

# Behavior Expectations and Positive Guidance

## Infants: a child younger than 12 months old

Behavior Expectations	Positive Guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cry to communicate that they are hungry, tired, in distress, or have other needs.</li> <li>● They become bored if they do not receive adequate attention or stimulation.</li> <li>● Being held makes them feel secure.</li> <li>● Wariness of strangers, and separation anxiety in the later months.</li> <li>● Object permanence is developed around 8 months.</li> <li>● Put everything in their mouths because they explore through taste.</li> <li>● Feel and touch everything because they learn and explore by using their five senses.</li> <li>● Need physical exercise such as “tummy time.”</li> <li>● Repeating the same actions, saying the same things over and over, curious and eager for interactions.</li> <li>● Engage in solitary play, they are not interested in or able to play with others yet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meet the infant’s physical needs</li> <li>● Allow infants to follow their own sleep and feeding schedule.</li> <li>● Give the infant attention by making eye contact and smiling.</li> <li>● Acknowledge their feelings.</li> <li>● Infants in stress can be comforted by physical touch. Pick up the child, carry them around the room. Try bouncing or rocking gently.</li> <li>● Infants can be comforted or distracted by sight. Show the child a colorful object, help them look out a window, show them a mirror.</li> <li>● Infants can be comforted by sounds. Try humming, singing or speaking softly. Turn on a fan, white noise or favorite music.</li> <li>● Redirect by moving them to another play area, or changing the toys in their area.</li> <li>● Model how to play with toys.</li> <li>● Talk to infants as you interact with them.</li> <li>● Ensure they have plenty of space to move and explore safely.</li> <li>● Serve and return: The child “serves” by reaching out for interaction—with eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, babbling, or touch. A responsive caregiver “returns the serve” by speaking back, or playing peekaboo.</li> </ul>

# Behavior Expectations and Positive Guidance

## Toddlers: age 12 months to 24 months

Behavior Expectations	Positive Guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Put everything in their mouths because they explore through taste.</li> <li>● Feel and touch everything because they learn and explore by using their five senses.</li> <li>● May cry, hit, bite, or throw toys to express their emotions or communicate in general. They do not have the verbal skills to communicate through words yet.</li> <li>● May show signs of anxiety during transitions such as parent drop off. This anxiety may look like withdrawing, crying, clinging, and/or wanting to be held.</li> <li>● Might be a picky or erratic eater.</li> <li>● Is constantly on the move - running, kicking, climbing or jumping.</li> <li>● Engage in solitary play, they are not interested in or able to play with others yet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model sharing and proper use of toys and play equipment.</li> <li>● Praise the process not the result.</li> <li>● Distract the child and redirect by guiding them to another play area or activity.</li> <li>● Maintain a schedule and routine to provide stability and security.</li> <li>● Give notice before a transition so the child can prepare and cope with the change.</li> <li>● Talk to them in a reassuring voice and empathize with their feelings.</li> <li>● Utilize proximity and active supervision to deescalate a frustrated child.</li> <li>● Praise and positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviors.</li> <li>● Evaluate the environment for evidence of overstimulation or crowding.</li> <li>● Ensure they have plenty of space to move and explore safely.</li> <li>● Rotate toy selections to maintain interest and appropriate amounts of challenging activities for the children.</li> <li>● Include lots of opportunities for movement throughout the day.</li> </ul>

# Behavior Expectations and Positive Guidance

## Two year olds

Behavior Expectations	Positive Guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Are learning to and experimenting with asserting their independence.</li> <li>● If verbal, they may frequently use the words “no”, and “mine”.</li> <li>● They want to play with others but do not know how and are unable to share well.</li> <li>● Enjoy parallel play, which is where they play near other children, but not with them yet.</li> <li>● Extreme mood swings.</li> <li>● Shows defiant behavior (doing what they have been told not to).</li> <li>● Copies and mimics others.</li> <li>● Beginning to experience feelings like pride, shame, guilt and embarrassment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model sharing and proper use of toys and play equipment.</li> <li>● Praise the process not the result.</li> <li>● Distract the child and redirect by guiding them to another play area or activity.</li> <li>● Maintain a schedule and routine to provide stability and security.</li> <li>● Give notice before a transition so the child can prepare and cope with the change.</li> <li>● Talk to them in a reassuring voice and empathize with their feelings.</li> <li>● Utilize proximity and active supervision to deescalate a frustrated child.</li> <li>● Praise and positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviors.</li> <li>● Evaluate the environment for evidence of overstimulation or crowding.</li> <li>● Rotate toy selections to maintain interest and appropriate amounts of challenging activities for the children.</li> <li>● Guide efforts in sharing with supervision, modeling, timers and planned sharing activities.</li> <li>● Model and give examples of ways to manage strong feelings.</li> <li>● Offer limited choices when possible (2-3 options work best).</li> </ul>

# Behavior Expectations and Positive Guidance

## Preschoolers: 3-4 year olds

Behavior Expectations	Positive Guidance
<p><b>Three year old.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Temper tantrums peak at this age.</li> <li>● Difficulty when separated from caregivers. Children may cry at drop offs, even if they previously came cheerfully.</li> <li>● Can follow simple rules but need reminding.</li> <li>● Can share but may not like it.</li> <li>● Begins to show empathy.</li> <li>● May tell on others to prove they know the rules.</li> <li>● Develops friendships.</li> <li>● Engages in associate play where they interact with others in play.</li> </ul> <p><b>Four year old</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Desire independence and wish to do things themselves.</li> <li>● Can follow simple rules.</li> <li>● Want to make decisions.</li> <li>● Experience a broader range of emotions, such as jealousy, excitement, anger and fear.</li> <li>● Focused on winning when playing games.</li> <li>● More readily shares.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Label behaviors, not children.</li> <li>● Set clear expectations.</li> <li>● Make rules simple and descriptive of what you want to see and hear. For example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Walking feet</li> <li>○ Gentle hands</li> <li>○ Listening ears</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Physically redirect by removing a problematic object, or moving a child to a different play area.</li> <li>● Verbally redirect by asking a child to do something differently. For example: “markers are for coloring paper and not friends! Can you show me how to color the paper?”</li> <li>● Model desired behaviors, actions and phrases.</li> <li>● Praise and positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviors.</li> <li>● Praise effort, not outcome.</li> <li>● Be consistent.</li> <li>● Remind children of rules when they forget.</li> <li>● Offer limited choices (2-3) when possible to give the child a sense of responsibility and autonomy.</li> <li>● Provide opportunities for gross motor and generally physical play.</li> </ul>

# Behavior Expectations and Positive Guidance

## School Age Children 5-12 year olds

Behavior Expectations	Positive Guidance
<p><b>Five to nine year old</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developing skills like pouring from a pitcher and setting the table.</li> <li>● Cares a great deal about what is fair.</li> <li>● Experiences emotional extremes and contradictions.</li> <li>● Often eager to please others. They want to make friends and receive positive responses from adults.</li> <li>● Engages in cooperative play, child plays with others and has interest in the other children and shared activity.</li> <li>● They may experiment with lying.</li> <li>● Develop long attention spans and are able to handle more complicated projects and tasks.</li> <li>● Begin to differentiate between real and imaginary around age six and may be more interested in doing “real” things.</li> <li>● Major gross motor development continues through age eight.</li> <li>● Demonstrate intense curiosity.</li> <li>● Handle quick transitions and change more easily.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Set clear expectations through verbal explanations and posted class rules.</li> <li>● Physically redirect by asking children to take breaks or directing them to a different area or activity when frustrated.</li> <li>● Verbally redirect by restating expectations and guiding children through navigating a conflict.</li> <li>● Model desired behaviors, actions and phrases.</li> <li>● Praise and positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviors.</li> <li>● Praise effort, not outcome. For example: “Great job taking a break when you were frustrated”.</li> <li>● Be consistent.</li> <li>● Continue to provide opportunities for gross motor and physical play.</li> <li>● Consequences should be logical to the child’s actions.</li> <li>● Provide opportunities for children to play creatively (free form block sets, dolls, costumes, and open ended art).</li> <li>● Promote independence and responsibility by offering a wider variety of choices and providing opportunities for children to do classroom tasks or jobs wherever possible.</li> </ul>

## Behavior Expectations and Positive Guidance

- Become self conscious and even self critical.

### Ten to twelve year old

- Privacy is an important part of healthy development and a child's need for it may show up as children creating secret codes and passwords.
  - Embrace clubs, teams, and cliques as they begin to understand the idea of a group identity.
  - As children enter puberty they become more concerned with physical appearance.
  - Test boundaries and push back on rules due to peer influences.
  - Need for acceptance and approval from peers and their developing frontal cortex can lead to risk taking behavior and impulsiveness.
  - May be filled with anxiety.
  - Solidifies independence from parents and caregivers, but wants approval from adults.
  - Concerned with fairness and justice.
- Model healthy body image. Caregivers should avoid comments that criticize your own body or others, and set an example of healthy eating habits.
  - Offer freedom and autonomy when possible. For example, if a child doesn't want to participate in the group activity give them the option of reading a book instead. It's often not about the activity, but a child needing to assert their control over themselves and their surroundings. It's better to deescalate by giving the child choice when possible.
  - Respond to children in a predictable way.
  - Show warmth and sensitivity.
  - Maintain a regular routine or schedule.