

Fresh Little Minds

THE GOLDEN RULES	Why these rules matter
Take a breath before we start, leave our worries at the door.	Because when we do children can sense that you are there for them and when they do it helps them feel special and safe. It doesn't matter what has happened before or what is going to happen after, for this time we are going to focus on creating a positive safe learning environment for children and it starts with being available for them.
Join in on all the activities, even if it feels cheesy.	Because when we do children learn that it's okay to be silly and it helps them to join in. When children do this, their brain and confidence grow, their bodies and minds feel better. Adults never ask children to do anything they won't do themselves. Joining in improves children's health and happiness.
Help children join in, especially those who are struggling	Many children find it difficult to take part although they would like to. It is easy for quiet, shy and children who like to please to get overlooked in a big group. Don't force children to take part or do something that they don't want to do, in Fresh Little Minds its ok to wait until you feel safe to join in.
Support each other through our words and actions.	Children need to see and sense adults treating each other with genuine kindness to feel safe. Children can only learn when they feel safe.
Be kind to children, never shout at children, be gentle.	When we shout or raise our voices to children their brain gets freaked out, activating a stress response and they struggle to take part. This happens on the inside of their bodies so we can't see the reaction. Shouting hurts children's confidence and takes away all the benefits that the programme can give.
Include children even when we are tested	Don't punish children through excluding them because exclusion disempowers a child, reducing their ability to cope in difficult situations. Witnessing exclusion also impacts other children present who may now stop expressing themselves, fearful of the consequences. When children are scared, the part of their brain required to learn is not accessible, children need feel safe to express themselves fully.
Get Involved where possible.	Children crave one to one time from adults, but adults are increasingly under more and more pressure, with more distractions reducing opportunities for that essential one to one time. It is more important than ever to take the time out to simply be with and nurture children.
Be patient with children. Don't be too strict, use kind voices, encouraging words and support restlessness to be moved out.	Emotion is E (energy) that needs Motion. Energy is built up from both a lack of opportunity to regularly move and as a result of trauma, distress or big emotion that is trapped in the body. Children who are naturally restless need to move to survive, self-regulate and to get themselves into the right state to make friends and learn. Patient adults let children know that It's okay in Fresh Little Minds to be restless and to move.
It's good to acknowledge mistakes. We all have our 'L' plates on.	When we make mistakes, we learn. When children see adults make mistakes and dealing with it positively, they learn it's okay to get things wrong, reducing their worry and need for perfectionism. It is the adult's responsibility to be a role model, making mistakes and normalising them.
Ask for help, show them the way	When we do children know that it is okay for them to ask for help. It is the adult's responsibility to be a role model and show them the way.
Fun with you comes first	When children are having fun with their trusted adult, learning becomes possible. When adults win children's hearts, they gain access to children's minds. Care for enjoyment as it builds a connection between child and adult, and this is the gateway to building resilience.
Smile	A genuine smile creates a warm, happy, caring, safe and loving environment for children to be nurtured. AND YOU FEEL BETTER TOO!

