



## PRESCHOOL SUSPENSION & EXPULSION PREVENTION SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

(For children ages birth through 12 years old)

### HAVE YOU BEEN ASKED TO...

- Pick up your child early from child care due to challenging behaviors?
- Not return to the child care site for several days?
- Reduce the number of hours your child attends child care?

**These are all examples of child care expulsion.**

### DID YOU KNOW?

- The primary goal of early education is to launch children on their educational journeys so they can succeed in elementary school and beyond
- Preschool-age children are expelled at three times the rate of children in kindergarten through 12th grade. This practice deprives young children of the benefits of early childhood education and may leave unaddressed mental health issues that can result in challenging behaviors and other long term effects
- An early childhood mental health consultation can reduce behaviors that may lead to expulsions



### WHY IS EXPULSION A CONCERN?

Research shows that preschool expulsions are linked to:

- Missed opportunities to learn, socialize with other children and interact with positive adult role models
- A risk of developing ongoing behavioral problems and negative views about learning, school, teachers, and the world around them, which can lead to greater challenges later in life

High expulsion rates are also an indicator that parents and caregivers need support in providing positive social and emotional opportunities for children to lay the foundation for all learning, future relationships and school readiness.

### WHAT'S NEW?

**Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) Expulsion Prevention Services are now offered through AZ STEPS!**

Families working with AZ STEPS can receive suspension and expulsion support and resources from a DES Contracted Resource Consultant by completing an Arizona Suspension and Expulsion Support Request Form.

### WHAT IS AZ STEPS?

Arizona Statewide Training and Technical Assistance for Expulsion Prevention

### WHY AZ STEPS?

AZ STEPS provides resources, support and training to help child care providers prevent suspensions and expulsion while strengthening their ability to support all children! AZ STEPS helps parents and teachers understand children's behaviors and how teaching social-emotional skills can help prepare them for social and academic success.

### HOW CAN AZ STEPS HELP? AZ STEPS OFFERS:

- Online training that covers behavior, trauma, and social-emotional development for families and caregivers
- Resources and support to help prevent expulsion from happening in the first place by working with parents and childcare providers to promote a child's success
- Mental Health consultations for families, teachers, and administrators to help meet the needs of the child

### HOW TO ACCESS SUPPORT?

If you notice your child exhibiting challenging behaviors, or you believe your child is at risk for suspension or expulsion, submit an Arizona Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Support Request through Arizona Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) by [visiting azccrr.com](http://visiting_azccrr.com) or by calling 1-800-308-9000 (option 2), Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm and Saturday 8 am-12 pm.

If you are interested in training or additional support for your family, please contact Jennifer Atkari-Benavides at (602) 633-8730 or [JAtkari@swhd.org](mailto:JAtkari@swhd.org).

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## **Student Expulsion and Prevention Policy**

We believe that all domains of learning are supported during play and through nourishing, positive, interactions with adults and peers. One of the fundamental responsibilities of our program is to further the social and emotional development of children in our care. Preschool age is a crucial time for children to learn how to regulate social and emotional skills, such as feelings, thoughts, attention, and behavior. Part of children's social development is learning how to interact with their peers and other adults. We encourage interactions between children and their teachers to help them learn to form relationships.

We know that when children are provided opportunities and guidance to develop, learn, and practice self-control and other social and emotional skills, it gives them the foundation necessary for academic and life success. Developing social and emotional skills also requires communication between providers and caregivers in how to support the child in their learning process.

We support children's development and work diligently to prevent expulsion through:

### **Our Environment**

- Staff regularly observe the classroom environment and the children as they interact in it to ensure it promotes healthy social interactions (ex. activities are made available long enough for all children to participate)
- We develop schedules that meet the needs of children to ensure transitions throughout the day are smooth and to avoid long periods of wait time
- We are flexible in our schedule and follow the interests of the children's cognitive, physical, and biological needs
- We provide children with materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age and respectful to them as individuals

### **Our Teachers**

- Teachers make an effort to communicate daily or weekly (in-person, phone, email, etc.) to parents on their child's development, in particular to identify and address any social, emotional, behavioral, or health issues that may arise
- Encourage peer relationships by creating social opportunities and working with children to resolve conflict
- Assist children to put words to their emotions (ex. "Emily, I can tell you were mad when James took your block.")
- Use positive methods of support and redirect the child's behavior by providing alternative actions and behaviors that are acceptable

### **Our Families**

- Communicate regularly with staff to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school
- Partners with us and allow us time to work with all children, including those needing higher levels of support