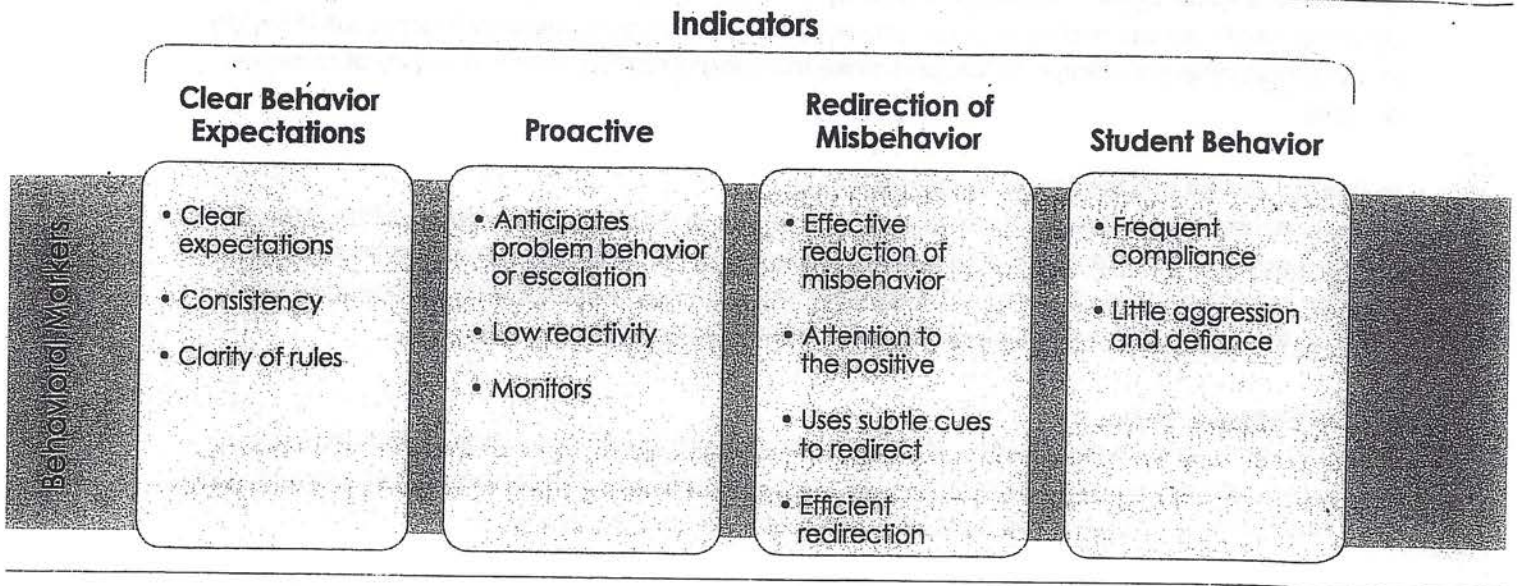


# Behavior Management



## What is it?

Children are most likely to behave appropriately in the classroom when rules and expectations are clearly and consistently communicated. Behavior management works best when focused on proactive intervention and redirection of minor misbehaviors. Effective behavior management provides children with specific expectations for their behavior and then repeated praise when they meet these expectations.

## Why is it important?

In the presence of effective behavior management, children typically understand how to act in the classroom so that little time is spent on managing their behaviors. This minimizes distractions and disruptions, allows the majority of classroom time to be spent on instructional activities, and increases the amount of time that children are immersed in learning throughout the day. Furthermore, dealing with misbehavior can be draining for teachers and children. By reducing the frequency and intensity of behavioral problems, everyone in the classroom enjoys being there more.

# How can I provide effective behavior management in my classroom?

## **Be proactive.**

Intervene before situations escalate and help children problem-solve. Anticipate moments when misbehavior is likely to occur, such as during transitions, and provide children with preferred alternative behaviors: "Put all the blocks away and then join us in the circle."

## **Monitor and redirect children's behavior.**

Look for cues, such as body language and facial expression, that indicate children may be moving toward more disruptive or inattentive behavior. Redirect before minor misbehavior escalates. Effective and quick redirection for individual children includes eye contact, gentle touch, a known gesture, moving closer to the child, or using the child's name: "Ella, what do you see happening in this picture?" Develop classroom routines that quickly reorient the whole class when they are too loud or not paying attention, such as clapping your hands twice, lowering your voice, or singing a song.

## **Clearly state expectations for behavior.**

Make classroom rules easy for children to understand and repeat them regularly. Be specific about expectations so that children know exactly what behavior you expect. If a child is poking a peer during circle time, prompt him to stop by saying "Robert, please put your hands in your lap and focus your eyes up here," rather than, "Stop that, Robert."

## **Be consistent with consequences.**

Immediately following any misbehavior, provide children with a predictable response to the behavior. If it is a classroom rule for children to raise their hands in order to respond, be consistent in only calling on children with a hand raised. Make sure that children know when this rule is or is not in effect.

## **Provide specific feedback when children behave well.**

Rather than telling children, "You are doing a nice job," or "You're behaving really well today," give children specific information about what they are doing well. Saying, "I really like the way Cindy and DeQuan are working together to clean up the blocks area," encourages this behavior and shows the other children which types of behavior you expect.

## **Encourage children to settle disputes.**

Teach children a set of problem-solving steps to handle disputes so that they learn over time how to address problems with minimal help from you.