



Helpful Hints on Offering Children Choices



One way to reduce challenging behavior is to allow a young child to make choices among activities, materials, snacks, play partners, and many other possibilities. Here are 6 tips to remember when offering children choices:



Choices should be offered **immediately before** an activity that has been associated with challenging behavior.



Offer only **two or three possible selections** for a child to choose from. Too many options can be overwhelming to young children.



Choices may need to be **presented in a variety of ways** (e.g., pictures, talking devices, objects) to ensure children with all abilities can make meaningful choices. Many young children require visual cues in order to make accurate choices.



Remember that some children may not know how to make choices and will need some **careful instruction** from an adult before the choice-making procedure can be effective.



The choices should be **presented positively**, and **all of them should be acceptable** to the child and adults. If something is not acceptable or available, do not offer it as a choice.



The child's selection should be **honored immediately**. Delayed selections do not tend to be effective with young children.