



SEEDS for Success

Quick Tips

Responding to Challenging Behaviors



Challenging behavior is any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults and does not respond to developmentally appropriate guidance strategies.

Remain Calm

- Be mindful of your reactions to challenging behavior. Take a moment to reframe your thoughts. *Example: What supports are needed?*
- Use a neutral voice. Avoid using harsh or inflammatory words and threatening language.



Teamwork



- Invite family perspectives. Ask family members if they've noticed the behavior at home and what has worked for them.
- Gather insight from others (ex: teachers, administrators, therapists, etc.) who interact with the child regularly.

Observe

- Look at each situation objectively. Who's involved? What happens (the behavior)? When? Where? How do you respond?
- Observe over time. Take note of similarities.
- Ask others to observe. A new view can be helpful.



Language



- Use descriptive, positive language. *For example, say "use walking feet inside" rather than "don't run."*
- Keep number of words to a minimum.
- **Specify** what you want the child **to do**.

Choices

- Use choice to empower the child. *For example, "would you like to paint or build with blocks?"*
- Offer choices throughout the day in a variety of contexts.
- Use directives or commands for unsafe behavior.



Teach

- Introduce routines and activities to children. Review and practice several times. Give verbal/visual reminders and descriptive feedback along the way.
- Visuals help make language concrete. Use visuals to enhance your teaching and as reminders.
- Identify skills children may be missing that may be causing challenging behavior. Choose strategies to teach those skills. Capitalize on and create opportunities for practice, practice, practice!



Consistency

- Be sure to follow through on reminders and directions.
- Discuss strategies with teammates to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- Commit to implementing new strategies consistently for at least 10 school days. Keep data to determine how it's working.



Data

- Write detailed notes of your observations. Include the Who, What, When, Where, and How of each situation. Compare your notes over time to identify similarities and trends.
- Continue to keep notes and tallies to monitor progress. Look for changes in behavior over time to determine if your strategies are working. Consult your team when considering changes.



Georgia's SEEDS for Success is a collaborative lead by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) to support and align the state's initiatives related to increased social emotional development and decreased challenging behaviors in early childhood settings.

For more resources to support the social emotional competence of young children visit the SEEDS webpage at:

<http://dec.al.ga.gov/InstructionalSupports/SEEDS.aspx>