

## **Fresh Air Learning Student Code of Conduct**

### **Mission Statement**

At Fresh Air Learning, we foster respect and wonder for the diverse and complex people, places, and ecosystems of our world. We are grateful for each other and the places where we learn, and we value respectful communication, connection to our community and our ecosystems.

### **We Have Behavioural Expectations for Program Entry**

Our program is a program of choice in an outdoor setting, and as such as we must ensure that students can regulate their behaviour in a manner that is safe for themselves, teachers, other students, and the environment around us. Through discussion with parents, we will determine whether a child is able to interact with others in a manner that is physically and emotionally safe for everyone in the program.

### **We Strive to Support Children With Additional Needs**

Our aim is provide proactive support for students in the program so that every child knows that he or she is a valued member of our community and can contribute as a member of the community.

If a child has behavioural or other needs that we need to support, our teachers will work to create a support plan with the parents. This support might include:

- Develop activity modifications, different teaching strategies, or additional adaptations to the program.
- Discuss the child's needs with facilitators to determine whether the child's needs can be supported within the program without an aide.
- If required, arrange for a support person to attend with the child. This could be a parent, other caregiver, or an aide paid for by parents or external funds. Island Discovery does not have funding for individual aides for children with an additional need for support.
- Develop a statement about the child that can be communicated to our wider group of children and families, so that we can communicate about a child in a sensitive way. This also allows volunteers who are present to understand and respond appropriately to the child's needs.

## **We All Have Difficult Days**

We all have days that are difficult. If a child is not ready to be in the program that day, the teacher will call a parent or caregiver and ask that the child be picked up. A call will generally happen after a teacher has gone through level one of our conflict resolution process at least once, but it will be at the teacher's discretion.

What says, "I am not ready to be here today?"

Behaviour that could hurt yourself or others:

- Physical violence directed at self, other people, animals, the surrounding environment, or equipment
- Derogatory language or actions directed at another person
- Inability to stay with the group

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At the beginning of each year, students and teachers will have a conversation about behavioural expectations and conflict resolution strategies.

At Fresh Air Learning, we have three safety rules:

- a. We are kind to ourselves
- b. We are kind to others
- c. We are kind to the environment and equipment around us, including animals.

We will have a discussion with the children about what this means. For example, being kind to ourselves means that we ask before engaging in rough play. We will expect that all children agree to these expectations in a verbal contract.

## **Conflict Resolution Process**

### **Level 1**

If a child exhibits a behaviour that does not comply with our code of conduct, teachers or a volunteer adult will speak to the student about the behaviour. As much as possible, teachers will work with students to ensure that the students participate in finding solutions to conflicts. Some of the strategies used to resolve conflict may involve the following:

- Reminders or informal discussion
- Use of problem-solving techniques such as a mediated discussion
- Quiet time to cool down and reflect

- Restitution, including a written or verbal apology
- Contact with parents/guardians

## **Level 2**

For behaviours that are repeated or are more serious, the teachers will speak to the student and to the parents. Some of the strategies used to resolve conflict may involve the following:

- Any strategies from Level 1
- Group discussion
- Creation of a behaviour contract or plan
- In-class support from a parent or other support person
- Removal from the program or situation for a specified amount of time

## **Level 3**

For incidents of a very serious or ongoing nature, including harassment and bullying, teachers will contact the parents and the program administrator. They will consider the frequency and severity of the behaviour and the individual circumstances in which it occurred. The parent or guardian will be asked to meet with the teachers and the administrator and make a commitment to change the behaviour. If the child is unable to change the behaviour with appropriate support, the administrator, teachers, and parents will determine whether the child should continue in the program.

## **Harassment and Bullying**

Harassment is behaviour that embarrasses, intimidates, demeans, or humiliates others. This includes comments or behaviours that you know or should know to be unwelcome and the undermine another person's dignity. Bullying is ongoing behaviour that involves an inequity of power. We ask anyone who feels uncomfortable with the behaviour of another member of our community to report the incident to a staff member as soon as possible, since it is hard to intervene or use a situation as a teaching opportunity if the incident is reported much later.

## **The Adult's Role in Conflict Resolution**

Everyone in our community is responsible for encouraging and modeling respectful behaviour. Engaging in conflict resolution can be difficult, and we will all make mistakes. We treat all children with respect, even if they are the aggressors in a conflict. Everyone needs to know that adults will help them if they need it and do so in a way that is supportive to all involved.

As a teacher, volunteer, or parent in the program, we can be kind, connect, and still deal with the problem. Children should know that our relationship with them is safe and that they can come to us when they have a problem. When we actively help children through these years of life when social learning is a big agenda for them, we pave the way for a lifetime of success and harmony.

Parents who attend the program may occasionally observe behaviour that concerns them. It may be uncomfortable to talk to someone else's child. Here are some suggestions to help if you find yourself in that situation:

1. Observe social interactions. We can work through most problems with diligent supervision. When you observe a conflict, wait to see if the children can solve it themselves. If they are having a hard time solving the conflict, you can step in to help or ask another adult to do so. Think about who is most connected to the children in question.
2. Say something. Even if you struggle with the "right" thing to say, as long as it is respectful, having the behaviour acknowledged makes a big difference and significantly decreases the likelihood of repeating incidents. Some possible things to say are:
  - a. What makes you say that?
  - b. How do you think \_\_\_\_ (name) feels when they hear you say that?
  - c. When you do \_\_\_\_ I feel \_\_\_\_\_. Is there a friendlier way you can express yourself?
3. Stay calm and model respectful communication. Help to mediate the conflict, or ask a teacher to help mediate. Ask the children what happened. Look for the feelings behind the conflict to get to the heart of the issue. It is important that we work to find out why the person is doing what they are doing, rather than reacting to behaviour. If there is a child who is hurt, encourage them to tell the other

person what they are feeling and what they want. Try to get the children to find a solution themselves.

4. Sometimes when children are feeling intense anger and frustration, they may need time and space to cool off and gather their thoughts. During these times, it is best to make sure that the child is safe and reflect, discuss, or negotiate when things have calmed down.
5. If there is a situation that involves serious conflict or you are unsure of how to handle it, please get one of the teachers. If you are having difficulty with one child in particular, talk to the teachers to find out if there are special considerations needed.
6. **You can tell a teacher, or email them later. We like to know what's going on, even if it seems like something minor.** If you are working in a volunteer role, after supervising, please tell the teachers if there were challenges, conflicts, or hurt feelings. That will help them follow up appropriately. If you notice that a child needs a lot of attention over time – for example, that child needs a lot of alone time, physical affection, or verbal attention, the teacher should be alerted so that we can form a plan to help that child and inform parents.