

# Q&A HOW TO REGULATE CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURS AT HOME AND IN PRESCHOOL.

FOR PARENTS



## Q Can I teach my six-month-old baby boundaries and appropriate behaviours?

At six months, babies can benefit from age-appropriate limits set within a warm and responsive relationship. They are not yet able to understand consequences and follow rules, but parents can teach them to behave appropriately.

- 1. Catch them doing right.** Provide positive attention and praise when your baby displays desirable behaviour. For example, make eye contact with a smile, and say "good waiting" or "nice playing on your own". This encourages him to repeat that behaviour.
- 2. Say "no" calmly.** When your baby displays undesirable behaviour, keep calm and say "no" in a neutral voice, while naming the behaviour (e.g., "no pulling hair" or "no throwing toys"). In a gentle manner, physically guide him to stop the action. Withdraw attention from the behaviour by turning away for a few seconds, only if it is safe to do so.
- 3. Physically guide your baby** to engage in a specific desirable behaviour while naming it (e.g., "pat Mama gently"). When the appropriate behaviour is displayed, reward your baby with positive attention and praise. By doing this repeatedly, he can eventually learn to display the behaviour without physical help.

## Q What are some ways to reduce disruptions and distractions while teaching?

Behaviours such as talking out of turn, being out of seat or non-attentiveness take time away from learning, as that time is used instead to get children to refocus.

Disruptive behaviour may be due to unclear expectations or a lack of social skills. To address these, first build a warm and responsive relationship with the child. A child who feels secure and has a sense of belonging is more likely to trust the educator and follow his or her guidance. Refrain from assuming children know how to behave appropriately.

Use these classroom management techniques.

- > **Make classroom rules explicit.** Use verbal or visual prompts, gestures, role-modelling and physical assistance. Get children involved in setting the rules. This helps them develop a sense of shared responsibility or ownership, which leads to greater cooperation and self-control.
- > **Catch children when they are good.** Verbally validate or acknowledge their efforts. For example, praise a child for raising his hand before speaking. Share the child's progress with his parents for further positive reinforcement.
- > **Reflect on the physical environment and resources.** Assess the space set-up and the children's interactions within this space regularly. Is there a distracting light source or unusual object? Are the children seated facing an open doorway or window? Is there overcrowding or are the resources adequate? Discuss with fellow teachers to find solutions.

FOR EDUCATORS



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