

VIRGINIA
INFANT & TODDLER SPECIALIST
NETWORK

“Achieving Excellence in Early Care”

www.va-itsnetwork.org



Five Tips for Managing Behavior

“What can I do about challenging behaviors?” This is a common question asked by child care professionals across the state. Fortunately, the Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network has some suggestions. While managing challenging behavior can be a difficult task for early child care educators, establishing a positive and nurturing environment that promotes healthy development and teaches appropriate behavior is important. While no single solution will work for all infants and toddlers, here are five tips that may help:

#1 Establish a Routine: Infants and toddlers thrive on routines, providing them with a sense of security and predictability. A consistent daily routine helps infants and toddlers understand what is expected of them and reduces anxiety. Create a schedule that includes regular mealtimes, nap times, play times, and bedtime. Stick to the routine as much as possible and encourage parents and caregivers to help during weekends or vacations; this can help infants and toddlers feel more secure and confident in their surrounding environment.

#2 Set Clear Boundaries: It is essential to set clear boundaries for infants and toddlers to understand what behaviors are acceptable and what are not. Use simple language and age-appropriate explanations to communicate rules and expectations. Be consistent in enforcing these boundaries, as inconsistency can confuse the infants and toddlers. Reinforce positive behaviors while redirecting or gently correcting challenging behaviors.

#3 Provide Positive Reinforcement: Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool for managing behavior in infants and toddlers. Acknowledge good behavior when it is displayed. Use specific language to describe the positive behavior, such as “You shared your toy with your friend. That was very kind!” This helps infants and toddlers understand what they did well and encourages them to repeat the behavior.

#4 Redirect Negative Behavior: Infants and toddlers often engage in developmentally appropriate behaviors that may not be desirable or safe. Instead of punishing or scolding them, try redirecting their attention to more appropriate activities or objects. For example, if a toddler is throwing toys, gently take the toy away and offer an alternative activity like stacking blocks or playing with a puzzle. Redirecting their focus will help them learn appropriate ways to express themselves.

#5 Model Good Behavior: Infants and toddlers learn by observing and imitating the behavior of adults and older children around them. It is crucial to model good behavior and be a positive role model for them. Show kindness, patience, and respect in interactions with others, including the infants and toddlers in care. Use polite language, share, take turns, and demonstrate problem-solving skills. When young children see positive behavior consistently modeled, they are more likely to adopt those behaviors themselves.

In conclusion, teaching appropriate behavior to infants and toddlers requires patience, consistency, and a nurturing environment. By establishing routines, setting clear boundaries, providing positive reinforcement, redirecting negative behavior, and modeling good behavior, caregivers can help promote positive behavior of the infants and toddlers in their care.

If additional strategies are needed, please consider reaching out to one of the resources below:

Infant and Toddler Specialists (ITSs): ITSs work regionally throughout the state.

- ITSs help improve the quality of care and education that infants and toddlers receive in child care centers and family day homes through coaching, focusing on supporting success in VQB5.
- ITSs work collaboratively with infant and toddler caregivers, teachers, and directors to improve educational levels and competencies through

technical assistance, training, and connection to existing relevant opportunities to support quality of care and education.

- ITSs offer in-person, virtual, and hybrid coaching, training, and technical assistance.
- A strong emphasis is placed on creating positive interactions to enhance relationships between caregivers and infants and toddlers in everyday care routines.

Infant and Toddler Behavior Consultants (ITBCs): ITBCs work regionally throughout the state.

- ITBCs promote infant and toddler mental wellness by providing in-person, virtual, and hybrid training and coaching on social emotional development and screening of infants and toddlers.
- ITBCs help improve social emotional learning environments by providing consultations on implementing strategies that promote positive social emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors in infants and toddlers.
- ITBCs offer mentoring, parent education, technical assistance, and intervention strategies.

Please click [here](#) for more information about ITS and ITBC services.

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants (ECMHCs) ECMHCs work throughout Greater Richmond, Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and virtually throughout the state as needed.

- ECMHCs offer in-person, virtual, and hybrid services.
- ECMHCs help early childhood teachers promote healthy social-emotional development of children from birth to age five.
- ECMHCs provide coaching on practices to improve children’s social and emotional development in a classroom or learning environment.
- Consultation can include resources to help children express emotions, form healthy relationships, and regulate their feelings with the support of an adult.
- In addition, ECMHCs work with families who may benefit from extra support to foster children’s social-emotional skills at home.

Please click [here](#) for more information.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics www.aap.org
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
Zero to Three www.zerotothree.org



Early Learning Support

Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) Introductory Microcredential Registration is Now Open!

A new enrollment period for the ELDS Microcredential, developed through a partnership with the **Vinod Chacra IMPACT Lab** at Radford University is open to all publicly-funded early childhood professionals in either English or Spanish. Available at **no-cost**, this 5-hour, non-credit bearing, online, self- and competency-based micro-credential is an introduction to Virginia's early learning and developmental standards. Radford Learning Coaches are available and PD certificates can be downloaded upon completion.

- Please click here to [register](#)
- Email a learning coach impactasset@radford.edu
- Contact Rebecca.Shaffer@doe.virginia.gov with questions

Upcoming PD Opportunities



Enhancing Emergent Literacy for Infants and Toddlers

1-2-3 READ! early literacy training is an interactive, practical training designed for teachers, caregivers, and directors who work with infants and toddlers, birth to 36 months, in a group setting.

October 21 - Dublin

Registration fee waived for VQB5 participants

Non-VQB5 participant is \$25.00

(Includes all training and materials)

The training is from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Click [here](#) to register online now!



Child Care Aware of Virginia offers a variety of training opportunities to support the child care workforce. You may qualify for FREE training if your program serves infants and toddlers (0-36 months) or participates in the Child Care Subsidy Program! Please check out their website and training calendar [here](#) to register for upcoming events.



Better Kid Care offers courses designed specifically to address the professional development needs of directors and program administrators. Courses are identified in the [On Demand](#) online system that has content relevant to program leadership and administration.

Should you have any questions, please contact [Mary Sheldon](#), Professional Development Coordinator, at 757-378-3172.

Did you know...?

The VA ITSN website maintains a list of upcoming virtual trainings. We would love to have you participate in one of our trainings. Check out the link [here](#) and register directly from the link.



Did you know...?

The new VQB5 Registration Deadline changed to Tuesday, October 3, 2023. This new deadline will also apply to RecognizeB5, meaning teachers who register by October 3 will still be considered for eligibility in

RecognizeB5.

- VIDEO - [VQB5 Participation Overview for Program Leaders](#) (16 minutes)
- Contact your [Ready Region](#) for VQB5 registration support and CLASS training
- Questions? Email vqb5@doe.virginia.gov



A nonprofit agency changing the lives of babies, toddlers & their families

The Virginia Infant and Toddler Specialist Network is supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$5,350,000 with 100% funded by ACF/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by the Virginia Department of Education, ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

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