



## Social Guidelines and Policies

Rewild Portland believes that blanket policies regarding behavior for children of different ages and backgrounds results in lost learning experiences. Instead we use developmentally appropriate guidelines and processes based on the needs of both the group as a whole and individuals in order to maintain social cohesion and safety. The following are policy statements designed to provide a clear working form and support for detailed and age-appropriate standards.

### First a Few Basic Rules:

- Adherence to behavioral guidelines (see below) is expected at all times
- When children are working with their parents, and during drop-off and pick-up times, the children are to be under the direct supervision of their parents.
- When children are with Rewild teachers, away from their parents, they are under the direct supervision of the teachers.
- Children must have appropriate clothing for the weather conditions (this may include a sunhat, long sleeve shirt, rain gear, etc).
- Children must have appropriate footwear for running around outside, climbing rocks and trees, etc (close toed sneakers are best).
- Please bring healthy foods for lunch and snacks, and refrain from sugary sweets and juices.
- Each child will need a small, snug fitting backpack that they can carry on their own with a 8-12oz water bottle, small snack and additional clothing as needed.
- Stick Play is developmentally appropriate and permissible for children over the age of five as long as they have received some instruction from a Rewild teacher on how to play safely and respectfully (ie: how to stick fight, how to safely throw a "spear," never purposefully hit another person with a stick, do not swing a stick wildly around other people, and how to safely run with a stick without poking your eye out).
- No pretend gun play is allowed
- Wrestling is also developmentally appropriate but again may only be played in certain ways that have been modeled and approved of by a teacher.
- Children may not enter any bodies of water without being directed to do so while being closely supervised by a teacher.
- Rewild Portland classes are screen and electronics free. Please leave all electronic devices at home and turn off your cell phones while in attendance.
- Leave all children's toys in the car or at home
- Children may not go farther than where they can see a teacher or parent, unless directed to do so.
- Children must return to the group, to their parents, or to a teacher when called.
- Rewild Portland programs provide a safe space. Everyone involved is expected to treat each other with kindness and respect. No weapons are allowed, unless the item is a tool (such as a pocket knife, bow & arrows) that has been approved by a Rewild Portland instructor and is an appropriate tool to have for the current class activities.
- Parents must adhere to and model Rewild Portland's guidelines for the children



## Behavior Guidelines for Children 3-6

It is our purpose for programs including young children to surround the children with a naturally flowing rhythm of free play in nature, use of found natural materials and engaging in work as modeled by adults. When young children are unable to take part in these activities or act out through undesirable behavior, the teachers will work to redirect the child into either positive reintegration with the group or direct them towards a task. Sometimes young children simply need some space and alone time, when they have become overwhelmed by a social situation, in which case one of our faculty will assist the child in finding this quiet space for themselves.

If being redirected to a task is a common occurrence at more than one Rewilding event, a parent/teacher conversation will begin through which we will work together to support the child's ability to work and play with the group. During this time behavior will be documented and teachers and parents will meet to discuss observations and discuss methods of behavior management. This process will continue until the child's participation in the class is acceptable. If the child's behavior does not alter or remains unhealthy for the child and for others, the Rewild faculty will ask that the child not attend the program until the teachers have had a chance to meet and decide if the child's continuing participation is in the best interest of the child and/or the group as a whole. This is an individualized, no-blame process that seeks to meet the needs of all the children and families.

## Behavior Guidelines for Children 7-9

Our guidelines for this age group are similar to those for the early childhood group, but with increasing support by faculty working with children to communicate with each other during conflicts and to seek creative and heartfelt resolutions through working together. For younger children redirection will still be used at times to lead to more desirable behavior or involvement with the group. Emphasis will still be placed on group dynamics and engaging in a rhythm of both free play in nature and skill development as lead by a teacher. Our aim is to help each child develop the attitudes and skills to act responsibly, while honoring the physical and emotional well-being of themselves and others.

## Behavior Guidelines for Children 10 and Older

Our guidelines for this age group are similar to those for the younger children, except now the emphasis on redirection is less and children are now expected to be able to respond positively to verbal directions in regards to behavior and safety. We realize children on the younger side of this age group will still need support in forming healthy communication and conflict resolution skills, but our



expectation is that the children will be able to increasingly show independence and empathy in managing their interactions with other people. Fighting or harassment will not be tolerated and will result in immediate action on the part of the faculty. For more minor transgressions this may mean the children involved will be asked by the teachers to work separately from the group until they have devised a way to resolve their conflict and make amends with one another and the entire group so as to be able to reintegrate into the group activities for the day. For more serious transgressions Rewild Portland reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program. Decisions of this nature will be made by the faculty of Rewild Portland after meeting with the parents of the child/ren.

#### Accidental Injury Guidelines:

Rewild Portland is committed to providing a healthy outdoor experience where children can play and learn safely. Still, injuries can happen. Even when an injury is accidental, it is important for the child causing this injury to recognize the hurt caused and have the opportunity to express an apology, provide care and be made aware of how to prevent a similar accident in the future. Most childhood injuries in a group setting fall into one of these three categories:

1. Accidental Injury A - Unavoidable and unintentional  
(ex: a child stumbles and knocks another down)
2. Accidental Injury B - Avoidable but Unintentional  
(ex: a child is recklessly swinging a stick and hits another child)
3. Intentional Injury - Injury was the result of an aggressive action  
(ex: a child kicks or pushes another child causing them to be hurt)

Rewild Portland uses the following procedures when a child is injured as a result of another's action:

1. After consulting with those involved or witness to the incident the teacher(s) will determine which category applies
2. If it was an Accidental Injury A the teacher(s) will follow first aid procedures as needed, encourage care and apologies from the other child(ren) involved. If the injury requires more than a bandaid the teacher(s) will fill out an Accident Report Form for internal use.
3. If it was an Accidental Injury B the same steps will be taken as above, and the teacher(s) will fill out an Accident Report Form and copies will be given to parents of both the child who was injured and the child who caused the injury. The teacher will speak to the parents of all children involved either at the end of the day or over the phone on the same day.



4. If it was an Intentional Injury, the same steps will be followed as with categories 1 and 2, steps may be taken to implement some social intervention follow up and a discipline referral form will be completed. The teacher(s) will follow up with the family and Rewild Portland staff to make certain the recommendations made in the discipline referral form are followed through on before the child returns to a Rewild Portland program.

#### Discipline Policies:

If a child is repeatedly unable to interact with the group in appropriate and healthful ways, for both themselves and towards others, at more than one Rewild Portland event, the following disciplinary actions may be taken.

Student is sent home from the class for the day:

Reason/Problem: Disruptive behavior, an unresponsive attitude, and/or verbally abusive towards others. The child is over-tired, uncooperative, talks back, and/or is unwilling to work in the group setting. The behavior frequently interrupts the classroom setting, the teacher has to frequently work with the student one-on-one to manage their behavior, and/or the behavior jeopardizes the safety of the child or the group.

Consequence: A teacher will return with the child to where the adults are working and request that the child either remain with the parent until the conclusion of the adult lesson before being taken home, or be taken home immediately, depending on the severity of the circumstances. The teacher will document the incident and will later speak with the parent(s) over the phone. If the child's being sent home becomes a common occurrence at more than one Rewild Portland event, the teachers will meet with the parents to discuss further steps based on the needs of the child and the group. Further steps may include possible suspension or expulsion from the program.

Who is involved: Parents and teachers

Action: Student is sent home for day. Incident is documented.

#### Suspension:

Reason/Problem: Frequent negative behavior and attitude. Constant uncooperative behavior. Persistent bickering with other children and/or teachers. Inappropriate use of physical force and/or harming of others physically. Inappropriate verbal harassment of children and/or teachers.

Consequence: Child is suspended from all Rewild Portland programs until teachers and parents have had a chance to meet and develop a plan of action for social inclusion. The teacher will document the incident(s) leading up to the suspension and parents will receive a copy of this written documentation. The child may only return to taking part in Rewild Portland programs when a plan of action for social inclusion has been put into place with parental involvement.

Who is involved: Parents and teachers.

Action: Child is suspended from program. Service work or conditions set by parents working with teachers as part of a plan of action for social inclusion may



be required. Parents will receive written notification of suspension and incident reports.

#### Expulsion:

**Reason/Problem:** Repeat suspensions (more than 2). Continued negative behavior and attitude, continuous disturbance of the class, aggression towards others, or behavior that puts the child's or group's safety at risk. The harming of others physically, engaging in vandalism, bringing objects and/or substances that put the child and others at risk, and/or possession of items not allowed at Rewild Portland events. Immediate expulsion will also take place if any inappropriate sexual behavior occurs.

**Consequence:** Child is suspended until teachers can meet with the board of Rewild Portland, where the problem will be reviewed and action taken. The child may then be expelled. The incidents leading to this decision and the notice of expulsion will be documented.

**Who is involved:** Rewild Portland teachers and board members

**Action:** Expulsion from all Rewild Portland programs, unless sufficient restitution can be made to restore what has been damaged in a physical, emotional or social sense, at a later time.

#### Guidelines for Restitution:

- Actions seen by victim as adequate
- Requires effort in which the wrongdoer helps to find a solution to help the victim(s)
- It needs to be genuine
- It does not in any way encourage repetition of misdeed
- It will be relevant to the general area of the wrongdoing
- It strengthens the person who has offended

#### For Parents:

Rewild Portland expects adults involved in its programs to adhere to and model the behavioral guidelines and expectations for their children. If an adult is repeatedly found to be acting in opposition to our guidelines or not supervising their own children in keeping with these guidelines, the family may be asked to leave the program.

Rewild Portland supports healthy and respectful interactions within our classes and community. Our guidelines and social well-being rely on building trust through healthful actions and communication. It is important to use conversation when we experience conflict or disagreement in our lives, but how can we do this in a way that benefits the whole community? None of us have perfected the art of conversation, but we can all improve through practice and building on our experiences. Although it can be difficult, communicating honestly and listening with empathy can result in an individual's concerns being addressed while contributing to the overall health of the group.



Here are some steps we encourage you to take when you have an issue with another person:

1. Go and tell them directly
2. If it is too hard to approach a person on your own ask another person to come with you
3. If someone comes to you with critical observations of another person, ask them to speak to that person directly
4. Check back later, with the person you encouraged to speak directly, to see how it went
5. If someone is reluctant to speak to someone directly about their concerns, offer to come along as an impartial "third person" to facilitate the conversation

Bringing our concerns directly to the person involved can help to avoid the spread of misinformation. It also underscores Rewild Portland's organizational belief that most people truly do want to act out of sound intentions! Following these guidelines for building trust can be especially helpful for parents if they have concerns about another family's child. Ok! Now stop reading all these guidelines and go have some fun!