

ECE SUSPENSION & EXPULSION POLICY

Your Child's World Learning Center, Inc. has adopted the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) policies and practices regarding suspension and expulsion. Your Child's World Learning Center, Inc. program meets guidelines established by the Joint Policy Statement issued by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) for preventing and severely limiting expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings. The goal of this policy is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and families that severely limits expulsion, suspension, or other exclusionary discipline; these exclusionary measures are to be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications.

Expulsion is the complete and permanent removal of a child from an early childhood program because of challenging behavior or non-infectious health condition. Suspension is an action that is administered as a consequence of a child's inappropriate behavior and requires that a child not be present in the classroom or the program for a specified period of time. All of the following actions are included in this definition of suspension:

1. Excluding a child from the classroom, whether by placing him/her in another part of the building, or excluding the child from the building;
2. Sending a child home early or limiting the number of hours per day (s) he can attend;
3. Un-enrolling a child because (s) he is "not a good fit" with the program.

Expulsion due to a child's behavioral challenges alone is prohibited and will be addressed through the program's positive behavior support program, program policies, and procedures.

Recent data indicate that expulsions and suspensions occur at high rates in preschool settings and are associated with negative educational and life outcomes. In addition, racial and gender disparities often exist in these practices (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Data indicates that specific groups of children are being disproportionately expelled and suspended from their early learning settings; a trend that has remained virtually unchanged over the past decade. Recent data indicates that African-American boys make up 18% of preschool enrollment, but 48% of preschoolers suspended more than once. Hispanic and African-American boys combined represent 46% of all boys in preschool, but 66% of their same-age peers who are suspended. Analyses of boys, compared to girls, indicated that they make up 79% of preschoolers suspended once, and 82% of preschoolers suspended multiple times. Suspension and

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expulsion does nothing to teach appropriate behavior and denies children the opportunity to access the benefits of an early childhood program.

If a child's behavior presents a serious safety threat for themselves or other children or adults, necessitating a temporary removal or change to the child's current program, this program will collaborate with parents to utilize appropriate referrals and community resources, such as early childhood mental health consultant, behavioral health, and/or early intervention.

If a situation should arise where there is documented evidence that all possible interventions and supports recommended by behavioral health and community based professionals, such as an early childhood mental health consultant or early intervention, have been exhausted — and it is collaboratively determined by the family, teacher, program, and other service providers that another setting is more appropriate for the wellbeing of the child in question — all parties, including the receiving program, will work together to develop a seamless transition plan and use that plan to implement a smooth transition from this program to an appropriate receiving program.

Your Child's World Learning Center, Inc. is committed to working with our families in order to prevent expulsion of a child. Fostering the social-emotional and behavioral development of all children, and in doing so eliminating expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings, depends on strong partnerships between families and programs, preparation and training, and development of appropriate and clearly communicated policies that are implemented consistently and without bias or discrimination across the diversity of young children represented in early learning settings. Those who serve our youngest learners have the responsibility and trust of setting infants, toddlers, and young children on positive trajectories. By reducing and ultimately eliminating expulsion and suspension through nurturing relationships and capacity building, with and on behalf of young children and their families, we can ensure that all of our youngest learners have the tools and experiences they need to thrive.