



# Behavior Management & Discipline

The staff's vision for Oasis volunteers is to keep several goals in mind when we practice discipline. Our hope and prayers are that you will be committed to the same vision.

Students will internalize values, learn from mistakes.  
Classrooms will be conducive to learning and teaching.  
Oasis will be a safe, healthy environment.

We work to accomplish these goals by practicing the following values and strategies. Many of these values and strategies are biblical in nature; some are well-articulated by the philosophy known as Love & Logic [2].

## **Love – Build loving, trusting relationship with students**

In order to go beyond compliance to an internalized value system, students must grow to trust the authority figures in their lives. Oasis volunteers are committed to do their part to establish strong bonds of love and trust with the students.

We seek to interact with students in ways that meet their basic needs for inclusion, control, affection and competency. We find every opportunity to communicate in word and deed that our students are loved and accepted, regardless of whatever poor choices they may make. We offer students opportunities to make choices, to communicate that they are competent and that they have a level of control over their lives.

We administer consequences with empathy, rather than with anger, disgust or lecturing when a student needs correction. We avoid unnecessary power struggles. Trusting relationships are the basis for character growth and development to take place in the lives of children.

## **Some practical suggestions:**

- Greet each child by name and warmly engage, "Hi, I'm so glad to see you."
- Show genuine concern and care, "What was the most favorite thing you did this week?" "Last time I saw you, you said you were going to \_\_\_\_\_. Did you have fun/how'd that go?"
- Engage with eye contact
- Observe to learn more about each child
- Remember and use children's names – this is easily accomplished by assigning volunteers to the same small groups of children
- Recognition without opinion, "I noticed... you like sports... you're wearing flip-flops today..."
- Pray with and for children in your small group

## **Logic – Setting limits and empowering students to solve their own problems**

We recognize that every student and situation is unique. Therefore, the volunteers do not feel the need to clearly define every rule, reward and consequence in advance. Instead, we operate from the general principle, if someone creates a problem for themselves or someone else, then action must be taken to correct the problem. When setting out this principle, the younger children will need instruction to consider what it looks like to create a problem. To know how much they understand, ask them to give examples of what it looks like to create a problem for themselves or someone else.

The appropriate corrective action could vary from student to student or situation to situation. Sometimes it's important to leave some time to think about the solution or corrective action to give the adult and student opportunity to think clearly, rather than make an impulsive decision in the heat of the moment.

One way to redirect students when they make a poor choice is to use a recovery area. While isolated for a short period of time, they have time to think about solutions. Note there is a purpose for them to consider how to solve their problem. This is not merely a time out to satisfy your frustration. Work with your director to determine how to accomplish this.

The one exception to this principle of treating each situation as unique is when their behavior endangers themselves or another child. The consequences for this type of behavior should be predetermined by your team and be immediate.

Another way that students internalize character values is when they own and solve their own problems. Remember that the problem belongs to the student; they are responsible for solving or correcting the problem. Throughout any interaction with students about their poor choices, our role is to come alongside the child to help him or her resolve whatever issues they have created.

Empowering students is relevant when students have conflict with one another. Our goal is to train students to talk in a healthy way with each other before they solicit the help of an adult.

Oasis recognizes that the parent's voice is the most significant voice in the life of the child. This is the way God has ordained it to be. Our goal is to partner with parents for the good of the child. Therefore, communicate frequently and establish a working, trusting relationship with the parents.

### **Some practical suggestions:**

- Make sure your entire team is unified on the classroom expectations – this requires the entire team to discuss together
  - Before the teaching every week take 5 minutes or less to ask the question, “What are the rules of this classroom?” ... “What are some things that might cause a problem for others?”... If you repeat this every week, most of the kids will be able to tell you quickly what is expected.

- Follow through with Consequences using Empathy vs. Anger
  - The adults' role is to set limits
  - The kids' role is to test those limits
  - We do not love kids when we don't follow through. The kids will only learn if they experience consequences for creating a problem
  - Consequences are unique to the child and situation. "It's so sad you are creating a problem during this teaching. We will talk about this later."
- Addressing the problem
  - Ask questions, "This is a problem. Do you know why?"
  - Hand the problem back to the child
    - "How do you think you can fix it?"
    - "What do you plan to do about it?"
    - "How do you intend to solve the problem?"
  - Take time to consider the consequence with your team and follow through.

**Additional Note:**

When you encounter any disciplinary issue please utilize the guidance of the CTO/Director. They are on standby to support you in the classroom.

Scenarios in which you should contact your CTO or Director:

- If you are encountering persistent behavioral issues with a child
- If a child is causing harm to another child or volunteer
- If you have any question at all regarding if a parent should be contacted
- If a child needs to take a break outside of the classroom
- If you encounter any situation in which you are unsure as to how to proceed