



Exploring behaviour guidance

How do educators support children when their behaviour is not helpful to themselves or to others around them?

“All children need to know that others care about them, know them well and are interested in what they do, think and feel. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security.” (DEEWR 2011, p.119)

In developing a strong sense of identity and wellbeing all children need to know that no matter what they can rely on a trusted adult to support them in their emotions and learning.

Often when behaviour becomes the focus of concern, it is because the behaviour is impacting on the child's ability to access learning opportunities or it may be affecting someone else's opportunities.

Over time there have been many strategies for 'managing' children's behaviour; strategies like, time out or a thinking chair. Current research and theory which underpin the learning frameworks, inform educators that these strategies do not promote wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security. So, if these strategies are no longer acceptable, then what can educators do? How do educators support children whose behaviour is not helpful to themselves or to others around them?

Human behaviour is very complex and no less so for children in education and care settings. It is important that educators feel supported in their work alongside children and have a range of strategies to use in supporting children. They need to ensure these strategies align with current research and theory. Beginning with the interrelated themes of belonging, being and becoming, educators who reflect on their practice (words and actions) and are responsive to children can assist in strengthening or developing strategies which will over time lead to changes in children's behaviour.

It is important educators can feel supported in their work alongside children to ensure the strategies they are using support the child's sense of belonging, being and becoming within the group and that they align with current research and theory.

Questions to guide reflection on practice:

How do we enable children to form and maintain positive relationships with others?

How do we ensure that our policy on interactions with children reflects current information about child development and best practice in guiding young children's behaviour?

How do we manage situations where we experience challenges in relation to guiding the behaviour of a child or group of children?

How do we meet older children's needs for independence and greater freedom?

How do we support educators when they are feeling stressed by or are having difficulty coping with a child's behaviour? (DEWR 2011, p. 130)

Professional learning with Gowrie SA

These sessions exploring relationships and attachment theory are scheduled in our professional learning guide and can also be delivered at your service. Call **(08) 8234 5219** to find out more.

Exploring behaviour guidance

This session will develop a deeper understanding of behaviour and an awareness of the role of educators. Explore new strategies based on relationships and plan for workplace reflection and learning.

Exploring Marte Meo

Discuss and explore concepts of the Marte Meo as an approach to guiding children's behaviour through improving and/or creating communication skills. The Marte Meo method gives us new ways of thinking about child and human development in general.

Introduction to attachment theory

Gain an awareness of attachment theories and an understanding of how this applies to relationships with children and families. Can this knowledge support us as we guide children's behaviour?

Circle of Security®

An ability to apply our understanding of The Circle of Security to our interactions with children, may be the most supportive measure in guiding their behaviour.

Responsive relationships: Supporting children and adults to build and maintain trusting relationships

This session will support participants to understand the educator's role in developing responsive and respectful relationships with children and gain insights into supporting children to develop self-regulation skills. Maintaining the dignity and rights of every child.

Reflective practice: Let's re-engage and re-examine

Explore the importance of critical reflection; examine personal and professional values and beliefs, and how these translate into service philosophies, practices and documentation

Physical environments: Planning environments that support relationships with children

Examine how the environment influences children's learning and relationships and share insights into the influence of adults in children's social and emotional development.

References:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) 2018, *The National Quality Standards*, ACECQA, NSW.

