

Guidance Techniques



1. Emphasize the positive, state suggestions, directions, and comments in a positive manner.
2. Be a "Model" Children will imitate what you do more often than what you say.
3. Use "I" Messages. An "I" Message includes 1) your nonjudgmental description of the problem. 2) its effects on you, and 3) your feelings about it.
4. Instruct appropriate Behavior, Children often misbehave inappropriately because they do not know or remember what is expected of them.
5. Limit options. Sometimes children are over stimulated by the environment. They may have too much time, too much space, too many activities, or too many materials.
6. Re-direct the child. When a child displays inappropriate behavior in an activity, direct the child into an activity that is developmentally more a "match" to the child's needs at this time.
7. Ignore Behavior. Sometimes the best thing you can do is ignore inappropriate behavior. However, aggressive behavior must be dealt with directly by other methods.
8. Reinforce appropriate behavior. Positive attention to appropriate behavior, reinforces and encourages children to continue those behaviors.
9. Reinforce adjacent behavior. When positive attention is given to children behaving appropriately, other children will imitate the appropriate behavior.
10. Cue behavior. Consistently used environmental cues will signal when transitions need to occur, e.g. turn the music on, switch a light, ring a bell.
11. Give a breather. Occasionally it is necessary to remove a child from an activity. The removal or breather is a temporary event that is ended when the child has the desire and control needed to return.
12. Do not allow a child to strike you or anyone else. Aggression needs to be redirected to inanimate objects.
13. Use a tone of voice that helps the child feel confident and reassured. Be physically close to children when talking to them. Squat down to see them eye-to-eye.
14. Use the most strategic positions for supervising. Sit down in a chair when possible, be alert of the total classroom. Do not turn your back to a large number of children just to be with a few.
15. Learn to *foresee*, and prevent problem situations.
16. When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and consistently maintained by all staff.
17. Give a child a choice only when you are prepared to accept the child's answer. Rather than asking, "Do you want to put on an apron?" or "Put on an apron. OK?" thus giving the child an opportunity to refuse, say "You need to put an apron on to paint"
18. Separate the act from the person. "I like you Mark but I don't like what you did to ..."
19. Use specific Rather than General statements. Keep your words to a minimum.
20. Warn the children at least 5 minutes before a change of activity so they have time to finish what they are doing.
21. When setting limits or when you are uncertain as to the appropriate behavior control or Guidance technique to use, think of these three questions:
a) is this limit necessary for the child's safety?; b) Is it necessary for the safety or well being of others?; Is it necessary for the protection of the equipment?; Is this a limit that is still necessary or has it been outgrown?; All of these questions need to be discussed by all classroom staff together at staff meetings.

A final word— WHEN ALL ELSE

FAILS.....

It is so easy to take ourselves too seriously, to get lost in the welter of problems, to lose our sense of humor and our sense of perspective—specially on those days when everything goes wrong, our mood is a bit rocky, and we know the barometric pressure is affecting both ourselves and the children. Why not laugh a bit and find ways, with the input of the children, to salvage the day?