



Outdoor Kids OT Behavior Policy for Therapy Groups & Summer Camps

Our OKOT groups and summer camps provide a supportive outdoor environment for your child to grow their social, emotional, and motor skills alongside peers. Each group is a maximum of 6 kids and led by a licensed therapist and 1-2 assistants (usually OT graduate students). However, we can and do run groups with a minimum of 2 adults, so our groups have a stated 3:1 child to adult ratio.

Our programs are designed to be flexible and thoughtful, adapting to each child's needs. However, if your child currently lacks the capacity to stay safe in a dynamic outdoor setting with a 3:1 ratio, our groups may not be a good fit at this time.

Safety Expectations

To ensure a positive experience, we expect children in our groups and/or camps to:

- Stay within 10-20 feet of the group (no wandering, eloping, or running away).
- Have basic safety awareness to be in a wild, unpredictable nature setting with an adult nearby, but NOT always within arm's reach.
- Follow 1-2 step verbal or visual directions (most of the time– we know kids are kids!) :)
- Use a safe body/hands when frustrated (no hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, or grabbing).
- Participate in age-appropriate group activities (e.g., tag, obstacle courses, social thinking games) with adult supervision/support.
- Communicate basic needs when asked (e.g., bathroom, feeling hot/cold, or hurt).
- Participate at their own level without demonstrating behaviors that significantly and repeatedly disrupt the experience or safety of other children in the group.

Examples of Unsafe Behaviors

- Running away from the group.
- Physical actions (hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, grabbing).
- Throwing objects at people or hitting others with sticks.
- Exposing private parts.
- Verbal threats, profanity, name calling, or targeted bullying/exclusion.
- Destroying property or equipment.

Our Approach

To ensure a positive experience for all kids, we use a relationship-based, therapeutic lens to understand and support your child, considering factors like nutrition, hydration, regulation, and connection. Our goal is to help every child feel successful while keeping the group safe.

To help illustrate our approach, here's a real-life scenario: *Kid A is building a stick fort and has been very focused and precise in their construction. Kid B runs over to the stick fort and without warning, kicks some of the sticks and part of the stick fort collapses. Kid A gets dysregulated and pushes Kid B hard enough in the chest that Kid B falls on their bum in the mud and Kid B scratches their palm when they catch themselves. Both kids are surprised and Kid B starts to cry and needs a bandaid and ice pack.*

Our response: We'll support both kids with regulation strategies, assess the situation, and problem-solve. If this happens repeatedly or escalates, we'll move through our tiers outlined below. If you are the parent of either Kid A or Kid B, you will not get a call saying your kid has been kicked out of group/camp. If your family prefers or requires a "zero tolerance policy" in group programming, PLEASE DO NOT SIGN UP for our groups/camps. We are not a good fit for you.

For every behavioral incident that occurs, we look at a variety of factors including:

- *Severity*: How harmful or disruptive was the behavior?
- *Duration*: How long did it last?
- *Intensity*: How much staff intervention was needed?
- *Frequency*: How often does it happen?
- *Impact*: How does it affect the group's physical/emotional safety?

If your child struggles, we'll assess their needs and use the following tiers:

Tier 1: Initial Support Strategies

- Offer movement breaks or sensory supportive activities.
- Modify participation/rules (e.g., being the timekeeper instead of running an obstacle course).
- Provide visual supports or scaffolded help.
- Give choices to boost empowerment and control.
- Encourage self-regulation tools (e.g., reading a book from home during breaks).
- Check for felt safety, bathroom needs, or hunger.

Tier 2: Increased Support Options

- Therapist and parent develop a support plan, which is implemented for 3-4 weeks.
- Consider switch to another group/camp (if available and appropriate).
- Shorten the day (e.g., attend camp 9-11 AM instead of a full day; no refund for missed time).
- Family provides a trained 1:1 aide to attend with the child (we can offer training/coaching).
- Take a day or week off to reset (no refund for missed time).

Tier 3: Withdrawal from Group

If, after 3 or 4 sessions of collaboration and support at Tier 2, we determine our group/camp isn't a good match due to persistent difficulty transitioning or tolerating the group (e.g., developmental readiness), ongoing safety concerns (e.g., elopement, aggression), or need for significant 1:1 support for safe participation, then we will recommend withdrawal with no cancellation fee.

- For Camps: Refunds are prorated for remaining days, excluding the non-refundable deposit.
- For Groups: Refunds are prorated for remaining weeks, minus the non-refundable deposit paid upon enrollment.

Our goal is to help every child feel successful, and we are committed to working with you to find the best way to support your child. If our group settings are not the best fit right now, we will work with you to explore alternative options, such as individual therapy or other programs, so your child can continue to grow and develop at their own pace.

Next Steps for You

- Unsure about fit? [Submit a group or camp application](#), and we'll figure it out together.
- Not ready for groups? [Apply for individual OT](#) to build skills for future groups.
- Have questions? [Book a call](#) with our admin team.