

DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR

Definition:

The destruction of items, such as furniture, doors or toys.

Behavior:

Why could this be happening?

- A child has experienced major changes (i.e. new baby in the home, illness or death of a family member, moving to a new home).
- Medical concerns (chronic ear infections, chronic pain, sensory integration issues).
- Limits are not stated or enforced consistently regarding this behavior.

Typical Development:

- Children under age 2 ½ typically “experiment” with some destructive behavior (ripping paper or books, throwing objects).
- As a child gains more verbal skills and self-control, destructive behavior usually decreases.

When to be Concerned:

- If the severity of the child’s behavior endangers other children or adults.
- If the behavior appears to be out of the child’s control.
- If the behavior is repetitive and doesn’t decrease as the child grows older.

Possible Resources:

Help Me Grow, Early Childhood Family Education, pediatrician, mental health professional, early childhood screening