

Age-Appropriate Behavior Scenarios

Please read the scenario assigned to you, then answer the following questions:

1. Do you think this behavior or expectation is age-appropriate? (check the Guidebook if unsure)
2. If so, how could you explain this to the parents/co-workers/etc.?
3. Is there anything you can do to prevent this situation/problem from happening again?

1) Infant Scenario: Jamal is almost 10 months old and just entering the separation anxiety stage—when older babies or young toddlers resist separating from their primary caregiver. This is a normal part of growth and development and a milestone in social-emotional development that shows Jamal's attachment to his mother. Jamal's parents are concerned because he is now crying and clinging when his parents bring him in the morning. They are worried that something has happened to him since he didn't act this way for the previous 4 months he'd been at your center.

2) Toddler Scenario: You have been working with toddlers at the Stay-and-Play Child Care Center for over a year and love their energy and curiosity! A new teacher assistant is subbing with you and tells two toddlers struggling over a toy phone to "share nicely" which just escalates the fighting. She finally removes the toy and tells them no one can have it if they don't share. The toddlers are now both crying and whining for the phone and the rest of the class is starting to as well. The sub tells you that she is used to kindergartners and doesn't know what to do with toddlers.

3) Preschool Scenario: You have been running your own family child care home for a couple of years and have an extensive collection of dress up clothes that the children adore. A parent has just started her three and four year old sons in your program and seems very upset when he comes to pick his boys up and finds them dressed as princesses. This parent is concerned that dressing up in girl's clothes is inappropriate for boys and will cause them to be confused and teased. You are also upset because the boys love dressing up and you don't want to restrict children's imaginative play.

4) School-ager Scenario: You just started working in an afterschool program for 5-8 year olds at a local elementary school. The children are expected to do their homework as soon as they come in afterschool since this is what parents want. You notice that this is a constant struggle with children acting up and complaining (and doing very little actual homework.) Your supervisor asks what you think they should do. What do you think should change and how would you explain your reasons?