

Positive child guidance essay



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Positive guidance and Challenging behaviour come hand in hand within early childhood sector . Throughout this essay, I will both describe and identify three challenging behaviours that we commonly see children exhibiting in the early childhood settings: Biting, Hitting, and Clinging. For each of these three behaviours, I will explain some possible causes as well as describing effective positive guidance strategies that may be used in an early childhood centre to support the child and minimise the occurrence of these behaviours, and show the importance of partnership with Whanau.

Biting is a behaviour seen in many early childhood settings, and many reasons exist to explain why children begin to bite others. Younger children may be teething, which pains their gums and relief is found in gnawing on items... even others limbs! Teething is a biological factor that contributes to biting. They may also simply be interested in what others taste or feel like and have decided to investigate this with their mouths. Older children may be imitating a new friend who bites and they have decided to trial this new activity. Attention seeking, intimidation, stress and frustration (Miller, 2007). an all provide reasons for a child to bite.

Another biological factor can be the frustration that comes with lack of communication. Stress, of course comes hand in hand with frustration, but links to being an emotional factor in life rather than existing biologics. Some children even bite because they realise that it brings them attention and they figure that even negative attention is better than no attention at all. Intimidation is a common emotional/social factor that can cause older children to bite (Miller, 2007). The best strategy for biting is prevention; therefore the appropriate teacher to child ratio needs to be addressed.

At our centre, we prevent by allowing a teacher to “ shadow” the biter in an attempt to stop this behaviour before he or she bites. Encouraging a strong emotional bond with a child is a good prevention method, this may cause the child to come to you with their problem rather than plunging right into a bite. (Miller, 2007) Additionally, one should consider the environment in which the children occupy. If this environment is the same every day the child could become bored, and more susceptible to biting. The environment should be set out in a way that is optimal for children to play.

Clinging is a behaviour seen mostly in babies. It can definitely cause challenges. It is usual for young infants to share a significant bond with their primary caregiver and separation anxiety is generally to be expected when the child goes to people with whom they do not have an existing bond. This is all a part of them developing trust and can be placed as a biological factor (Miller, 2007). If a child clings to their parents, the teachers need to involve themselves with the child and do all that is possible to help this child feel loved and secure.

We must communicate with the Whanau, gain each other’s trust and remember it is in all likelihood just as hard for them to leave their child as it is for the new addition to the centre. Building good relationships between teachers and children will help children develop normal social and emotional skills in their future (Miller, 2007). Bringing in a familiar item such as a toy or a blanket for sleeping may be good way to help ease the transition. Each child should be allowed to bond with a particular staff member of their choice, so as when he/she is dropped off, they may begin to have one familiar person and relationship within the centre.

The teacher should take the child and allow for lots of cuddles, talk softly and calmly to the child and allow them to wave goodbye to their Whanau.

Distraction or diversion is a fantastic strategy once the parent has said goodbye as it will allow the child to find something to engage themselves with. Children hit others for a variety of different reasons. These can include attempts to gain attention, confusion and possibly even self-soothe. As adults and teachers we must take care in making sure to observe WHO, WHEN and WHY children hit in order to better understand why this behaviour may be occurring.

If we look closely enough, we may discover a pattern emerging from the child who suddenly has taken to hitting. Where the hitting occurs may tell of an emotional state, for example. If a child hits only while at their Childcare centre, there is likely something in that area that is upsetting to that child. When hitting takes place, it may also pose an opportunity for greater understanding. If a child hits only when they are obviously tired, this may purely be out of frustration or confusion. Who the child hits may in turn be very informative.

Hitting parents or caregivers tends to be testing the limits or a cry for attention (Kids' Behaviour, 2010). Any child can display challenging behaviour. Initially it is developmentally necessary in early life, and once in a while on a bad day or in an angry moment children continue to use this as they grow. This period is extended when parents separate, someone in the family is taken ill, relocation occurs or a new baby arrives. Events such as these are confusing and tricky for children and they often cope with this by extruding challenging behaviour (Kaiser & Rasminsky, 2003).

Penalizing children who hit straight after the behaviour is usually the best course of action in order to nip such behaviour in the bud. At my centre, once a child has struck another, we will first warn them, by reinforcing that we do not hit! If this does not prevent another hit, we remove them from the situation and take them to a quiet place, or a specific spot. We then tell them “ You hit, you sit! ” and “ It is not okay to hit your friends. ” We also make sure the child knows that the person they hit was hurt and upset.

Knowing the consequence of their actions is an important key to bringing an end to the hitting. In some cases of challenging behaviour, the Whanau’s involvement is important as consistency is vital when dealing with children displaying this behaviour. We need to make sure that all staff at the centre as well as Whanau, are on the same page, doing the same things, and all staff at the centre need to be practicing the same strategies and techniques. If these strategies fail regardless, outside help may be required, the Ministry of education, for example.

Over the course of this essay, I have addressed the issue of positive child guidance. I have identified three different challenging behaviours and a number of likely causes have been identified. Various strategies have been addressed to deal with each type of behaviour and the need for Whanau to be involved has been highlighted. I feel that positive guidance is the most effective way to deal with challenging behaviour and that if the correct strategies are adopted by the centre and the Whanau the results will be reflected in the behaviour and attitudes of the children.