

Behavior Management of Children

Plan how you will manage behavior within a group of children. Foster safe and secure relationships with the children in your care as you navigate both desirable and undesirable behaviors. Incorporating these ideas into the ways you manage your meeting will help everyone enjoy your missions discipleship time and minimize disruptive behaviors.

First, be sure to familiarize yourself with your church's child protection policy and discipline procedures. Identify safe behaviors between leaders and children within the context of your church, and stay up to date with any changes to the policy or procedures while you lead a group of children at any age.

Planning engaging lessons and activities that are age appropriate for your children can help avoid undesired behaviors because they will often effectively hold their attention. Include a variety of learning styles so every child can learn in a way that is appropriate for him or her. There are many ways to tell mission stories, so choosing different methods each week is important for your group.

During your time together, set fair and simple limits that are consistently enforced. This allows children to understand your expectations, and they can become familiar with the structure of the environment without becoming overwhelmed. During each group time, be kind and consistently maintain a positive atmosphere where everyone knows what to expect. Make sure children take turns helping with supplies, looking at maps and missionary pictures, and going first during games.

Focusing on good behavior and emphasizing what children should be doing reinforces children's understanding of expectations for them. Offering praise and encouragement allows their understanding of good behavior to expand and grow over time. Give children positive attention through smiles or by showing interest in their interests, activities, and achievements. This builds security in a child's relationship with you and demonstrates kind behaviors a child will seek to model within his or her own relationships. Using badges and patches as rewards for missions projects can help children feel recognized, but they are also long-lasting reminders of the good work children have done in your group.

When behaviors arise that must be addressed, use logical consequences and talk through the consequences with the child. It is important to maintain the fair and simple limits that you put in place ahead of time and are expected within your group.

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