

TGS Volunteer Orientation

August 21, 2023



**Thank you for your interest in
volunteering for TGS events!**

**Your support and commitment is greatly
appreciated.**



Expectations and Guidelines

Interacting with parents/caregivers and young children



General guidelines when interacting with families

- Be **welcoming, patient, understanding and helpful**
 - Use facial expressions and body language as best as you can to communicate a welcoming and kind atmosphere.
- **Safety** is our number one priority
 - Be sure that you are **demonstrating safe practices** when interacting toys/materials
 - Be sure that children are not given food aside from approved food
 - Respect the personal physical space of each child and **refrain from moving or picking up a child unless there is an immediate safety concern.**
 - If you feel like a child needs physical help, please consult and discuss with the TGS CARE team for assistance.
- Never give medical advice to families. Instead, direct the family to a member of the TGS CARE team who can record their question(s) and direct them to a qualified member of a medical team.

General guidelines when interacting with families

- **Keep in mind our goals:**
 - model positive approaches and behaviors for caregivers
 - encourage parents to engage in play with their children
- **Go where help is needed**, observe various stations or areas and see where you could be of greatest assistance.
- Make it a priority to **interact with a variety of families and children.**
- **Follow the child's lead** when supporting engagement with activities.
 - Notice what the child is interested in.
 - If they are engaged in an activity already, ask if you can join in.
 - Stay focused on the activity and resist changing the way the child is engaging with the toys/materials
 - Ask questions to engage the child during play. You can also comment or narrate what you are doing.
 - If the child wants to change how they are playing or move to a new activity, follow their lead.

Sample words of encouragement you can use when children are playing:

- "Tell me more about what you made/built/drew!"
- "That's a great observation, good thinking!"
- "I like how you..."
- "You're really thinking about how to make it _____. That's really creative."
- "Wow, I can tell you worked really hard on this!"

Sample phrases you can use with parents:

- "Have you tried..."
- "Sometimes when I'm working with children, I..."
- "Something that often works well with children is..."

What to do for childcare drop-off situations



Guidelines for drop off situations:

- **Greet families warmly** and assure parents that although childcare is available, they may always choose to keep their child with them if their child is having a hard time separating.
- If the parent chooses to drop-off their child, **explain the procedures clearly**:
 - Explain that their child will be watched at all times while they are participating in the event.
 - If their child is in need of a diaper change, toilet assistance, or is becoming upset and hard to redirect, someone will come get them. You can remind parents that we do not physically help with diaper changes/bathrooming so for parents with older children, encourage caregivers to take the children to use the bathroom first.
 - Ask caregivers if they have any special instructions regarding their child's needs.

Guidelines for drop off situations:

- When caregivers are ready to leave, **encourage them to say goodbye in a calm, reassuring manner.** If they seem hesitant to leave, you can invite them to observe their child from a distance.
- If their child continues to be upset, reassure the caregiver that if the child remains upset for about 5 to 10 minutes, a member of the CARE team will come to get the caregiver.
- **Remember! Safety is the number one priority.**
 - Please respect the personal physical space of the child and avoid touching or moving a child under normal circumstances.
 - **Only intervene physically if a child's safety is an immediate concern.** In other scenarios where you feel like a child needs physical help, please consult and discuss with the TGS CARE team.

**If a child does not want to
enter the room or join an activity**



Interacting with children who are not ready to join:

- **Reassure the parent/caregiver**
- Talk to the child at eye-level with a calm voice and relaxed body
- **Offer a toy** or book of interest
- **Encourage the parent/caregiver to stay close to the child** and talk to the child about what they see happening in the TGS activity

If a child is having a hard time in social interactions



Acknowledge the child's emotion and offer an alternative to get their needs met.

- Ex: "I see that you _____, but you cannot _____. Instead, I can help you _____."
- Ex: "I see that you would like that toy, but you cannot grab it from your friend. Instead, I can help you ask for a turn with that toy."

Redirect the child into a different activity or space of the room:

- Ex: "Can you help me with a special task? I need someone to help me _____"

If at any point you feel like you need additional support, for example if a child is not being physically safe, please ask the closest TGS CARE team member or FHC staff member for assistance.

What to do if a child has a temper tantrum

- Focus on helping everyone get “calm first.”
- Keep the child safe.
- Encourage the parent/caregiver to stay close to the child.
- Once the child is calm, help the parent redirect the child.

Guidelines on handling toileting at events

- We do not physically help children with toileting or changing diapers.
- During childcare events at the FHC, **toilet trained children can be escorted to FHC bathrooms at the end of hallway.**
- **Leave the main door open and let children attend to their own needs.** If the child asks for help, wave over TGS or FHC staff so one of you can keep watch while the other goes to retrieve the child's caregiver. If the child is not yet toilet-trained, let a member of the TGS CARE team know that you are leaving the room to get the child's caregiver.
- During TGS events where it might make more sense to take the child directly to their caregiver than to retrieve them (for example at a Sunset Park playgroup), let someone on the TGS CARE team know that you are doing so.



Questions?

