

St Claire's Training Points of View

LOOKING AT CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF RIGHT AND WRONG,
OF OUR PERCEPTION OF THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND WHETHER WE
SHOULD BE GUIDING, ADVISING OR PUNISHING.

Aims

In this session we will:

1. Look at general behavioral issues- not SEN or attachment related
2. Develop skills in looking at our own expectations of behaviour
3. Analyse the skills needed to 'behave'
4. Look at things from a child's developmental & experiential point of view
5. Look at how being 'told off' may not be the best learning tool for improved behaviour
6. Look at how we can respond beneficially to help children learn the required social skills

Managing Behaviour

Before we begin, please write down (in brief) three situations where a child hasn't met your behavioral expectations:

1)

2)

3)

Behaviour- what do we expect?

Picture your ideal after school club session- what does the children's behaviour look like?

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Let's look at that a bit more carefully:

What skills does a child need to be able to meet those behavioural expectations?

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Thinking of Maslow, what else does a child need to be able to meet those behavioural standards?

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Skills required to meet behavioral expectations:

Delayed gratification Ability to follow complex instructions Adaptability. Empathy Ability to apply same rules to different situations Ability to perceive emotions in others. Impulse control Awareness of impact of self on others Desire to please Ability to self regulate Ability to take criticism. Ability to sit still. Ability to still still for extended periods of time. Ability to concentrate. Ability to filter sensory environment. Listening skills. Ability to process language. Ability to express themselves. Ability to learn from mistakes. Executive functioning- ability to predict & plan. Ability to recognise social norms & expectations. Ability to read non verbal communication. Understand humour.

What skills do our children have?

Age 4

Age 5

Age 6

Age 7

Age 8

Age 9

Age 10

Age 11

Age 12

At what age can children stop and think before doing?

When can we reasonably expect this?

Fill in what you think are the ages for these developmental stages:

Sensorimotor Stage: Ages During this stage, children learn about the world through their senses and the manipulation of objects.

Preoperational Stage: Ages During this stage, children develop memory and imagination. They are also able to understand things symbolically, and to understand the ideas of past and future.

Concrete Operational Stage: Ages During this stage, children become more aware of external events, as well as feelings other than their own. They become less egocentric, and begin to understand that not everyone shares their thoughts, beliefs, or feelings.

Formal Operational Stage: Ages During this stage, children are able to use logic to solve problems, view the world around them, and plan for the future.

Parents, teachers, child carers, we all see things differently...

Every club I go to is different. Some expect children to line up to come in, others come in and sit down and others come in and play. None is more right than another, but they are all different. That's what I see, that's my point of view.

But how do children know what is expected of them?

Let's look at our own setting from the viewpoint of Sandy. Sandy has been to nursery before and has just started at school. She likes school and has a friend in her class from nursery but she doesn't come to after school club with her, although there is a boy in her class who does come. She lives with Mummy during the week but spends weekends with Daddy. Try to list all the different expectations Sandy has to abide by.

How are your personal expectations different from your co-workers?

We all have different expectations. I don't mind my children playing with mud, others think it's disgusting. I don't choose my children's clothes, others want their children presented well! Write your co-workers names down, and the differences you have in child related opinions:

Now how many layers of expectation do you think Sandy may have to understand?

One coin, two sides

Recently, a friend said to me 'The kids are always pushing boundaries, they push and push until you either give in or shout' I thought about this for a long time as I know her children very well and don't see them as challenging, what I do see is her and her partner's expectations are very different and what Dad says yes to, Mum doesn't, so they keep trying.

Let's think about Tom. He's been told to walk indoors twice already today and now you've had to tell him to use his indoor voice. What could be going on in his world to spark this behaviour?

How could you help him adjust?

So how do we respond?

What do we do when our expectations aren't met? Circle those you think are appropriate for a 4 year old and draw a single line through those you feel aren't:

Explain your expectations briefly. Help them understand by being sarcastic about their mistake.

Show a child why they can't do that. Using a raised voice. Modeling the behaviour you want.

Getting the child/ren to 'rewind' and 'do-over'. Pointing their mistake out in front of others.

Talking to the child in detail. Looking at it with empathy Giving time out. Use active listening.

Break the ice by making a joke about their mistake. Describe their behaviour negatively eg 'babyish'

Trying to understand why they did it. Asking them why they did it. Depersonalize the mistake

Attributing the mistake with positive intentions. Show the child what you expect. Pair them with someone who knows the expectations.

What would help *you* learn?

When you make a mistake- be it with friends, family or at work- how would you want people to tell you?

Do you handle criticism well? What makes it easier to digest?

If it's a mistake you make regularly- perhaps you're late for work, have forgotten to sign in or put your phone in a lockable place- how would you want the people around you to respond?

Can you apply those when you need to speak to a child in your setting?

Conclusions

1. Most of the behaviour we don't want to see in club is simply not the right behaviour for the time and place- in and of itself, it's not 'wrong'. Running isn't wrong, helping yourself isn't wrong, expressing your emotions isn't wrong, shouting isn't either. It's just most children haven't yet mastered the how's, where's and when's of our setting.
2. Most of the time, children need gentle guidance. This is a lot easier to learn from than punishment.
3. We expect a lot from children- they benefit when we recognise this.

Bearing all of this in mind, go back to your setting and look at your own personal responses to children- do you give them the benefit of the doubt? Do you try to see the best in each child? If you can let them know you see this, then maybe they'll see the best in themselves too.