

Helping Children Learn to Manage Their Own Behavior

HANDOUT

7



Assess the child's current level of self-management skills by asking questions such as the following to see how accurately a child is able to assess his or her own behavior.

- ⇒ Raise your hand if you put your lunch box away this morning.
- ⇒ Put your thumbs up if you are sitting.
- ⇒ Raise your hand if you played at the block center today.



Identify what behaviors you want the child to learn to self-manage. Each step should clearly describe what you want children to do.

- ⇒ When told to *clean up*, the child should stop playing, pick up toys, place them on the shelf, and take a seat in the circle area.
- ⇒ When told to *sit quietly*, the child should stop talking, sit with her hands in her lap, and look at the teacher.



Visually display behaviors for the child using photographs or drawings on a poster, on a sheet of paper, or in a booklet.

- ⇒ When teaching a child to use the bathroom independently, you might draw each step on a poster or in the form of a book depicting steps such as pulling pants down, sitting on the toilet, wiping with toilet paper, pulling pants up, and washing hands.



Guide the child to learn the desired behaviors and to use the self-management system (e.g., checklist, chart) to assess his performance of the behaviors.

- ⇒ When teaching a child to put away the art supplies and go to the rug, you might review all the steps with the child and give him or her a chart showing each step of the process, including putting the crayons and markers in the bin, putting drawings in a cubby, walking over to the rug, choosing a book, and sitting quietly looking at the book. The child could then circle or make a check mark next to the pictures that show what steps were completed. For a long process, teach the first step or two, and you finish the job the first time. As the child masters the first few steps, add new ones, one at a time.



Provide positive attention to the child when she correctly completes the steps and uses the self-monitoring system accurately.

- ⇒ *Melissa, good job cleaning up and marking the steps you did by yourself!*
- ⇒ *Sally, I see that you have your hands in your lap, thank you for sitting so quietly.*
- ⇒ *Kara, nice job remembering what you did and marking the steps on your chart!*