



Toddler: Behavior Guidance

Title: Clear Expectations for Outdoor Play

In this example, the lead teacher sets clear expectations as the children transition from inside to outdoor play.

Proactive

- The teacher sets clear expectations for walking down the stairs by saying, “And we hold the railing, remember?”
- The children walk slowly down the stairs while using the railing, indicating that they are aware of the teacher’s expectations for the transition.
- She continues to be proactive and state the expectations, “Any time we come outside we count our friends. So count with me.”
- The teacher continues to set clear expectations as the children approach the sand table, “Now remember, where do our sand toys belong? In the sand box. So if you take them over there, then you won’t have any sand toys to play with any more. Right? So let’s leave them there so we know where to find them.”
- One child demonstrates her awareness of the expectations by removing a ball that does not belong in the sand table.
- The teacher notices there is a wet spot on the ground and states clear directions for the children, “Hey guys, take five seconds and look at the ground for me. You see there is light spots and there is dark spots. The dark spots are wet so if you cannot sit your bottom down that would be awesome ‘cause I don’t want you to get your bottom wet.”

Supporting Positive Behavior

- The teacher says, “Good job,” to a few students to support positive behavior.
- The children immediately sit down on the bench after they walk down the stairs, and the teacher supports their positive behavior by saying, “I love the way you sat down.”
- The teacher uses positive phrasing indicating what the children should be doing (for example, “Can you walk your feet?”) as they walk to the play area.

Problem Behavior

- There is little, if any, wandering or waiting as the children transition outside and begin to play at the sand table.
- No disruptive or potentially dangerous behavior occurs.

By using a positive approach and setting clear behavioral expectations, the teacher is promoting behavioral self-regulation and minimizing the potential for problem behavior.