

# VIRGINIA INFANT & TODDLER SPECIALIST NETWORK



## Five Tips for Managing Behavior

One common question that is heard throughout the state in the Virginia Infant and Toddler Specialist Network's work with child care professionals is, "What can I do about challenging behaviors?" While there is not one answer that will work for all young children, below are some strategies to help manage behavior.

**#1 Children need to have downtime and time to play.** Free play is vital to infants and toddlers as this is how they learn. It is child-chosen and child-directed play that is essential for their mental health. Having a schedule that requires sitting increases fatigue and reduces concentration. Tired children who are not able to concentrate have a tendency to display challenging behaviors. Intentionally include free play and downtime in your child care schedule often.

**#2 Expect developmentally appropriate behavior.** Make sure that you are expecting behavior that aligns with where the child is developmentally. Don't ask too much of the children in your care. When the expectation is higher than the ability, children become frustrated and unhappy which can be expressed as challenging behaviors. Use typical child behaviors as a guideline but remember that children will do things their own way and in their own time.

**#3 Allow children to be creative, active learners.** Children have a true love for learning and are naturally creative, active learners. Incorporating free play daily in your child care schedule offers opportunities for this type of learning to take place. Activities such as worksheets and art focused on the product instead of the process can lead to an increase in the challenging behaviors observed as some children find these types of activities lack excitement.

**#4 Stress cooperation, not competition.** Children prefer a friendlier environment where cooperative activities such as playing together are encouraged. Competition is not developmentally appropriate for young children and increases aggression and other antisocial behavior. Ensure your child care setting is kind, pleasant, and welcoming to keep the challenging behaviors to a minimum.

**#5 Reduce screen time.** Social emotional development is vital in early childhood and face-to-face interactions are necessary for healthy development. Research shows that screen time is creating depression and aggression in children. To help prevent challenging behaviors, reduce screen time and increase the number and quality of interactions between children and between the children and staff.

If additional strategies are needed, please contact the Virginia Infant and Toddler Specialist Network at [info@va-itsnetwork.org](mailto:info@va-itsnetwork.org).

Infant and toddler mental health consultants can provide assistance with infant and toddler social emotional needs and challenging behaviors which include individual child assessments as well as

You can also visit our website at [www.va-itsnetwork.org](http://www.va-itsnetwork.org).

*Reference:*

*7 Reasons We're Seeing More Challenging Behavior in Early Childhood Settings*  
[www.raepica.com/2019/05/challenging-behavior-in-early-childhood-settings](http://www.raepica.com/2019/05/challenging-behavior-in-early-childhood-settings)

Visit our website

## Resource Spotlight



Click ([Here](#)) to access the VA ITSN website for the latest COVID-19 resources.

Click ([Here](#)) for a list of disinfectants to use against the virus that causes COVID-19.

Click ([Here](#)) for a website with guidance for cleaning and sanitizing child care facilities along with other valuable information.



Please update your program information in the Child Care Aware provider database. Their staff ask that you login and update your vacancies regularly to ensure they can provide the most accurate and current child care openings with families in need of care.

If you have any questions regarding your program profile, please email [donnaf@va.childcareaware.org](mailto:donnaf@va.childcareaware.org)

## Upcoming PD Opportunities

**We are here to help!**

The VA ITSN is available to help during these difficult times. While the services will look different as the infant and toddler specialists and infant and toddler mental health consultants will not be making on-site visits, they are still available to provide technical assistance by phone and through virtual trainings.

For upcoming PD opportunities, please check [va-itsnetwork.org](http://va-itsnetwork.org) for online training and webinar opportunities.

You can also contact us by emailing [info@va-itsnetwork.org](mailto:info@va-itsnetwork.org) and let us know how we can help you.

## Did You Know.....

Bluefield College offers several Early Childhood degrees online, including Associate's and Bachelor's degrees in Early Childhood Education as well as a Master's in Education? There are discounts available for members of the Virginia Head Start Association. Virginia residents are eligible for the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant which is money that does not need to be paid back.



Contact Brenda at [bworkman@bluefield.edu](mailto:bworkman@bluefield.edu) or 276-326-4412 for more information or visit their website at [bluefield.edu](http://bluefield.edu).

## Working on Wonderful (WOW)

Congratulations to the following programs that have recently completed Level 1 services with the VA ITSN!

First Steps CCC	Muriel Rhodes
Little Hearts Daycare	Bright Starts Daycare & Learning Center
Heavenly Hands	Chesterbrook Academy - Woodbridge
The Goddard - Three Chopt	Grach Quashigah
Rhonda Edmonds	Renee Hardy
Kids on the Move Learning Center	Sochitl Rodriguez Kauffman
Kings Academy	Tanya Shahid
Sharon Martin	Donna Sandiford
Caring Hearts Academy	Love Offerings CDC
Stanleytown's Amazing Grace Baptist Church	Delma Guzman
Children's Center	Vine & Branches Lutheran Church
John Ortiz	YMCA Loudoun County
Rachel McQuigg	Everbrook Academy
Dan River W.E.E. School	Children's International School
Longwood Avenue Christian School	Lynette Vango-Green
Ebenezer Kidz Care	Annette Carter-McMillan
Yasmeen Rahman	Kid-Konnection
Ebony Smith	Sunshine Smiles
Cindi Damron	Mary Bethune Academy

Emma Gilman	Karter School
North Star/Stafford County EHS	Helen Mai-Huong Nguyen
Bright Beginnings Day Care, Inc.	Beata Sawina
Wee Care Christian Learning Center	Shweta Anand
Land of Wonder Preschool	Marco Quino
Honey Tree - Christiansburg	Ladybug Academy
Holly King	Silvana Pereira
UMC Early Learning Center	The Goddard School - Glen Allen
Wee Angels	The Goddard School - Ashland
Tiny Toes Creative Learning Center	Sandra Davis
La Petite Academy - Church Road	The Goddard School - Mechanicsville
Ritu Bastola FDH	Nikki's Christian Daycare, Inc.
Shenandoah Valley CDC	Paula Andrea Gomez
St. Philip ECC	St. John's Lutheran



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