

Shared Expectations

What are shared expectations?

Expectations are values and rules that guide our interactions with others in a shared space. They are developed by, and agreed upon, through a collaborative process between educator(s) and children. When children and adults understand what is expected of them, they are more likely to engage in that behaviour.

Our Behaviour Expectations

We are
KIND



We are
SAFE



We are
RESPECTFUL



Why are shared expectations important?

Children and adult's sense of safety and security are supported and nurtured when they understand the expectations in any shared space. When expectations are stated positively (i.e., "please use soft voices" rather than "don't yell") children know what to do rather than worrying about what NOT to do.

When children participate in creating shared expectations, it fosters their sense of belonging in the environment, and their independence and self-advocacy (i.e., their ability to understand what is important and communicate needs) are developed when the expectations are clear. Children also begin to recognize themselves as a citizen in your room with rights and responsibilities.

Pictures really are worth one thousand words. Visuals are a positive way of communicating expectations to all children, especially those with diverse learning needs and dual language learners.

Educators can co-create shared expectations by:

- Having a conversation with your team and the children about your room/program's values.
- Defining your room/program's values. Choose 5 or less (i.e., "We value respect, kindness, and teamwork").
- Provide specific examples (5 or less) of how your room/program values are

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demonstrated throughout the day (i.e., we use kind words when talking to others or we help someone when they are hurt or sad).

- Ensure examples make sense for the children in your environment and the setting. Your expectations for toddlers will be very different from your expectations for school age children. Expectations for being safe inside will be different from the expectation for outside play.
 - Ensuring your expectations are worded positively (i.e., focus on what you WANT the children to do *rather than* stating what you don't want them to do), are located at children's eye level, and include a visual (i.e., the children can be in the photos).
 - Get input from families to ensure that expectations are culturally appropriate for your community.
- Provide ongoing reminders to children about your values and expectations (i.e., Before an outing remind children what it means to be kind, safe, and respectful in the new space).
 - Notice and name children when they are demonstrating your expectations.
 - Revisit and revise your expectations with educators, children, and families as needed.

References

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center & National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations. (2021). *Early care and education environment indicators of high-quality inclusion and observation*. https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/ECEE_Indicators_Observation-Tool.pdf

For more information on shared expectations:

Behaviour Expectations Strategies and Poster

https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Expectations_EN-FR.pdf

