

WHAT IS REDIRECTING?

Redirecting is a teaching strategy that addresses challenging behavior as soon as it begins and prevents it from escalating. A teacher who redirects behavior guides a child to alternative behaviors that are more acceptable.

WHY REDIRECT?

Redirecting:

- Stops a child from engaging in a challenging behavior before it escalates.
- Clearly describes the behavior expected and helps the child begin that behavior.
- Re-engages a child with appropriate activities and maximizes learning time.
- Maximizes learning time for all children in the classroom because they will not be distracted by the challenging behavior.

HOW DO I REDIRECT BEHAVIOR?

You are redirecting when you:

- Minimize the attention you give to the challenging behavior.
- Describe the behavior you expect from the child. ("You can ask for a turn nicely," or "We play with the trucks by driving them on the carpet.")
- Give positive attention or feedback. ("That's playing with the trucks safely. I see you are driving them on the carpet.") Or provide the desired object or activity to the child as soon as it is available.

Let's break this down. A child is trying to throw a ball over a fence. This is the behavior you **do not** want to see. There are several behaviors you **do** want to see—to throw the ball against a wall, play basketball, or play catch with a friend.

When you redirect, you **decrease** your attention to the "ball over the fence" and **increase** your attention to an appropriate behavior. The idea is to get the child's mind off the unacceptable behavior and on to a new acceptable behavior.

It's helpful to have interesting suggestions and engaging materials available when you are redirecting behavior.

WHEN DO I REDIRECT BEHAVIOR?

Here are several examples when it is appropriate to redirect behavior:

- When a child is off task, it can be used to bring attention back to the task.
- When a child uses materials inappropriately, it can remind the child how to use them properly.
- When a child talks out of turn, it can help the child wait for a turn.
- When a situation upsets a child, it can guide the child away from that situation. A teacher can also use this opportunity to address the child's feelings and engage the child in an alternate activity.

Remember: Redirect behavior to minimize challenging behavior and maximize children's learning.

Take a few moments to consider how you can incorporate this information in your daily practice.

