



## 10 Commandments of Interactions with School-Age Children

Staff interactions are critical to the positive social/emotional climate in programs. Here are some ideas for improving interactions with youth. Please feel free to use this document in program staff meetings, one on one meetings with director and staff or other opportunities for professional improvement and growth.

- I. Thou shalt not speak to a child from across the room.
- II. Thou shalt get down on the child's eye level and always use children's names.
- III. Thou shalt teach and encourage children to use problem-solving.
- IV. Remember to be aware of tone of voice and speak to children respectfully, always mindful of their self-esteem.
- V. Honor, accept, help identify, and validate children's feelings.
- VI. Thou shalt ask open ended (divergent and convergent) questions to encourage thinking skills.
- VII. Thou shalt greet children warmly when they arrive and as they depart, and continue to make them feel welcomed throughout the day.
- VIII. Thou shalt state things in a positive way, telling children what they **CAN** do, and not what they **CAN'T** do.
- IX. Thou shalt serve as a positive role model for children and families.
- X. Thou shalt remember to use genuine and authentic praise and strength-based approach—including appropriate affection.

Adapted from Cathy Abraham's 10 Commandments of Interactions with Children

*"Resiliency  
is a strengths based model, meaning its focus is on providing the supports and opportunities which promote life success, rather than trying only to eliminate the factors that promote failure."*

### Practice and Reflection Plan of Action

Reflect on which of these you do well and which you need to improve. Devise your plan of action for self-improvement.

**Make a list of the commandments that you are already using in your program and show evidence of how you support these commandments:**

**List the commandments that you need to grow and a strategy for how you will accomplish this:**