

Emotional Differences

Emotional differences in children

Physical maturity does not necessarily produce emotional maturity. Children can be large and well built for their age and yet be self-conscious about themselves. Emotionally immature children may:

- Appear to be a little shy or hyper-sensitive
- Be easily distracted
- Lack confidence
- Demonstrate poor emotion control in a variety of situations
- Be easily led by other children
- Not know how to adjust to the different personalities they face in a group situation

Children who are awkward, not good at motor skills or obese, may face a hard life with peers, and their estimation of self-worth may be seriously affected unless adult guidance is sensitive and wise. A good leader is aware of the different personalities and the differences in emotional maturity of the children in his/her charge. A leader can build a child's emotional well-being by ensuring that as far as possible appropriate roles and activities are provided for children. This helps to build their confidence and avoids them being exposed to public failure or humiliation.

Catering for differences

In order to cater for individual difference:

- Approaches and expectancies for skill learning must differ from individual to individual
- Emphasis should be put on the child's own progress, and not on comparing achievements with those of others
- Individualised instruction and individualised challenges should be provided
- A broad array of activities should be planned and presented
- Activities should be of an increasingly complex nature and be challenging but certainly 'doable'
- Where possible, children of approximately the same skill levels (eg. beginning, developing, extending) should be grouped together for instructional purposes

Children who are enthusiastic, learn quickly, get on with others and have a happy disposition are a delight to teach. Fortunately most children display several of these characteristics. But not all do and few do all of the time. An AusTouch Leader's job is not just to coach the easiest and best children . . . it is about engaging all children in the activity process.

Look out for those who may need special help

AusTouch Leaders should observe children they work with to detect those children who:

- Lose concentration most readily
- Always want to be first or have difficulty sharing
- Have difficulty remembering or following instructions
- Give up most readily
- Are picked on or are ignored by others
- Are quick to anger or to express dissatisfaction
- Express frustration or appear confused
- Bully or try to dominate others
- Become withdrawn and reluctant to participate

These children especially should be assisted to overcome behaviours that will impede their enjoyment, learning or the learning of others in the group. Ignoring these factors that can disrupt the group and impede learning can result in the leading / teaching / coaching role becoming more and more difficult and children dropping out of the AusTouch program.