



Early Childhood Program Expectations Matrix Development Instructions

Create a Program Expectations Matrix for your program or building by following these steps:

1	Review the example matrix below to see what an expectations matrix looks like. A matrix will be different for each program, and your goal is to personalize it for your context. Personalizing may include defining your own expectations and incorporating your program mascot and language in the matrix.
2	Work with a program team to create your own matrix using the Program Expectations Matrix template below.
3	As a team, identify your broad expectation categories. Usually 3 broad expectations work well for early childhood so it does not become overwhelming. Examples of categories may include be safe, be responsible, be respectful, be kind, be learners, try hard.
4	List the activities of the day where you would want to see students following expectations and list them in the “Activities” columns. For example, arrival, large group, circle, table time, play, snack, outside, rest time, bathroom.
5	For each box, list 2-4 behaviors that would demonstrate that expectation in that activity (e.g., what does safe look like at arrival, what does be kind look like during play). These are phrased as what children should do rather than what they should not do.
6	Introduce the matrix to all adults in the program and explain the rationale for the matrix and how it will be used.
7	Post the matrix in each of the activity areas. You will want to create mini matrices or posters that list the expectations for that area. See poster examples.
8	Introduce the matrix to all children in the program through lessons that occur in each of the activity areas. This involves providing lots of examples and a few non-examples, and give them an opportunity to practice. Provide lots of acknowledgement for practicing.

9	On a daily basis, give positive acknowledgement and descriptive praise to children for following the expectations, both individually and as a group. When children do not follow the expectations, provide a positively stated reminder of the expectation and refer to the posted matrix (e.g., “remember, being safe on the playground means staying inside the fenced area.”)
10	Remember to train all new staff to use the expectations and provide refreshers for all staff at least twice a year.

EXAMPLE

Program Expectations Matrix						
Activities						
	Arrival	Classroom	Playground	Hallway	Lunch	Bathroom
Be safe	• Use walking feet • Listen to adults	• Using walking feet • Use an inside voice • Listen to adults	• Rocks and wood chips stay on the ground • Sit on the slide • Watch for others	• Use walking feet • Stay with an adult	• Walk to the table • Push chairs in • Keep hands and feet to self • Keep food to self	• Walk in the bathroom • Wash hands with soap and water • One person in the stall at a time
Be kind	• Say hello to others • Offer to help	• Use kind words • Share with others • Take care of the classroom	• Use kind words • Share with others • Let others play • Keep hands and feet to self	• Use inside voice • Keep hands and feet to self	• Use good manners • Ask to be excused	• Wait your turn • Use inside voice • Keep hands and feet to self
Be responsible	• Put away your items in your cubby	• Be a helper • Follow directions • Clean up • Make good choices	• Use equipment correctly • Follow line-up rules • Clean up	• Use listening ears • Follow line-up rules	• Keep food on your plate • Clean up	• Flush the toilet • Turn off the water • Use one towel • Clean up

Program Expectations Matrix							
Activities							
	"Activity"	"Activity"	"Activity"	"Activity"	"Activity"	"Activity"	"Activity"
"Broad expectation 1"							
"Broad expectation 2"							
"Broad expectation 3"							