

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR FAMILY AND PARENT EDUCATORS

I. Relationships With Parents and Families

1. We will be aware of the impact/power we have on parents and family relationships.
2. We will strive to understand families as complex, interactive systems where parents have the primary responsibility as educators, nurturers, and limit-setters for their children.
3. We will respect cultural beliefs, backgrounds, and differences and engage in practice that is sensitive to the diversity of child-rearing values and goals.
4. We will help parents recognize their strengths and work with parents to set goals for themselves and their children.
5. We will respect and accept parents for who they are, recognizing their developmental level and circumstances.
6. We will support and challenge parents to continue to grow and learn about parenting and their child's development.
7. We will communicate respectfully and clearly with family members.
8. We will communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services provided.
9. We will support diverse family values by acknowledging and examining alternative parenting practices to support healthy family relationships.
10. We will include parents as partners in problem solving and decision making related to program design and implementation.
11. We will be proactive in stating program child guidance principles and discipline guidelines and encourage non-violent child rearing.
12. We will create data privacy and confidentiality guidelines respectful of family members and protective of their legal rights.
13. We will provide a program environment that is safe and nurturing to all family members.
14. We will ensure that all family members have access to family education programs and are encouraged to participate.

II. Relationships With Children

1. We will treat children with respect and sensitivity to their needs and rights as developing persons.
2. We will strive to understand children in the context of their families.
3. We will do no harm to children and insist on the same from others.
4. We will advocate for children and their best interests at the same time that we work with the parents/adults in the family.

5. We will provide environments that are respectful of children and sensitive to their developmental and individual needs.
6. We will support the right of all children to have access to quality education, health, and community resources.

III. Relationships With Colleagues And The Profession

1. We will value and promote diversity in staff.
2. We will provide staff with policies and support systems for addressing difficult situations with family members, colleagues, and others.
3. We will follow data privacy policies that meet legal standards and are based upon respect for family members.
4. We will follow the mandatory reporting of abusive family behavior in a respectful and prudent manner.
5. We will define our role as family educators and practice within our level of competence.
6. We will recognize the difference between personal and professional values in our professional interactions.
7. We will support the ongoing development of a knowledge base that guides us towards ethical and effective practice.
8. We will be committed to ongoing training and professional development to enhance our knowledge and skills.

IV. Relationships With Community/Society

1. We will be knowledgeable about community resources and make and accept informed, appropriate referrals.
2. We will be aware of the boundaries of our practice and know when to use other community resources for the benefit of family members.
3. We will communicate clearly and cooperate with other programs/agencies to best meet family needs.
4. We will advocate for laws and policies that reflect our changing knowledge base and the best interests of parents, families, and communities.
5. We will respect and uphold laws and regulations that pertain to our practice as family educators and offer expertise to legal authorities based on professional knowledge.

Source: National Council on Family Relations (1999). *Tools for ethical thinking and practice in family life education*.