Lesson 6.2 Expectations and Development of Children

**Goal:** To increase parents’ awareness of the impact expectations have on growth and development.

**Materials:** Parent Handbooks, clipboard/flip chart, magic markers, DVD player

## Procedures:

1. The focus of this lesson is on the impact expectations have on a child’s development.

2. The expectations we have for our children contribute to their overall feelings of negative or positive self-worth. Expectations that are appropriate and doable promote a healthy sense of self and communicate encouragement through achievement and effort. Appropriate developmental expectations also provide children with a sense of mastery and with the ability to please their parents. Pleasing parents goes a long way in making and carrying out family rules.

3. On the other hand, inappropriate expectations are an emotional form of cancer that ultimately kills a child’s sense of mastery, cooperation, participation and spirit. When expectations are inappropriate, children cannot please their parents no matter how hard they try. The likely result is a sense of failure.

4. Have each parent respond to the following:

One expectation my parents had for me that I did achieve was \_\_\_ and I felt \_\_\_\_.

**One expectation my parents had for me that I couldn’t achieve was \_\_ and I felt \_\_\_.**

**The outcome of these two actions in my adult life has been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

5. Growth and development is like a spiral going upward from a limited set of skills to more and more advanced skills, as children get older.

6. As children grow, they become more and more capable of doing things for themselves. This skill is called Autonomy. Autonomy and independence are nature’s way of helping all of us survive babyhood and grow to mature adults. Parents don’t always view this growth as desirable and often refer to it as a terrible period of development. The “terrible two’s” is a term used to describe adults’ resistance to children’s demands to become more autonomous.

7. Ask parents to complete the following:

**One way I see my child being independent is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**My response is usually \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

8. Referring to developing autonomy as “terrible” communicates to children that using your personal power to do things for yourself, have your own opinions, decide things for yourself and explore your environment are skills parents don’t condone. The message is: Children shouldn’t be seen or heard. Instead of the “terrible two’s,” let the children know that growth is terrific. The “terrific two’s” encourages and empowers children.

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9. Managing appropriate expectations of children is the initial step in developing discipline in a home. A

happy child with positive regard for self is an easier child to be with and manage than one who is angry, oppositional, and resentful.

10. Review the information in the **Parent Handbook** titled, **“Ages & Stages: Having Appropriate Expectations of Children.”**

a. Nature vs. Nurture.

b. Developmental stages are periods of time children grow and learn new things.

c. There are four kinds of developmental stages:

• Physical

• Language

• Intellectual

• Social and Emotional

d. Everyone goes through stages of growth throughout life.

e. Knowing what to expect at various stages of growth is important for children to develop a positive self-concept and self-esteem.

f. Parents who place inappropriate developmental expectations on their children encourage them to feel inadequate.

## Notes and Suggestions:

Expectations do have an effect on children, on their self-concept and performance. As teachers and parents, we need to be aware of how we can program our children for success by having positive and reasonable expectations.

**Visit Time:** As parents transition to the supervised visit, ask them to encourage their children if they are attempting a new skill or challenge. “Have them use language like Nice Try!” Or other positive phrases to support the growth and development of their child(ren)

**Post Visit:** If possible spend 10-15 minutes processing the visit after the children leave.

**Home Assignment:** Have parents list one short-term and one long-term expectation they have for their children.