

Ways to Prevent Challenging Behaviour



Prevention is an important part of managing challenging behaviour in young children. Some ways to do this include:

1. **Positive Directions** – teach a child what to do by:
 - First telling – state what you need your child to do (i.e. “Please pick up your blocks”)
 - Then showing – If needed, demonstrate (i.e. Pick up a block to show them.)
 - Then helping – Help your child do the task (i.e. Take turns picking up blocks.)
2. **Limited/Reasonable Choices** – provide a choice between 2 or more objects/activities in daily routines. This can help give your child a sense of independence while still following routines and expectations.
 - E.g. “Yellow socks or red socks?” instead of “what do you want to wear today?”
3. **First/Then Statements** – clarify expectations and tell your child the order that activities must be done.
 - E.g. “First we will see the doctor, then we will go to the park.”
4. **Nurturing Feedback** – describes exactly what your child doing well and what you want to see more of.
 - E.g. “You are being so helpful when you pick up your toys.”
5. **Redirection** – supports learning and guides your child to a new or more appropriate activity or way of responding
 - i.e. child throws toys so parent helps them throw the toys into a laundry basket instead.
6. **Plan Ahead** – try to anticipate what your child may do or many need in various situations. Hope for the best, and always have a back-up plan.
 - E.g. If you are going to a restaurant, bring books, stickers, or a quiet toy to can play with.

