



Dealing with Tricky Situations

Helpful responses for common challenges Age Managers face with young Nippers

Every session won't go exactly to plan—and that's okay! Kids are unpredictable, the beach is full of distractions, and you're doing your best. This quick guide will help you feel more confident responding to some of the most common tricky moments on the sand.

1. A child is crying or upset

What to do:

- Stay calm and crouch down to their level.
- Use a gentle tone: "It's okay to feel upset. Can you tell me what's wrong?"
- If needed, pair them with a buddy or helper for the next activity.
- Let their parent/guardian know with kindness—not guilt.

Avoid:

- Dismissing their feelings ("You'll be fine!") or pushing them to join if they're not ready.

2. A child refuses to participate

What to do:

- Offer a low-pressure alternative: "Want to help time the race?" or "You can watch this one and join when you're ready."
- Give them space without making it a big deal.
- Praise even small steps back into the group.

Avoid:

- Forcing or singling them out. Gentle encouragement works better than insistence.

3. A child is being disruptive or not listening

What to do:

- Calmly get their attention: "Can you come stand next to me for a moment?"
- Use "when/then" language: "When we're all quiet, then we can start the game."
- Give a role or responsibility if they need more focus.

Avoid:

- Calling them out in front of the group. Quiet redirection is more effective.

4. Two kids are having conflict

What to do:

- Step in early and stay neutral.
- Encourage both to explain: “Tell me what happened—one at a time.”
- Reinforce group values: “We all want to have fun and be fair.”
- If needed, separate for a short break before re-joining.

Avoid:

- Taking sides too quickly or using blame-based language.

5. A child seems shy or withdrawn

What to do:

- Greet them warmly by name and stay nearby.
- Pair them with a buddy or a gentle activity.
- Celebrate their small wins—just showing up is a big deal.

Avoid:

- Pushing them into big group activities before they’re ready.

6. A child seems shy or withdrawnIn Case of Injury or Emergency

- Call the **first aid officer** immediately—do not try to assess alone.
- Keep the group calm and together while support arrives.
- Follow club protocols and report as required.

Final Thought: You're Not Alone

Even the most experienced Age Managers face these situations. If you’re unsure, ask a fellow volunteer, patrol member, or the JAC. You’re part of a team—and the kids are lucky to have you.

