

Providing Choices

Video Transcript

Title Screen: Providing Choices, The Maryland EXCELS and Maryland State Department of Education logos.

This video is an animated presentation where the content on the slides is represented in the narration.

Narrator: Providing choices is an important strategy that helps children develop self-control, confidence, and decision-making skills. It helps to minimize power struggles and promotes responsibility and independence.

Providing choices creates a child-centered environment where children are able and encouraged to make decisions throughout the day. It's important to give children enough choices to feel empowered but not overwhelmed.

Provide children with guidance when they are struggling with their choices. Offer a couple of clear options. For example: "Would you like to build with blocks, or go to the art table?" Or "Would you like the farm puzzle or the city puzzle while you wait?"

Even when there isn't a choice, such as transitioning to another room, you can still offer a secondary choice: For example, "Would you like to stand next to Elisa or Anthony?" This small decision still gives the child a sense of control, while keeping things moving.

Offering choices is not about giving ultimatums. Avoid phrases like: "Play nicely or else you'll go to time out." Instead, frame it in a way that helps the child learn to navigate the situation: "You two can share that truck, or we can get another one from the box so you each have one."

Think about it. How does your program provide choices to children throughout their day?

Please take advantage of this time to answer the questions. This will help you build an effective Positive Guidance Policy or strengthen the policy your program already has.