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# RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PREVENTING EXPULSION & SUSPENSION

## GUIDING SYSTEM TO FAMILIES RESOURCES

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## EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION PREVENTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS

The Louisiana Department of Education is committed to raising awareness of exclusionary discipline practices in early childhood settings, issues of racial and gender disparities, and negative outcomes of children associated with expulsion and suspension in the early years. The hope is that this guidance will assist early childhood programs in preventing, reducing and ultimately eliminating expulsions and suspensions in early learning settings.

**Expulsion** is a removal from all regular school or preschool settings for a period of **not less than** one school semester. **Suspension** is a temporary removal of a student from his or her regular educational or preschool setting for a violation of school policies or rules. During suspension, a student is not allowed to attend school/child care or attend school/child care activities for a set length of time.

**Challenging Behavior** is any behavior that interferes with learning, engagement, and social interaction with his or her peers. These behaviors make it difficult for children to learn, putting each child at risk for negative short and long-term effects.

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### WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

- ✓ Fussiness (e.g., refusal to eat certain foods or wear certain clothes)
- ✓ Defiance (e.g., refusing to follow instructions)
- ✓ Excessive anger when the child doesn't get their way
- ✓ Aggression
- ✓ Hurting other people (e.g., biting, kicking)
- ✓ Tantrums

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### WHY DO CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS OCCUR?

- ✓ Feeling unwell or in pain – It may be difficult to communicate to others. Head banging, for example, is a way of coping with the pain or discomfort.
  - ✓ Frustration at being scolded, not being listened to, or not being understood
  - ✓ Feeling upset or distressed about something, perhaps a change in routine or even loneliness
  - ✓ A change in family circumstances or routine, environmental factors, including traumatic events
  - ✓ Not enough sleep or being tired
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## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON CONTRIBUTING FACTORS RESULTING IN CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS?

- ✓ Disabilities
- ✓ Disorders
- ✓ Diseases
- ✓ Parenting Styles
- ✓ Environments
- ✓ Artificial Stimulants

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## HOW CAN I AND MY CHILD CARE PROVIDER RESPOND TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS?

- ✓ Praise good behavior while ignoring negative behavior
- ✓ Use positive language and interactions
- ✓ Provide ongoing monitoring
- ✓ Explore diagnostic screenings
- ✓ Create a reward system
- ✓ Keep an open-line of communication between parents and teachers
- ✓ Create a visual schedule

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## WHAT STEPS CAN I TAKE TO PREVENT CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR?

- ✓ Look carefully at your family's schedule, routines, and transitions
- ✓ Plan ahead
- ✓ Have materials ready
- ✓ Use music, songs, or predictable noises to signal transitions
- ✓ Use visual cues
- ✓ Turn transition times into games

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## WHAT CAN MY CHILD CARE PROVIDER DO TO HELP PREVENT EXPULSION?

- ✓ Develop and share guidance on discipline practices that are developmentally appropriate to promote your child's social, emotional, and behavioral health.
  - ✓ Provide assistance using these practices consistently without bias or discrimination and set appropriate consequences for challenging behavior.
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- ✓ Help set goals to support your child's social, emotional, and behavioral development.
- ✓ Keep an open-line of communication about your child's progress with you and your child's teacher and make changes if needed.
- ✓ Build skills to support your child's social, emotional, and behavioral development. (Seek support from specialists, such as infant mental health consultants, behavioral coaches, school counselors, or special educators, if needed.)
- ✓ Attend to their own health and wellness (work reasonable hours, access social services, health and wellness services as needed.)
- ✓ Work with you and your family to understand and implement successful quality early childhood techniques and strategies used at home.

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## HOW CAN I WORK WITH PROVIDERS TO HELP PREVENT EXPULSION OR SUSPENSION?

- ✓ Read your child care provider's policy on expulsion and/or suspension of children from school (ask your child care provider questions for clarity if needed.)
- ✓ Discuss your child's needs, interests, and preferences for daily routines.
- ✓ Talk to your child's teacher every day.
- ✓ If you find your child's behavior challenging, share with the teacher and discuss possible responses.
- ✓ Discuss ways to best respond to your child's challenging behaviors at home and at child care.
- ✓ When you have time, visit the center, have lunch, and stay awhile.
- ✓ Welcome teachers into your home for home visits.
- ✓ Follow through on any screenings or assessments your child's teacher may suggest.
- ✓ Participate in the learning process with your child's school whenever possible by visiting and assisting and developing an understanding of child development techniques and center expectations.
- ✓ Practice using parallel language with your child (model the language you want him to use.)

## WHAT CAN I DO IF MY CHILD IS ASKED TO LEAVE A PROGRAM?

- ✓ Revisit the child care provider's policy on expulsion and exclusion of children from school.
  - » Early childhood programs are strongly encouraged to establish policies to eliminate or sternly limit expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices in compliance with federal civil rights laws.
  - » Contact your [state's child care licensing agency](#) at [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov) or at 225-342-9905 for information on laws or regulations that prohibit or limit expulsion or suspension.
- ✓ Ask if the provider works with an early childhood mental health specialist, and if not, is one available.
- ✓ If you suspect your child may have a developmental delay, disability, or mental health issue, ask where your child can get an evaluation.
- ✓ If you agree that it is best for your child to attend another program, focus on creating a smooth transition and find a center that may fit your child's needs. You may contact School Finder at <https://louisianaschools.com/>.
- ✓ If you suspect your child needs additional support or has a disability, work with an [early intervention specialist](#) to ensure your child gets the support needed. (Early intervention specialists can assist providers in providing support for your child more effectively.)
- ✓ Let your child's doctor know about the transition. Your child may benefit from screenings or evaluations recommended by your child's doctor. (Your child's doctor can provide a referral to a specialist who can conduct an in-depth evaluation of your child.)

*“When parents engage positively with their children, teaching them the behaviors and skills that they need to cope with the world, children learn to follow rules and regulate their own feelings,” said Dr. Carol Metzler, who studies parenting at the Oregon Research Institute.*

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

- ✓ Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) conducts research on child care needs and trends within their community so that they can help families and providers with questions they may have. CCR&R supports child care settings that help children develop and learn by affording providers the opportunity to receive training, coaching and continuing education. The research is also helpful in keeping the families and providers abreast of developments in the child care field each year.
  - » **Anna Williamson, Agenda for Children Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies:**
    - Region 1: 504-586-8509
    - Region 3: 985-624-2950
    - Region 4: 985-446-8330
  - » **Karen Powell, Volunteers of America:**
    - Regions 2 & 3: 225-926-8005
    - Region 5, 6, & 7: 337-704-2838
  - » **Nancy Alexander, Northwestern State University:**
    - Region 7 & 8: 318-677-3150
  - » **Amy Clancy, The Children's Coalition:**
    - Region 9: 318-323-8775
  - » **Paula Granger, On Track by 5 Alliance:**
    - Region 10: 337-521-7134
  - » **Melissa Cline, Pointe Coupee Early Childhood Coalition:**
    - Region 11: 225-618-6688
- ✓ **Top-Notch Behavior Healthcare Services, LLC:**  
<https://www.topnotchbhs.org> 225-960-7179
- ✓ **Child and Family Program:**  
Mavis Matthews, BA  
Child and Family Specialist  
Church of The Way Presbyterian Church  
260 South Foster Dr, Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
Cell: 225-252-1914  
Fax: 225-929-6688
- ✓ **Care South Clinic:**  
<https://caresouth.org>  
225-252-1914
- ✓ **CAS Child Advocacy Services:**  
<https://childadv.net>
- ✓ **Baton Rouge Children's Advocacy Center:**  
<https://batonrougecac.org>  
225-343-1984

- ✓ Preventing Suspensions and Expulsions in Early Childhood:  
<https://preventexpulsion.org>
- ✓ Early Steps:  
[ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/139/n/139](http://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/139/n/139)
- ✓ Learn the Signs Act Early
- ✓ Tulane Early Childhood Mental Health:  
<https://medicine.tulane.edu/departments/clinical-sciences/psychiatry/research/tikes>
- ✓ <https://www.louisianabelieves.com>
- ✓ <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/infant-toddler>
- ✓ <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/preschool>
- ✓ <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/school-age>
- ✓ <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/tcs>
- ✓ [www.childcare.gov/consumer-education/responding-to-challenging-behaviors](http://www.childcare.gov/consumer-education/responding-to-challenging-behaviors)
- ✓ <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/sep2018/>
- ✓ [www.Zerothree.org](http://www.Zerothree.org)

Child care enrollment decisions are strictly made by the parent or legal guardian. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) can only provide developmental guidance.

Louisiana CCAP families may request a change in providers by submitting a CCAP 10 (Report of Change) <https://tinyurl.com/CCAPChange>



[www.louisianabelieves.com](http://www.louisianabelieves.com)

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