

# HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO GUIDE YOUNG CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

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***Guide Developed with Nancy Morgan***

Professional Development Program for Teachers of Pre-K – Grade 1

Running Time: 24 minutes



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## INTRODUCTION

**This program and accompanying trainer's guide** will give teachers, aides and other staff specific techniques they can use to guide young children's behavior. The program focuses on a **supportive guidance approach**, which emphasizes nurturing and caring and also clear expectations and limits.

Viewers will learn the possible causes of inappropriate behaviors, the importance of developing relationships with the children and their families, the elements of the supportive guidance approach, how they can teach social skills, and the top twenty supportive guidance approach techniques that can be implemented immediately. Live classroom footage reinforces the strategies discussed, so teachers can adapt these techniques to their classrooms.

The video and print materials are based on current research as well as Head Start and NAEYC guidelines and developmentally appropriate best practices.

This program is for all classroom teachers and aides of preschool, Head Start, kindergarten and first grade students. Though designed for the classroom teacher, this program can also be used with teachers of special education, ELL, and other special departments.

**The program** demonstrates specific strategies that can be incorporated in any early childhood classroom. The program is divided into six sections. These video sections can be viewed at the same time, or can be divided into six different sessions and a review. (see *Recommendations for the Trainer* on suggestions on how to break up the sessions).

**This guide** includes instructions for the trainer on directing one to six workshops. For each workshop session, there are two corresponding handouts for the participants. The first handout for each session includes the objectives, preview questions and key concepts. The second handout includes reflection and discussion questions. Finally, there is a bibliography and list of internet resources.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM

### OBJECTIVE FOR ALL SESSIONS:

All participants will explore inappropriate behaviors and how they currently handle such behaviors. They will see important elements of successful behavior guidance demonstrated by teachers. They will understand and be able to use the supportive guidance approach to promote positive behavior. They will be able to teach social skills employing a variety of methods. When they complete the workshop sessions, they will have the “tools” to promote positive behaviors in young children.

**After each session below, the staff will be able to:**

#### **Session I: Introduction**

- Identify inappropriate behaviors and explore how they currently feel about such behaviors.
- Describe how they currently address inappropriate behaviors.

#### **Session II: Reasons for Inappropriate Behavior**

- Recognize a variety of reasons for inappropriate behavior.
- Understand that they can limit those behaviors by controlling the environment, being aware and sensitive to events in children's lives, adjusting the pace of their lessons, and providing adequate physical activity.

#### **Session III: Importance of Our Relationships**

- Appreciate the importance of building respectful relationships with children and their families and the insight the relationships provide.
- Recognize that children who feel valued by teachers are more responsive to their direction and guidance.

#### **Session IV: The Supportive Guidance Approach**

- Describe the elements of the supportive guidance approach to promoting positive behavior: warmth, caring, setting rules and guidelines, supervising children's activities, communicating clearly and setting realistic expectations.

#### **Session V: How to Teach Social Skills**

- Identify social skills such as helping, sharing, cooperating and empathy.
- Teach social skills through modeling, role play, songs, books, pictures and instruction during daily activities.

#### **Session VI: Top 20 Supportive Guidance Approach Techniques**

- Identify 20 supportive guidance techniques that will help promote positive, prosocial behavior.

#### **Session VII: Review**

## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TRAINER

**This curriculum** can be used in many different ways, depending on the staff development setting. Ideally, it will be used in a workshop setting, where staff can share ideas. The curriculum can be presented as one 90-minute workshop, or as six 45-minute workshops. A staff member or family practitioner can also view the program individually. How the material is used depends on your needs and setting.

Before presenting the curriculum, please read through the material in this guide and view the video. In this way, you can determine the number of workshops you want to conduct. Regardless of the number of workshops, a suggested format might include:

- Presentation of objectives
- Review preview questions (Handout A)
- View the entire video program or the sections corresponding to the session
- Conduct the reflection / discussion / activity handout (Handout B)

Before conducting the workshop, Trainers are encouraged to read through all the activities in the guide and select the ones that best suit the participants' needs.

### Materials Needed

#### DVD

- DVD player
- Monitor or screen with LCD Projector
- Copies of handouts\*

#### Concept Clips

- Computer
- Monitor / screen with LCD Projector / Interactive Whiteboard
- Copies of handouts\*

\*Each session has two handouts:

Handout A -Preview Questions and the Key Concepts

Handout B - Reflection/Discussion/ Activity Sheet

Some Trainers like to work with chart paper or an overhead projector to write down the major points made by participants from the session.

## **HANDOUT I-A**

### **SESSION I: Introduction**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

After this session, staff will be able to:

- identify inappropriate behaviors and explore how they currently feel about such behaviors.
- describe how they currently address inappropriate behaviors.

#### **PREVIEW QUESTIONS**

- What is inappropriate behavior? Describe some children's behaviors that you consider inappropriate.

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- How do you feel when children behave inappropriately? What behaviors would you like to see in the classroom?

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- How does inappropriate behavior affect you? How does it affect the children in the class?

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#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Inappropriate behaviors**

Inappropriate behaviors include physical behaviors such as pushing, poking, hitting and grabbing. When children won't share or cooperate, when they tease others, or damage other children's work, it is considered inappropriate behavior.

##### **Positive behaviors**

Positive behaviors are also known as prosocial or "helping" behaviors. They include sharing, cooperating, helping and empathy (having feelings for others).

##### **Supportive Guidance Approach**

Teachers who are warm and nurturing but also set limits and boundaries are employing the supportive guidance approach. This approach leads to a classroom that runs smoothly, where students feel secure, and the teacher feels confident.

*Notes:*

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## **HANDOUT I-B**

### **REFLECTION / DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY**

#### **SESSION I: Introduction**

#### **FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES**

##### **Reflection**

- What inappropriate behaviors have you experienced (or observed)? What do you believe was the cause of the inappropriate behavior?

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- What techniques did/do you use to alter inappropriate behaviors?

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##### **Discussion**

Discuss the different circumstances that might lead to inappropriate behaviors  
What can teachers do? Discuss your success in promoting positive behaviors.

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## **HANDOUT II-A**

### **SESSION II: Reasons for Inappropriate Behavior**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

After this session, staff will be able to:

- recognize a variety of reasons for inappropriate behavior.
- understand that they can limit those behaviors by controlling the environment, being aware and sensitive to events in children's lives, adjusting the pace of their lessons, and providing adequate physical activity.

#### **PREVIEW QUESTIONS**

- From your experience, can you identify "triggers" for inappropriate behavior in class?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What events in children's home lives might cause inappropriate behavior?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How does your classroom routine or organization provide guidance and structure for student behavior?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Reasons for inappropriate behavior**

Children may act inappropriately at times because they are hungry, tired or ill. There may also be a situation at home that is troubling the child, such as the birth of a sibling.

##### **Meeting children's needs**

Teachers who know their students well will have better success in determining why a child acts inappropriately. By being sensitive to a child's special needs, and by being aware of events at home, a teacher is able to respond to the child in a helpful way. The child may need some special attention, or the teacher may want to talk to the parent about the issue.

##### **Managing the classroom environment for success**

A well-managed classroom limits inappropriate behavior because children feel secure and safe. Classrooms and their learning centers should be orderly and organized with adequate space. The pace of activities and level of instruction should be geared to the age of the children—neither too slow or too fast, nor too hard or easy. Transitions should be limited and children should be aware when transitions are about to occur. Teachers who provide adequate physical activity for young children are also less likely to encounter inappropriate behavior.

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## **HANDOUT II-B**

### **REFLECTION / DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY**

#### **SESSION II: Reasons for Inappropriate Behavior**

##### **Reflection**

- Think about your classroom. Identify any areas that are disorganized or overcrowded and make note of them here.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What might cause a child to act inappropriately?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What types of physical activities do you provide to the children inside the class as well as outside?  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### **Discussion**

Discuss your classroom and what you can do to make it more conducive to appropriate behavior. Is it well organized? What should be rearranged? What storage devices can you add? How can you make the most of the space you have?

\_\_\_\_\_

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What are some typical events in children's lives that might prompt inappropriate behavior? What are some unusual events that might trigger inappropriate behavior?

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Discuss the opportunities for physical activity during the day. How can you increase the opportunities for physical activity both outside and inside the classroom?

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## **HANDOUT III-A**

### **Session III: Importance of Our Relationships**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

After this session, staff will:

- appreciate the importance of building respectful relationships with children and their families and the insight the relationships provide.
- recognize that children who feel valued by teachers are more responsive to their teachers' direction and guidance.

#### **PREVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Why is it important to establish relationships with children? With their families?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are some things you can do to show children that you respect them?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How important do you consider spending one-on-one time with each child?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Building relationships**

By building a relationship with a child, you are modeling appropriate behavior and showing the child that you care. This trust creates an environment conducive to a teacher's direction and guidance. By building a relationship, you also know more about the child and are better able to meet that child's needs.

##### **Showing children respect**

You can build relationships with your students by greeting each child every day by name, by lowering yourself to the child's eye level when speaking to him or her, by giving each child a chance to speak in a group setting, and by spending one-on-one time with the child.

##### **One-on-one time**

Spending one-on-one time with children helps them feel valued. Teachers also gain important information about children that can help them be more empathetic and meet the children's needs in a responsive way.

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## HANDOUT III-B

### REFLECTION / DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

### Session III: Importance of Our Relationships

#### Reflection

- Think about a child who might need more guidance than others in learning appropriate classroom behaviors. Which behaviors of this child lead you to believe that?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think of the child you identified above. What is the quality of your relationship with the child? With his or her parents? If the relationships need improvement, what can you do?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What appropriate behaviors can you teach through modeling?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Discussion

Discuss what it means to show children they are valued. What do you do to help children feel valued?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the needs of the children in your class. What do you do (or can you do) to meet their needs?

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What are some behaviors you can model for students? How does this affect the level of mutual respect in the classroom? How does it build better relationships?

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## **HANDOUT IV-A**

### **SESSION IV: The Supportive Guidance Approach**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

After this session, participants will be able to:

- describe the elements of the supportive guidance approach to promoting positive behavior: warmth, caring, setting rules and guidelines, supervising children's activities, communicating clearly, and setting realistic expectations.

#### **PREVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Think about several teachers you consider effective in terms of how their students behave. What is their approach to guiding children's behavior?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why is it important to clearly communicate classroom expectations to your students? Can you think of some examples where you did not communicate expectations clearly? What happened?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- In your experience, do some children pick up on classroom routines quicker than other children? Why do you think this is so?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Effective guidance in the classroom**

Teachers who are most effective in the classroom have a consistent guidance approach. They are warm and nurturing, but they set limits and guidelines for children to follow. Children feel secure when they know what is expected of them.

##### **Communicating expectations clearly**

You can foster positive behaviors from students by communicating expectations clearly. This may take some time for young learners, especially if they have not been in a classroom setting before. It's important to take the time to discuss classroom rules and respect for one another.

##### **Self-regulation**

Self-regulation reflects a child's ability to control their impulses (such as speaking out of turn) and to know what appropriate behavior is (following the rules).

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## **HANDOUT IV-B**

### **REFLECTION / DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY**

#### **SESSION IV: The Supportive Guidance Approach**

##### **Reflection**

- What type of guidance approach do you use in your classroom? Which aspects are successful, and which are not? (Describe specific student behaviors that indicate if your approach is successful or not.)

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- What do you do to show children kindness and caring? What are examples of limits you set? How does this affect the children?

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- How can creative play allow for self-regulation? What can you do to monitor creative play?

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##### **Discussion**

Discuss two to three specific characteristics of a successful guidance approach that has worked for you or for one of your colleagues. Based on these characteristics, how could you revise your current approach?

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Evaluate your current classroom rules. Are the rules appropriate for your students' current development? Did the students help form the rules? Are your rules simple, and clearly communicated to students? What can you do to improve your rules and how they are communicated to students?

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Discuss what you have observed about children's behavior when they play. Do they set their own rules? How do they self-regulate? How can monitoring their play from a distance help you understand more clearly what kind of self-regulation your individual students need to develop?

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## **HANDOUT V-A**

### **SESSION V: How to Teach Social Skills**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

After this session, participants will be able to:

- identify social skills such as helping, sharing, cooperating and empathy.
- teach social skills through modeling, role play, songs, books, pictures, and instruction during daily activities.

#### **PREVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Which social skills are important for a child to learn in your classroom?

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- Why is it important for children to learn social skills?

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- Do you currently teach social skills? How?

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#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Important social skills**

Social skills that are important for young children to learn include sharing, caring for others, cooperating, and helping others. Other social skills include respecting others, telling the truth, getting along, and being a good friend. Social skills need to be taught to young children, and they need practice using them.

##### **Classroom climate**

In a classroom where social skills are taught, children feel safe. Teachers who develop social skills in their students are creating a positive climate where students can thrive.

##### **Teaching social skills**

There are many ways to teach social skills. You can model good social skills to your students with your own behavior. You can read stories that demonstrate social skills. You can instruct using puppets. Students can role-play social skills, or act out a skill through drama or music. There are many opportunities in the classroom to teach positive behavior.

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## HANDOUT V-B

### REFLECTION / DISCUSSION/ ACTIVITY

#### SESSION V: How to Teach Social Skills

##### Reflection

- Think about your current group of students. Which social skills would most benefit these students to learn?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why are the skills of helping, sharing, cooperating and empathy important for children to learn? If students practice these skills, how would it affect the classroom as a whole?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think about how you currently try to foster the use of appropriate social skills in your classroom. Do you have a specific plan? If so, describe your plan.  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### Discussion

Discuss social skills that you value as important. Do students come to your classroom using these skills, or do you need to teach them? Pick 3-4 social skills you would like to work on with your students, and explain why your students would benefit from learning these skills.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the impact on your classroom when students understand and practice the social skills of helping, sharing, cooperating and empathy, or any other skills which you discussed above.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Outline for each other the plan you currently use to foster appropriate social skills in your classroom. If you do not have a specific plan, discuss 3-4 things you would like to do to improve your students' social skills.

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## **HANDOUT VI-A**

### **SESSION VI: Top 20 Supportive Guidance Approach Techniques**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

After this session, participants will be able to:

- identify 20 supportive guidance techniques that will help promote positive, prosocial behavior.

#### **PREVIEW QUESTIONS**

- How can planning your activities carefully lead students to behave appropriately?

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- Think about the language you use to reinforce good behavior. How does it affect children's behavior?

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- How does providing choices help encourage positive behavior?

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#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Plan classroom instruction and activities**

When you plan your activities carefully, you are creating a positive climate for students to succeed. Plan activities that keep the children interested. Make sure you think through all the steps involved, including the materials you will need, the instructions you will provide, how you will group students, and how they will transition from one activity or center to another. Vary the type of activities, and try to account for different learning styles.

##### **Model and monitor**

Model appropriate behavior - such as empathy, cooperating, sharing and helping - for children. Discuss these behaviors with the class as they occur naturally. Praise these behaviors in children right away when you observe them. Remind children of the behavior you expect.

##### **Present choices**

Children will develop self-regulation, independence and good decision-making skills if you talk them through choices they can make about their behavior. Use the "if-then" principle, which allows children to select good choices and become more aware of their choices. Help children with tasks by using a collaborative approach. ("I'll do this if you do that.")

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**HANDOUT VI-B**  
**REFLECTION / DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY**  
**SESSION VI: Top 20 Supportive Guidance**  
**Approach Techniques**

**Reflection**

- Plan a new activity for your class and incorporate methods that you believe will help control inappropriate behavior. Include the materials you will use, instructions, how you will group students, and methods of transition.

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- How can the use of praise and positive reinforcement help shape children's behavior?

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- Think about a student in your class who likes to be independent and do things his or her way. How can providing choices for this student lead the child to act appropriately in the classroom?

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**Discussion**

Present to each other the activities you created and the methods you would use to reduce inappropriate behavior. Provide suggestions for improvement. Why do you think each other's activities will promote appropriate behavior? What elements of the plan might need more consideration?

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Describe a situation when you could use praise to reinforce a child's positive behavior: sharing, helping, empathizing and cooperating.

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What are some phrases you can use with children to show them they have a choice in how they behave?

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## POST TEST: Questions

### Session I: Introduction

1. List some examples of inappropriate behavior:
2. What are some positive behaviors you would like children to exhibit?
3. How can using the Supportive Guidance Approach help you create a more positive classroom atmosphere conducive to positive behaviors?

### Session II: Reasons for Inappropriate Behavior

4. What are some of the reasons children may act inappropriately?
5. How can a teacher determine why a child is acting inappropriately?
6. How can a teacher manage the environment to reduce inappropriate behaviors?

### Session III: Importance of Our Relationships

7. Why is it important to build relationships with your students?
8. How can you show respect to a child?
9. Why is it important to spend one-on-one time with each of your students?

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## **Session IV: The Supportive Guidance Approach**

10. How can teachers provide a consistent guidance approach in the classroom?
11. What are some ways to communicate expectations clearly to students?
12. What is self-regulation?

## **Session V: How to Teach Social Skills**

13. What are some important social skills for young children?
14. Why is teaching social skills important to the classroom climate?
15. What are some ways to teach social skills?

## **Session VI: Top 20 Supportive Guidance Approach Techniques**

16. Describe some instructional plans and activities that encourage appropriate behavior.
17. What can you do to reinforce positive behaviors in your classroom?
18. Give an example of how you can use the If/Then Principle to encourage a child to complete an activity?

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## POST TEST

(Questions and Answers)

### Session I: Introduction

1. List some examples of inappropriate behavior:  
(Pushing, poking, hitting, grabbing, teasing, not respecting others' work.)
2. What are some positive behaviors you would like children to exhibit?  
(Positive or prosocial behavior includes sharing, cooperating, helping and empathy, or having feelings for others.)
3. How can using the Supportive Guidance Approach help you create a more positive classroom atmosphere conducive to positive behaviors?  
(Be warm and nurturing, while setting limits. This creates security for the students and confidence for the teacher. )

### Session II: Reasons for Inappropriate Behavior

4. What are some of the reasons children may act inappropriately?  
(They may be hungry, tired or ill; there may be a situation at home that is troubling the child, such as the birth of a sibling.)
5. How can a teacher determine why a child is acting inappropriately?  
(Get to know your students well, be sensitive to their special needs, be aware of events at home.)
6. How can a teacher manage the environment to reduce inappropriate behaviors?  
(Organize spaces in an orderly fashion, allow enough room for children to move about; pace activities and levels of instruction to the age and interests of the students; limit transitions and be clear about moving from one activity to the next; provide adequate physical activity.)

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## Session III: Importance of Our Relationships

7. Why is it important to build relationships with your students?  
(You are better able to meet the child's needs. You model appropriate behavior, show caring, create trust, and gain information about the child.)
8. How can you show respect to a child?  
(Greet each child every day by name, make eye contact on their level, give each child a chance to speak in a group setting, and spend one-on-time with the child.)
9. Why is it important to spend one-on-one time with each of your students?  
(It helps children feel valued. You gain important information about children, which allows you to meet the children's needs in a responsive way.)

## Session IV: The Supportive Guidance Approach

10. How can teachers provide a consistent guidance approach in the classroom?  
(Be warm and nurturing, but set limits and clear guidelines.)
11. What are some ways to communicate expectations clearly to students?  
(Set some simple, age-appropriate rules for students. Discuss these rules with the students.)
12. What is self-regulation?  
(Self-regulation is a child's ability to control their impulses and know what is appropriate behavior. Self-regulation needs to be taught.)

## Session V: How to Teach Social Skills

13. What are some important social skills for young children?  
(Sharing, caring for others, cooperating, and helping others. Other social skills are respecting others, telling the truth, getting along, and being a good friend.)
14. Why is teaching social skills important to the classroom climate?  
(Children feel safe, and it creates a positive climate.)
15. What are some ways to teach social skills?  
(Read stories that demonstrate social skills, model social skills through puppets and your own behavior. Have students role-play social skills, or act out a skill through drama or music.)

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## Session VI: Top 20 Supportive Guidance Approach Techniques

16. Describe some instructional plans and activities that encourage appropriate behavior.  
(Plan varied and interesting activities. Think through all the steps involved, including materials needed, types of instructions you will provide, grouping, and transitions.)
17. What can you do to reinforce positive behaviors in your classroom?  
(Model appropriate behavior, such as empathizing, cooperating, sharing and helping. Discuss these behaviors and praise children who engage in them. )
18. Give an example of how you can use the If/Then Principle to encourage a child to complete an activity?  
(“If you finish your art, then you can play with the blocks.”)

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## INTERNET RESOURCES

**Developing Self-Regulation in Kindergarten** by E. Bodrova and D. Leong. (2008).

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[http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200803/BTJ\\_Primary\\_Interest.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200803/BTJ_Primary_Interest.pdf)

**Guiding the Behavior of Young Children.**

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**My Young Child**

Online stories to teach values by N. Morgan (nd).

<http://www.myyoungchild.org>

**National Association for Education of Young Children**

<http://www.naeyc.org>

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### ABOUT DR. PATRICIA VARDIN

Dr. Patricia A. Vardin is Chair of the Early Childhood Education Department and an Associate Professor at Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in child development and early childhood education. Dr. Vardin serves as an educational consultant in early childhood education for institutions and organizations including public, private and parochial schools as well as corporations. Dr. Vardin is the author of an exciting new model early childhood program entitled *The Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Model* currently implemented in four schools in New York City and Westchester. The model is based on the latest research in early education and child development.

Dr. Vardin is the creator of ChildChart, an innovative system using a computer and a Palm Pilot to monitor the progress of young children in the early childhood classroom. ChildChart is being used in several hundred schools across the country.

Dr. Vardin has written many articles and spoken at numerous international, national and local conferences on a range of early childhood education topics and has appeared as a guest expert for the media. She holds a doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University and has more than 25 years of experience working with young children, teachers, college students, parents and administrators.

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# *Certificate of Participation*



## **HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO GUIDE YOUNG CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR**

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