

Positive Guidance for Young Children: Plan Ahead

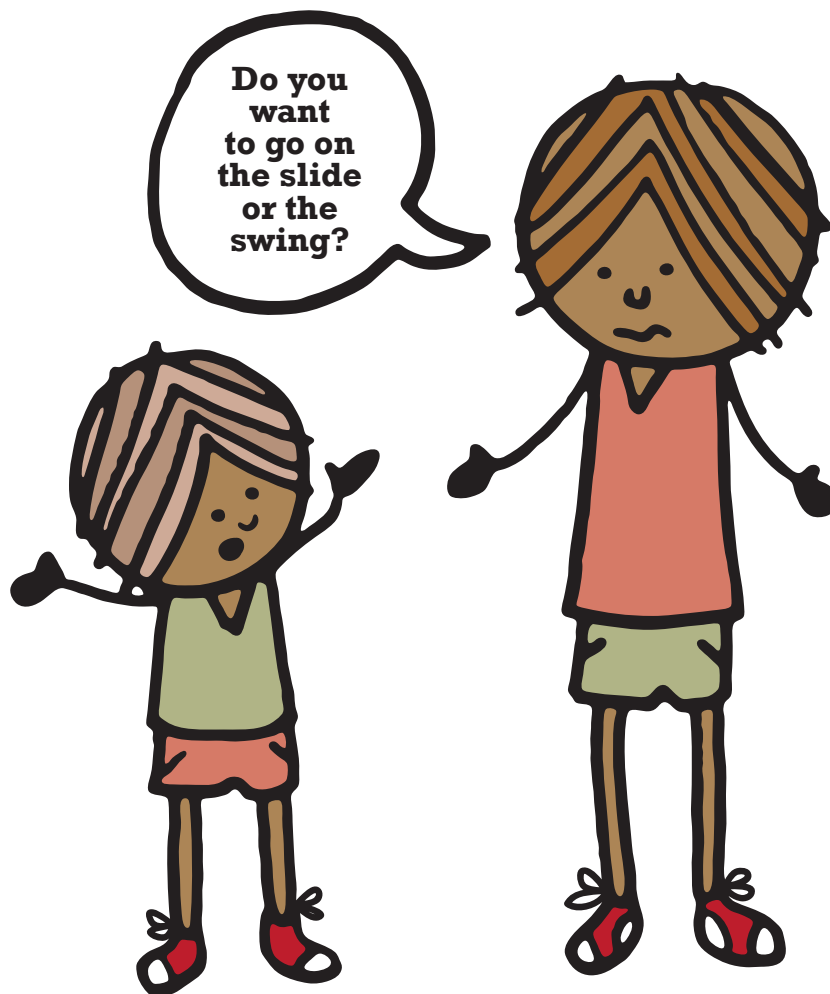
Young children are curious and actively explore the world. This curiosity and exploration may look like inappropriate behavior when they do not follow directions from adults or touch items they should not. Plan and prevent problem behaviors using these strategies:

Describe what you want to see

Clearly state your expectations for their behavior and show children what you mean. Say “let’s walk” instead of “don’t run.”

Use the “first/then” rule

Tie what you expect to what children want. For example, “First pick up the toys, then I will read you a story.”



Provide acceptable choices

Offer options that are appropriate to the child, such as “Do you want to wear the red shirt or yellow shirt?”

Use clear language

Avoid giving children unintentional choices. For example, questions such as “Are you ready to go?” can give

children the opportunity to say “no.”

Set up spaces to encourage appropriate behavior

Keep items that are breakable and unsafe out of the reach of children. Put items where they should be used. For example, keep crayons on a table for drawing. Keep a basket of books near a sofa where children can sit and read.

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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