



**Pathways of Care for Children and Youth of  
*Anona United Methodist Church***

**Mission / Philosophy Statement:**

Our goal is always and in all settings for our children and youth to experience Anona as a place of **love, trust** and **respect** for God, for each other, and for adults who care for them. We live a life in Christian Community.

**Rights and Responsibilities:**

**Participants in church program have a right to:**

- Planned, age-appropriate programs and activities.
- An emotionally and physically safe environment to learn, grow, interact and worship.
- Trained and equipped leaders.
- Clear expectation of appropriate behavior and discipline procedures.

**The church and staff have the right to:**

- Conduct programs and activities for the wholesome spiritual development of those participating in Anona's children and youth ministries.
- The cooperation of those attending church programs.
- The cooperative partnership of their parents / guardians.

**Criterion for Initiating Disciplinary Procedures:**

**The Disciplinary Procedure outlined by individual program areas will be initiated when anyone's behavior does harm to:**

- The program's ability to function.
- The focus of attention to the group.
- The ability to take groups off campus.
- An individual verbally, physically, emotionally or sexually.

**Specific applications of this policy will be provided by individual program areas.**



## Anona Child Development Center Discipline Policy

**Anona Child Development Center** is a Conscious Discipline® school that uses the School Family model of classroom management. “Conscious Discipline® is a comprehensive self-regulation program that integrates social-emotional learning, school culture and discipline. It empowers staff to respond to conflict as teachable moments in such a manner as to teach life skills and problem solving. (Becky A. Bailey, 2014) We have adopted the recommended discipline rules from the Pinellas County License Board and ensure all discipline is age-appropriate, constructive and instructive in nature and will not be severe, humiliating or frightening or associated with food, rest or toileting. All forms of physical punishment are prohibited.

Five Steps to Self-Regulation are taught through the social/emotional curriculum and supported by the staff and the School Family. These activities and interventions support emerging self-regulation and help children be successful. (Becky A. Bailey, 2014) Additionally, we provide opportunities for staff and teachers to communicate with parents about the development and wellbeing of each child. Regular communication is encouraged, through notes, phone calls, scheduled annual conferences and called conferences as needed. We encourage parents to communicate with the staff and actively participate in all aspects of the program.

Children have moments when their outward behavior reveals an upset internal state and conflict occurs. The staff of Anona Child Development Center will initiate the following Discipline Plan:

1. **Choice to be Helpful:** Children are reminded of the class commitment and given two positive helpful choices.
2. **Choice of the Safe Place:** Continued disruptive behavior is supported in the Safe Place Learning Center. Children may choose to go on their own, follow suggestions by other children in the School Family, or be helped to the center by the teacher. The teacher will monitor the child’s progress in the Safe Place and step in to support learning and the mastery of the Five Steps to Self-Regulation.

The Safe Place is the emotional regulation center in the classroom. The purpose of the Safe Place is to “provide a place where children can learn to self-regulate. Children use the Safe Place to learn how to change their internal state from upset to calm in order to maximize their learning potential.” (Becky A. Bailey, 2014).

- a) **Step 1: I AM...**Children are triggered into a state of upset and learn to go to the Safe Place.
- b) **Step 2: I CALM...**Children are taught calming techniques and are supported in their use during upset.
- c) **Step 3: I FEEL...**Children learn to name their feelings. Once they can name their feelings and become conscious of it, they are able to begin managing the moment.
- d) **Step 4: I CHOOSE...**Children are assisted in choosing a “brain Strategy” that helps them move from the lower center of the brain to the higher center of the brain in order to return to the classroom activities, ready to participate and learn.
- e) **Step 5: I SOLVE...**Something triggered the child into an upset state prior to entering the Safe Place. In this step, children discuss other solution options so that future upsets results in appropriate problem solving skills.

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3. **Behavior Plan:** If this upset continues, staff and directors meet together and discuss the situation and develop a Behavior Plan. This plan includes the Undesired Behavior and the Desired Behavior, activities to establish/strengthen connections and teach skills to correct unwanted behavior. Parents will be kept aware of behavior plans in place.
4. **Logical Consequence**
5. **Parent/Teacher Conference**
6. **Parent/Teacher/Director Conference**
7. **Referrals where appropriate**
8. **Parent/Director/Board/Pastor Conference**
9. **Dismissal of the child from care**

The staff of Anona Child Development Center reserves the right to enter this Discipline Plan at any point. Parents will be kept informed of all serious infractions of this policy. The Director is available for scheduled, private conferences with parents upon request.

**APPEAL PROCESS:** Parents may appeal, without fear of repercussion, any decision of the school to the Board of Directors. A written request may be sent to the Board Chairperson in advance of the regular board meeting. The request will be considered and the parents notified of the outcome. All board decisions are final.