How to Use These Strategies:

1. Evaluate Why the Behavior Occurs

What is the purpose of the behavior? What are the feelings & needs behind the behavior?

Example feelings: Frustrated, disappointed, confused, anxious, lonely, sad, overly excited, unsafe, over/under stimulated

Example needs: Control, love, acceptance, friendship, calmness, security, to obtain something, to avoid something, change the level of stimuli

2. Identify Triggers

Consider the conditions & environment when the behavior occurs most frequently.

Examples of triggers: Same time of day, same playmates, lack of sleep, before a mealtime, getting ready for school

3. Choose a Strategy

Choose a strategy or strategies based on why you think the behavior is occurring & give it a try!

Example: If a child is frustrated because he/she does not want to wait their turn, **redirect** the child to an activity that interests them. Then **set clear expectations** by telling the child "We wait calmly while waiting for our turn." **Allow choices** by asking if the child would like to read a book or color while they wait for their turn. **Give logical consequences** by stating "When your body is calm, then you may have a turn." **Model appropriate behaviors** by remaining patient and calm.

Sources and Online Resources for Each Strategy:

Active Ignoring©:
- Pocket Parent Child Interaction Therapy: https://www.pocketpcit.com/how-can-you-influence-your-childs-behavior.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/consequences/ignoring.html

Choices:
- Positive Discipline: https://www.positivediscipline.com/articles/limited-choices
- Autism Classroom News & Resources: https://autismclassroomresources.com/podcasts/give-choices-improve-behavior/

FLIP-IT!®:
- Devereux Center for Resilient Children: https://centerforresilientchildren.org/dcrc-chop/flip-it/

Logical Consequences:
- Positive Discipline: https://www.positivediscipline.com/articles/natural-consequences
- Positive Discipline: https://www.positivediscipline.com/articles/logical-consequences

Model Appropriate Behaviors:
- MSU Extension: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/monkey_see_monkey_do_model_behavior_in_early_childhood
- Healthy Children.org: https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/How-to-Shape-Manage-Young-Child-Behavior.aspx

Redirection:
- Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/redirecting-behavior
- Babyhearing.org: https://www.babyhearing.org/parenting/redirecting-behavior

Set Clear Expectations:
- Teachstone: https://www.info.teachstone.com/blog/teacher-tips-clear-expectations
- Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: https://www.ecmhc.org/documents/CEMHC_Tips_Infants_Parents_2.pdf
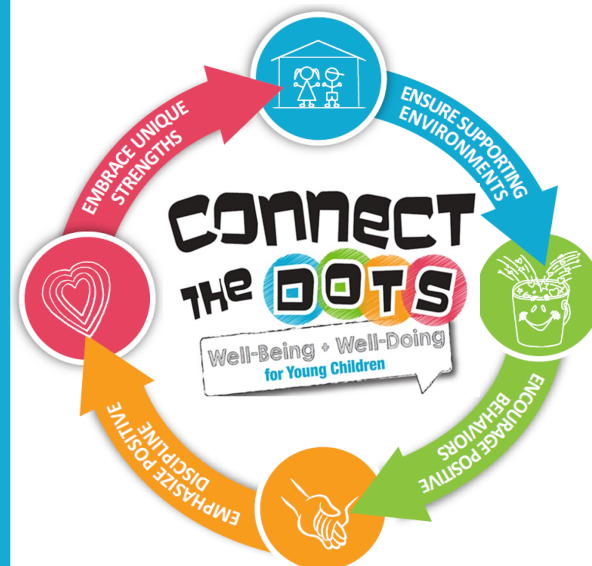
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Positive Discipline Strategies

Address challenging behaviors of young children (ages 2-5) in a positive way that helps build strong social & emotional skills!

CONNECT the DOTS
Well-Being • Well-Doing
for Young Children

EMBRACE UNIQUE STRENGTHS
ENSURE SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTS
ENCOURAGE POSITIVE BEHAVIORS
EMPHASIZE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Positive Discipline is part of Connect the Dots. To learn more about Connect the Dots visit www.kentuckycchc.org

Strategies for Emphasizing Positive Discipline

Set Clear Expectations

- Be direct & specific
- State expectations in a positive way
- Give one command at a time
- Give age appropriate expectations
- Be polite & use a neutral tone

Example: "Please walk."

Model Appropriate Behaviors

- Consistently model appropriate behaviors & reactions for the child to observe
- Be a patient, calm & respectful
- Be ready with a plan BEFORE behavior strikes

Example Questions to Ask Yourself: Am I being respectful? Am I calm? Am I behaving how I want the child to behave?

Redirect

If you see undesirable behavior coming, head it off _before_ it begins & praise appropriate behavior as soon as possible.

Example: If a child is about to throw a block redirect by saying, "How high can you build a tower?" When the child begins playing appropriately then offer praise by saying, "Great job playing nicely with the blocks!"

Use the FLIP-IT® Technique

- **Feelings**: Acknowledging how the child is feeling validates their feelings
- **Limits**: Remind the child of the positive limits & expectations
- **Inquiries**: Ask questions that promote problem-solving & healthy coping skills
- **Prompts**: Provide cues, clues & suggestions

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Example: "I can see you are feeling mad, but we cannot hit when we are mad. What are some other ways we can get our mad out? (WAIT) What if we stomp our feet?"

Allow Choices

- Gives the child a sense of control
- Keep it simple & offer two choices
- Only offer choices that are acceptable
- Provide choices with clear expectations
- Allow the child reasonable time to select a choice & comply
- Give choices when transitioning from one activity to another

Example: "It is time to sit down for lunch. Would you like to sit in the blue chair or the red chair?"

Give Logical Consequences

- Use when/then statements especially when emotions are high
- Make sure you can follow through
- Consequences should be related to the behavior
- Use a respectful, reasonable & helpful tone

Example: "When you throw the toy then you are all done playing with it until after naptime."

Actively Ignore© Inappropriate Behaviors

- Often, if you actively ignore inappropriate behaviors they will disappear faster than if you correct them
- Give full attention & offer praise to the child ONLY when appropriate behavior begins
- Only ignore minor & irritating behaviors (not harmful or dangerous behaviors)
- Remember: You are ignoring the behavior NOT the child

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Example: If a child is playing appropriately with toys but whines while doing so say, "I like how creative you are" & do not acknowledge the whining.