

# BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE STRATEGIES



## Proactive

### 1 Provide Clear and Simple Expectations

Use simple and specific language so that children understand exactly what you expect. For example, instead of saying, “Don’t throw the blocks,” say, “We build with blocks.”

### 2 Be Proactive and Plan Ahead

Anticipate times when disruptive behavior is more likely to occur and plan accordingly. Have activities and experiences ready and available. Children who can move from one activity to another are more likely to remain engaged. Try a song, book, or game to play for times when there is a delay or children have to wait.

## Supporting Positive Behavior

### 3 Patiently Redirect

Provide a gentle reminder, a soft touch, or a predetermined signal that stops or prevents challenging behaviors from escalating. For example, when a child starts to climb on the table, pat the seat of his chair to remind him to sit.

### 4 Provide a Strategy

Help children know what they are feeling and what to do when they become frustrated, angry, or upset. Acknowledge and validate how they feel and provide a strategy. “It is hard to wait. I think it is hard to wait sometimes too.” or “You are really frustrated. Would you like to stomp your feet? How about a hug?” You can also say what is not okay. “You look like you are really mad. It is okay to be mad. It is not okay to hit. I will not let you hit. Let’s go over here together and you can be mad.”

### 5 Understand Children’s Development

By better understanding how a child’s behavior may be related to her stage of development, you can respond in positive ways. For example, it might not be appropriate to expect a young child to understand how to share a toy.