



## Early Childhood Behavior Management: Rule Reminders

Est. Time: 15–20 Minutes

### Objective

Understand several strategies that early childhood educators or providers can use to remind young children about rules, and identify situations in which they would use these strategies.

### DEC Recommended Practices

This Activity addresses the DEC Recommended Practices (DEC RP) topic areas outlined below:

#### Environment

**E1.** Practitioners provide services and supports in natural and inclusive environments during daily routines and activities to promote the child’s access to and participation in learning experiences.

#### Instruction

**INS4.** Practitioners plan for and provide the level of support, accommodations, and adaptations needed for the child to access, participate, and learn within and across activities and routines.

**INS5.** Practitioners embed instruction within and across routines, activities, and environments to provide contextually relevant learning opportunities.

### Overview

If children are to be successful in the learning environment, they must be able to apply classroom rules in the context of classroom activities and routines. Early childhood educators can use three key strategies to encourage and remind children to follow the rules.

1. **Connect children’s behavior to the rules:** Help a child understand the relationship between his or her behavior and the rule by clearly linking the two.

Example: “Daphne, I like the way you are following the rule. You used a gentle touch to get Finn’s attention.”

2. **Provide precorrections:** Remind a child of appropriate behavior before the child can make an error.

Example: “We are going outside. Remember, feet-first down the slide.”

3. **Reference the rules when challenging behavior occurs:** When a child is having trouble following a rule, simply remind him or her of the rule.

Example: If Caleb is in the art center with friends and refuses to share supplies, the teacher can say, “Caleb, remember to share materials with friends.”



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### Activity

Read each vignette below and then 1) decide which strategy to use to remind children about the rules and justify your selection, and 2) write down what you might say. Refer to the classroom rules below when formulating your response.



**Vignette 1:** You are on the playground with your preschool class. You bring out the equipment, including a ball with a cartoon character on it. Adelaide, one of your children, has a strong preference for the cartoon character and doesn't like it when other children use the ball. You notice Tomás pick up the ball and begin to play with it.

**Vignette 2:** Anjette and Olivia are sitting beside one another, putting together puzzles. Anjette has Down syndrome and has difficulty with fine motor skills. Olivia notices that Anjette is struggling with her puzzle and reaches over to do it for her. Anjette shoves Olivia's hand away and starts yelling at her.



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**Vignette 3:** Elliott and Maribel are working together on a block tower. Their tower is very tall and extends out of the block area into a common area. They are excited to show it to you. Elliott, using a loud, excited voice, screams across the room, “Teacher, we made the tower really, really high! Come see!”

**Vignette 4:** When it is nearing snack time, you tell the children to clean up their centers and wash their hands. Joshua, who has a language delay and often has a hard time following multi-step directions, immediately puts away his art materials and washes his hands.

### References

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- Stormont, M., Lewis, T. J., & Beckner, R. (2005). Positive behavior support systems: Applying key features in preschool settings. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 37*(6), 42–49.

### Additional Resources

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu>

*This Website of the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) is dedicated to “promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5.” Visitors here will find a host of resources, including training modules, training kits, and family tools, among much, much more.*



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Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)  
<http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu>

*The online home of the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) contains a multitude of resources designed “to assist states in their efforts to improve systems and services related to children with disabilities.” On hand here is information about the Pyramid Model, links to teaching tools, and a PBIS Web tutorial.*

Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI). (2012). *Positive behavior interventions and supports from preschool to high school: A conversation about implementation*. Webinar recording and materials. Retrieved on December 5, 2014, from [http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/explore/webinars/8.24.2012\\_webinar.htm?utm\\_source=TACSEI+%2526+CSEFEL+Updates&utm\\_campaign=405b765efd-TACSEI+and+CSEFEL+U](http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/explore/webinars/8.24.2012_webinar.htm?utm_source=TACSEI+%2526+CSEFEL+Updates&utm_campaign=405b765efd-TACSEI+and+CSEFEL+U)

*This Webinar hosted by the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) features experts discussing the implementation of PBIS in early childhood programs and K–12 classrooms. Taking part are Drs. Glen Dunlap, Lise Fox, and George Sugai.*