

MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS IN THE HOME

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Edison Township Public Schools

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OVERVIEW: GOALS

- Getting my Child to Listen
- Reinforcing Desired Behaviors
- Addressing Challenging Behaviors

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WE'RE EITHER WORKING TOGETHER OR AGAINST EACH OTHER



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PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

- People learn by observing the behavior of others *and* the consequences of that behavior
- Children's behavior can be shaped, modified, and developed when the variables affecting that behavior are understood and effectively altered
 - Necessary condition which a parent must accept for effective behavioral intervention
- Contingencies (behavior → consequence) are learned faster when they are explained clearly and implemented consistently

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PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Antecedents and consequence interventions are designed to change the rate at which a behavior occurs

Antecedents	Behaviors	Consequences
What happens before a behavior	Appropriate or inappropriate behavior	What happens after a behavior

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THE PRINCIPLES IN PICTURES



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PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

- A. Pinpointing presenting problem
- B. Determining response characteristics
 1. Frequency
 2. Intensity
 3. Duration
- C. Obtaining history of problem
- D. Identifying current probable controlling variables
- E. Selecting tentative targets for intervention

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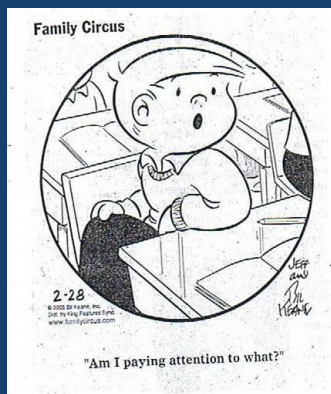
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BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

- A. Physical
 1. Motoric restlessness
 2. Excitable temperament
 3. Hyperactive
 4. Physical disabilities (including gross-motor, fine-motor, vision, hearing)

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BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

- B. Cognitive
 1. Impulsive
 2. Paying attention sporadically
 3. Forgetfulness
 4. Knowing vs. doing
 5. Deficient cognitive & communication skills

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BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

- C. Behavioral
 1. Impulsive
 2. Avoids/escapes effortful tasks
 3. Disruptive/noncompliant

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BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

- D. Affective
 1. Emotional
 2. Deficient in self-regulation
 3. Anger/frustrates easily



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BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

E. Communication

1. Non-verbal communication weaknesses
2. Comprehension poor
3. Weaknesses in functional communication

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BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION

F. Resources

1. Knowledge of strategies
2. Personnel available
3. Funds available
4. Time to implement strategies
5. Consistency

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HOW TO IDENTIFY CONSEQUENCES

- A. Observe the child's actions
- B. The Reinforcement Inventory
- C. Functional Assessment Scale: attention, escape/avoid, tangible, sensory
- D. Information between school and home

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FUNCTION OF BEHAVIOR

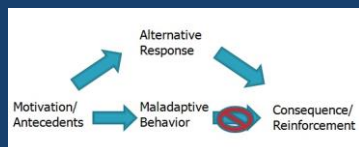
- To get something you want
 - Adult attention
 - Peer attention
 - Tangible object, event or activity
 - Automatic positive reinforcement (sensory)
- To avoid/escape something you don't want
 - A task that is too long
 - A task that is too difficult
 - A social situation
 - Automatic negative reinforcement (sensory)

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REPLACE THE INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- Identify replacement behaviors (what do you want your child to do instead?)
- Use 'teachable moments'
- Include a list of behaviors that are more appropriate to teach them



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PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

- A. Giving commands
 1. Following directions vs. selective attention
 2. Simple vs. multiple commands
- B. Coercive process
 1. Loud, louder, loudest
 2. Getting your child's attention
- C. Actions or personality traits
 1. Good vs. stubborn
 2. Be specific about what you want

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GRADUALLY DECREASE CONTROL

- Child needs to gradually feel and become empowered (shaping behavior)
- There needs to be a gradual shifting in control from the parent to the child
- Child needs to understand that he/she makes choices and has control over his/her actions
- Boundaries and limits need to remain, with child understanding the connection between his/her actions and consequences

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"CONFRONTATION-TIME" RULES (BECAUSE SOMETIMETHINGS DON'T GO SMOOTHLY)

- Take turns speaking
- Listen to each person
- Try to understand one another's perspective
- Use soft "inside" voice
- Write out feelings if screaming occurs
- Find a good time to discuss feelings
- Use "I feel" statements rather than blaming "You" statements
- Problem-solve together possible solutions, then evaluate each based on whether it is safe, fair, how each person would feel, and whether it would work

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REMOVING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS & PROMOTING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

- A. Improving Attention and Compliance
- B. Antecedent Interventions: Making it less likely child will be upset/frustrated and more likely that he/she is comfortable with the activity or request
- C. Increase child's ability to communicate (wants, needs, comments, protest, feelings).
 1. Incorporating textual/word cue, picture prompts, "stop" signs, etc.

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REMOVING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS & PROMOTING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

- D. Positive Consequences
 1. Differential attention ("Catch being good")
 2. Reinforcement Hierarchy
 - a. Self-reinforcement
 - b. Social reinforcement

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REMOVING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS & PROMOTING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

*Systematic Praise

STEPS

1. Identify/pinpoint behaviors
2. Increase proximity and make eye contact
3. Describe in detail
4. Praise
5. The Zap Trap (avoid saying "You did a great job, *but* you should have done that 20 minutes ago.")
6. The Pony Express (sharing positive behaviors with family members, friends)

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REMOVING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS & PROMOTING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

- c. Activities as reinforcement
 - Premack Principle: doing something more desirable follows something less desirable (e.g., "First homework, then TV.")
 - d. Symbolic reinforcer
 - e. Use of choices
 - f. Special time
3. Reinforcement Inventory

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NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

1. Planned Ignoring
2. Reprimands
3. Response Cost
4. Boredom Punishments

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NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

5. Freeze Technique: withholding or "freezing" reinforcing activities / privileges until compliant
6. Effort Consequences
 - a. Simple correction
 - b. Over-correction
 - c. Positive practice
7. Sit and Watch (time out variation)
 - a. Include teaching interaction

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LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

- The if _____ then _____ proposition (or When you ____, then __)
- Who's consequence is this anyway?
- Attitudes and emotions

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DOS AND DON'TS

- Don't say, "We'll see" (very vague and conveys that there is no commitment)
- Don't take away everything child enjoys or owns as a consequence to negative behavior just because you are frustrated (Do adhere to contract and set it up so child needs to earn preferred items.)
- Don't say, "I don't care what all your friends are doing." (Do validate child's feelings, showing an understanding of how this must be frustrating, embarrassing, etc.)

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DOS AND DON'TS

- Don't keep reminding the child what he/she needs to do. Do use Socratic Questioning to encourage the child to internalize what he/she needs to do
- For example:
 - "What do you think you should do if you want to have money to buy...?"
 - "Where can you go if you are confused about...?"
 - "What should you do if you forget which way to go...?"

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DOS AND DON'TS

- Don't try to control your child
 - This will only increase animosity and friction. Goal for child will shift to either expressing frustration or resolving issue, rather than focusing on goal of independence
 - Better to revisit goal and related contract
 - Discuss with child that his/her actions are within his/her control and he/she has the choice to act upon feelings or not. As long as the consequences (+/-) are clear, the child has opportunity to make "informed" decisions about his/her behavior

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HELPFUL HINTS AND REMINDERS

- A. There are rarely immediate solutions (*Rome wasn't built in a day!*)
- B. Keep a record of child's behavior and your behavior (frequency, duration, antecedents, consequences)
- C. Figure out the function of your child's behavior (to gain attention, escape or avoid something unpleasant, to get something he/she wants)
- D. Determine the effectiveness of the rewards (should be strong and immediate)

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HELPFUL HINTS AND REMINDERS

- E. Be sure there is not an *overemphasis* on punishment
- F. Be sure to *emphasize* skill building
- G. Importance of antecedent interventions to facilitate success
- H. Praise and reward your child *and* yourself: increase the *positive interactions!*

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WHAT CAN YOU DO?

• The 4 P's:

- Point Out
- Prompt
- Practice
- Praise



Christophersen, E. & Mortweet VanScoyoc, S. (2003). *Strategies for Teaching Important Social Skills to Young Children*. Developmental and Behavioral News, Autumn 2003.

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RESOURCES

- Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) <http://www.spanadvocacy.org/>
- Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) <http://www.chadd.org>
- Autism New Jersey <https://www.autismnj.org/>
- The Learning Disabilities Association of NJ (LDANJ) <https://www.ldanj.org/>

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KEEP MOVING FORWARD



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