

A Clinical Treatment Guide to 10 Common Pediatric Behavioral Problems

Following Playground Rules



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Following rules of playground

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Following rules of playground

1. Preview rules before going to playground.

Your rules for the playground should be a short list, so that they easily fit on one index card.

The younger the child, the shorter the list (especially in the beginning). You can always add to the list once your child has learned how to respect your initial few rules. Also it is probably advisable to have shorter lengths of time on the playground in the beginning. This facilitates getting your child used to leaving the playground appropriately because of a greater number of opportunities to do so.

2. The consequence for breaking a rule is an immediate brief removal.

If your child breaks a rule, immediately go to your child, indicate what rule they broke and provide a brief removal from the playground area.

3. Set a limit on breaking rules.

On some days, it may seem that your child is forever testing you and the rules. There needs to be a point at which the playground experience is terminated as a consequence of such behavior. Therefore, tell your child that if you have to remove him more than a certain number of times, the playground activity will be immediately terminated. For example, if you designate that three removals is the limit, the following would occur. The first time your child broke a rule, he would simply be removed for a short period of time out. The same would happen for the second time. However, with the third rule violation, the playground experience is ended immediately and you both proceed to go home.

4. When it is over, it is over!

Whether it is an early departure (due to behavior) or the scheduled ending of the play activity, when you say, "It is time to go," that is it. Tell your child he has to the count of five to come to you. If he complies, I would suggest giving him a monetary reward (read Section IV in free downloadable ebook, Punishment on Trial, for further information on arranging consequences). Depending on the age of the child, a dime to a quarter can add up across several weeks. If the child does not comply and either ignores you and engages in tantrums, immediately physically take her away from the playground, with no monetary reward. You might also designate an additional consequence that day for failing to follow your directive to leave the playground, e.g., early bedtime, loss of TV

programs, etc.