Positive Guidance for Young Children: **Be Thoughtful**

Young children are learning to manage their behaviors and feelings. Your responses matter to children in these moments. Sometimes adults need to stop behaviors that are unsafe or extremely disruptive and help children understand how to behave appropriately. Here are some ways adults can help children:

Redirect behavior

Substitute a "can't do" behavior for a "can do" behavior. If your child tends

to draw on the walls, stock up on drawing paper and let her know where she can find it so she can draw when she's interested. Encourage children to help think of "can do" behaviors to replace problematic ones.

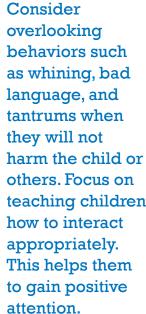
Wait until the child is calm

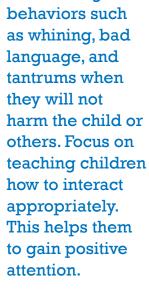
Young children who are upset or excited may have a hard time listening

to adults. Use calming strategies such as taking deep breaths. Talk about the problem after the child is calm.

Limit your response when possible

Children may act out because they want attention or to avoid a task or situation.





Organize to help children succeed

Sometimes children need help understanding our expectations. For

example, if clothes and toys are often left lying about, start using baskets and low hooks for easier cleanup.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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