

## **LITTLE LEARNERS, BIG EMOTIONS: NAVIGATING KINDERGARTEN BEHAVIOR**

*by:*

**Louise Anne S. Labarentos**

*Teacher II, Daang Bago Elementary School*

A child's first exposure to formal learning outside of the home usually takes place in kindergarten. It's a period of intense emotion as well as excitement, development, and curiosity. Children are only starting to comprehend their emotions, express their wants, and engage socially in a group environment at this developmental time. Kindergarten behavior management is, therefore, a crucial and challenging duty for teachers.

Children of any age are developing their ability to manage a wide range of emotions, including pride, joy, frustration, and grief. Their capacity for self-control is still growing, though. Instead of being an indication of common misbehavior, tantrums, impulsive behavior, and difficulties sharing or waiting turns are signs of a growing emotional and social skill set.

Teachers who work with kindergarteners need to know the "why" behind certain actions. A preschooler who tosses a toy, for instance, can be overwhelmed by the loudness of the classroom or may not yet understand how to ask for assistance. When teachers approach behavior as communication, they can respond more empathetically and effectively.

Establishing a secure, neat and tidy, and caring environment is one of the most effective strategies for behavior management in early life. Children feel more secure when they follow routines. They feel more in control and can better control their emotions when they know what to expect.

Clear, consistent, and positive speech should characterize classroom guidelines. Teachers may say, “We Walk to stay safe,” rather than, “Don’t run.” Other strategies that help steer young learners toward healthy behavior include visual calendars, transition cues, and calm-down corners. Teaching children in kindergarten the skills they require to survive socially and emotionally is the goal of behavior management, which goes beyond simply correcting bad behavior. This entails sharing, taking turns, verbally expressing emotions, and peacefully settling differences.

Children can practice these abilities in a safe setting with the aid of programs like SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) and strategies like role-playing, storybooks, and group discussions. Children who receive clear instruction on how to identify and control their emotions are less likely to misbehave and are more likely to form wholesome bonds with others.

Effective behavior management is based on both teachers and pupils having strong, positive relationships. Children are more likely to listen, cooperate, and participate when they feel appreciated, seen, and respected. When it comes to influencing future behavior, positive reinforcement—which involves praising and rewarding excellent behavior—may be more successful than punishment.

Involving families in the process is also crucial. Children receive consistent signals about expectations and values when there is regular communication between the family and the school.

Kindergarten behavior management is more about connection, guidance, and development than it is about control. Teachers may help children learn how to express themselves, positively engage with others, and become self-assured members of a learning community by being aware of the developmental requirements of young learners and fostering an environment of empathy and consistency. Every strong

emotion, after all, is the result of a young learner doing their hardest to comprehend the universe.

*References:*

<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/news/the-tapestry-of-childrens-big-emotions-strategies-that-support-social-emotional-learning>

<https://www.apa.org/topics/parenting/emotion-regulation>