

# Age Appropriate or Disruptive: Defiance in Preschoolers

## Age Appropriate

Saying no often: A common way preschoolers express independence and develop a sense of self.

Ignoring instructions: May reflect a desire for control or difficulty shifting attention.

Temper dysregulated behavior: Still typical at this age, especially when frustrated or unable to do something independently.

Testing boundaries: Small rule-bending, like delaying bedtime, helps children learn limits.

## Disruptive

Excessive aggression: Frequent or intense physical aggression beyond typical peer conflict.

Frequent prolonged outbursts: Emotional reactions lasting over 20 minutes or occurring many times per day.

Consistent noncompliance: Ongoing refusal to follow directions despite clear, consistent expectations.

Disruption to daily life: Behaviors that regularly interrupt routines and create significant family stress.

