

# INVITATIONS FOR LEARNING

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## *Asking Preschoolers to stand in Line Invites PUSHING*

Standing in line invites the child to:

- Push the child in front of him/her
- Be loud to be heard
- Knock over someone to get what he/she wants
- Run to be faster than the others
- Take it first, because they might not get a turn
- Do something to make sure the "world" recognizes him/her

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At a preschool program I was visiting the teacher said, "Okay boys and girls time to get your coat on and get in line the bus is coming." I watched as 18 preschoolers, scrambled to get their coats on and then rushed to get in line. Once they were in line a child started to push the child that was in front of him. The teacher came over and said, "We don't push our friends. You are going to have to get in the back of the line now". The child was placed at the end of the line and started to push the whole line of children. At that point the children started to scream, "Teacher he is pushing again." The teacher came over and made the child stand next to her.

I thought to myself, how hard it is for adults to stand in lines and for preschoolers even more challenging.

What are the skills needed to be able to stand in line:

- Spatial (where does my body end and yours begin?)
- Time (how long do I have to stand here?)
- Recognizing Others (do they have the same needs and desires as me?)
- Self Control (can I push when I am frustrated?)
- Delayed Gratification (do I have to wait to get what I want?)

All of these skills develop and grow at different levels and different times for each of us. Do you know some adults who do not have these skills yet?

Having young children stand in a line invites them to push and shove. It is not the child's fault but the adult who created the challenge.

## *No More Lines*

- *Small clusters (Have children move in small clusters rather than all together at once)*
- *Hula Hoops ( If you have to move children all together have them hold onto a hula hoop. There is no beginning and no end)*
- *Make sure you plan for transitions (What will the children be doing? ex. singing, movement)*
- *No waiting (Have multiples of the same, so children do not have to share or wait for a turn)*
- *Hallway movements (Walking is to high of an expectation, encourage hopping, slithering, crawling and running)*
- *Pushing activities (Rather than telling children, “No Pushing”, what can they push? ex. boxes, carts on wheels )*