

Problem Behaviors and Solutions!

Problem Behavior	Possible Reason/ Developmental meaning	Where/When Manifests?	Possible Strategy
Sleep Issues	Overstimulation/Understimulation in environment Lack of consistent schedule Separation anxiety Rule out other medical causes (e.g., sleep apnea)	Beginning bedtime routine Starting new sleep routine	Explanation & Transitional Warning Make bedtime routine soothing (e.g., Calming music, television off) Establish predictable and consistent routine Give child sensitive and nurturing messages (e.g., “You’re safe, I’m right here.”)
Mealtimes	Avoiding novel or undesired foods Finds environment more interesting (e.g., television, games) Negative attention Developmental Exploration (e.g., Exploring cause & effect of dropping food off of highchair)	Asked to eat a novel or disliked food Getting-up/ Wandering around eating	Rules (e.g., “No thank-you bite” rule) Change environment When-then (e.g., “When you sit down, then that tells me you’re ready for more.”)
Disobey/ Defiance (not trauma related)	Requested to perform an unpleasant activity (e.g., Diapering/toileting) Overwhelmed by commands given/ unrealistic expectations	Home Daycare/ Preschool Community	Be Direct Hand-over-Hand 2 choices (e.g., “You can have a diaper change now or in 5 minutes.”) Re-doing

Aggressive and/or Possessive of toy or object	Not getting what is wanted Limit being set Does not have words to express feelings or social skills to resolve conflict	Home Daycare/ Preschool Community	If/then (e.g., “If you throw the toy again, then I will put the toy away.”) Re-do Redirect aggression and model appropriate behavior
Screams/ Easily upset/ Hard to calm	Not getting what is wanted Does not have words to express feelings or ability to self-regulate	Demands attention Home Daycare/Preschool Community	Ignore Reinforce appropriate expression of feelings When/Then (e.g., “When you are calm, then I can help you.”) Acknowledge feelings and teach skills when child is in a calm state
Careless/ Destructive with others’ things	Skills deficit	Home Daycare/ Preschool	Natural/Logical Consequences Modeling Hand-Over-Hand
Interrupts/ Seeks attention	Wants something/needs help	Parent talking with other adults Sharing attention with siblings	Acknowledge child before moving on to adult task Warnings Ignore
Overactive or Underactive	Over stimulating environment Low stimulation activities Lack of nap/ quiet-time	Social Activities Daycare/ Preschool	Observe for signs of overstimulation and remove /calm Practice attention (timer and attention breaks) Use PRIDE to engage