Strides in the Development of Social Understanding and Social Behavior

By four to five years of age, preschoolers begin to:

- Understand truth, emotions and fairness.
- Share play schemes.
- Understand how thoughts and beliefs affect behavior.
- Respond to the emotions and actions of others.
- Resolve conflict through compromise, taking turns, persuading, negotiating and using humor.
Five Areas Associated With School Readiness

In 1997, the National Education Goals Panel identified five areas associated with school readiness:

1) Health and physical development.
2) Emotional well-being and social competence.
3) Approaches to learning.
4) Communication skills.
5) Cognition and general knowledge.
The Goal of Pre-K SEL Training

The goal of the Pre-K SEL training is to strengthen the capacity of preschool programs to improve the social and emotional outcomes of young children.
Reasons for Pre-K Social-Emotional Learning Training

- Promote school readiness

- Identify social-emotional problems in children early

- Understand risk and resiliency of young children

- Prepare teachers to promote social-emotional learning
Ready for School

Children who are ready for school:

- Learn through exploration and discovery.
- Attend by sitting, staying focused and completing a task.
- Make and keep friends and play with others.
- Trust adults for guidance, direction, comfort, information and praise.
- Cope with classroom routines, large group activities and expectations of friends and teachers.
Developmental Pathways

Long-term negative consequences

No intervention

Cluster of problem behaviors

Positive outcomes

Intervention

Social-emotional learning

Problem Behavior
**The Teaching Pyramid**
A model for supporting social competence and preventing challenging behavior in young children

- Positive relationships with children, families, and colleagues
- Classroom preventive practices
- Social and emotional teaching strategies
- Intensive individualized interventions
Developmentally Healthy Children

By kindergarten, healthy children are developmentally ready to:

- Handle materials (crayons, scissors, pencils, balls, blocks).
- Listen.
- Express feelings.
- Express their thoughts.
- Discriminate shapes, colors, sounds and smells.
- Move freely (walk, run, jump, climb, ride).
Early Developmental Tasks

▶ **Emergence of self-control and independence** — Making the transition from requiring help from others to regulating one's emotions, behaviors and attentions to regulating them by oneself (self-regulation).

▶ **Language, reasoning and problem solving** — Acquiring the skills that undergird communication and learning.

▶ **Relationships** — Learning to relate well to other children and forming friendships, including the emerging capacity to trust, to love and nurture, and to resolve conflicts constructively.
Skills that Promote School Success

- Accurately identify emotions in themselves and others.
- Relate to teachers and friends in positive ways.
- Manage feelings of anger, frustration and distress.
- Enjoy academic learning and approach it enthusiastically.
- Work attentively, independently and cooperatively in a structured classroom environment.
Factors That Cause Children to Be less Likely to Succeed in School

- Frequently fight, hit, shout or use other aggressive behaviors
- Cannot control impulsive behavior
- Cannot pay attention to tasks or follow directions
- Are oppositional, noncompliant or defiant
- Cannot cooperate with others
- Constantly seek attention from teachers and friends
- Ignore teachers or friends
Factors in a Preschool Classroom Environment That Affect Social-Emotional Development

- Quality of child care
- Age starting child care
- Hours in care
- Classroom climate
Indicators of Quality Child Care

- Well-trained teachers
- Small classes
- Clear goals
- Responsiveness to children and families
- Focus on the whole child
- Strong, positive teacher-child relationships
- Active learning
- Focus on teacher education
Understanding Temperament – A Tool

Understand temperament

Structure classroom

Individualize responses

Improve observation

Pre-K Social-Emotional Learning Instructor Manual
Nine Temperament Traits

- Activity level
- Regularity
- Approachability
- Sensitivity
- Adaptability
- Intensity
- Mood
- Distractibility
- Persistence/attention
Activity Level

Low Activity Level (Quiet)

- Prefers quiet activities
- Moves at a slow pace
- Has good fine motor skills
- Acquires gross motor skills at slower pace
- Is sometimes misunderstood as mentally slow
- Is content to stay put
- Depends on parents longer
Activity Level

High Activity Level (Energetic)

- Prefers physical activities
- Moves constantly
- Has good gross motor skills
- Dislikes being confined (car seats)
- Likes doing things themselves
- Learns by doing
- Needs positive ways to release energy
- Tends to get *revved up*
- Hard to calm down after high activity
Regularity

Low Average High

Low Regularity (Unpredictable)

- Has sleep, hunger and bowel patterns that vary from day to day
- Has difficulty with regular bed/mealtimes
- Is harder to toilet train
- Is often messy because of lack of daily routines
Regularity

High Regularity *(Predictable)*

- Needs regular sleep times and mealtimes
- Has difficulty with changes in bed/mealtimes
- Regular bowel patterns so easier to toilet train
- Can *set your clock* by them
- Has more routines in daily behavior
Approachability

Low Approach (Withdrawing)

♦ Likes familiar things, people, places and events

♦ Rejects new things, people, places and activities at first

♦ Is cautious; needs time to warm up to new things

♦ May act shy initially

♦ Learns by watching (observer)
Approachability

High
(Approaching)

♦ Enjoys new things, people, places and events
♦ Is quick to try new things
♦ Explores everything
♦ Can be accident prone if active
♦ Is social and outgoing
♦ Is a hands-on learner (doer)
Sensitivity

Low
Average
High

Low Sensitivity

- Has difficulty identifying emotions
- Has high tolerance for discomfort or pain
- Has difficulty reading social cues
- May be unaware of how he affects others
- Is often seen as tough
Sensitivity

High Sensitivity

♦ Is sensitive to sights, sounds, touch, texture and smell

♦ Is more distressed by illness and injuries

♦ Is easily overstimulated or overwhelmed

♦ Is empathetic to others feelings

♦ May have feelings that are easily hurt
Adaptability

**Low**
*(Slow to Adapt)*

- Is inflexible—resists change
- Has difficulty with transitions, changes and intrusions
- Needs a regular routine or schedule
- Takes time to adjust
- Likes control so power struggles frequent
- Needs structure
Adaptability

High (Fast Adapting)

♦ Is flexible—accepts change easily
♦ Makes transitions easily
♦ Does not need a regular routine or schedule
♦ *Goes with the flow*
♦ Is less likely to engage in power struggles
♦ Travels well
♦ May let controlling children take advantage
Intensity

Low

♦ Is generally quiet and calm
♦ May be difficult to read emotions
♦ Has difficulty expressing emotions

High

♦ Is loud, dramatic, with strong feelings
♦ Has extreme emotions
♦ Laughs and cries easily
Mood

Low (Negative)
- Is fussy or cranky
- Is serious
- Is easily upset
- Has a negative attitude
- Is often difficult to comfort

High (Positive)
- Is happy, smiles and laughs a lot
- Is generally content
- Is less easily upset
- Has a positive attitude
Distractibility

Low

♦ Is difficult to distract

♦ Is focused; *tunnel vision*
Distractibility

High

✦ Is highly observant (*nothing gets by him*)
✦ Is easily distracted from tasks or activity
✦ Has difficulty concentrating
✦ Changes activities often
✦ Is perceptive
✦ Pays attention to and is overwhelmed by details
Persistence/Attention

Low

- Has poor attention to task
- Has difficulty practicing new skills or activities
- Gives up easily
- Likes adults around to help
- Is easily frustrated
- Switches activities easily
Lesson 3: Visual Aid 11b

Persistence/Attention

High (Persistent)

- Has good attention to task
- Has difficulty stopping an activity or task
- Is stubborn
- Practices new task over and over
- Likes playing alone
- Is not easily frustrated
Effect of Temperament on Adjustment to Child Care

**Adjusts easily:**
- Positive mood (do best)
- Approaching (likes new experience)

**Has difficulty adjusting:**
- Highly active
- Withdrawing
- Highly sensitive
- Negative
- Irregular
Risk Factors

- Single parent homes
- Lack of financial resources
- Parents with mental health problems
- Poverty
- Child abuse and neglect
- Low maternal education
- Teen parent
- Frequent moves
- Parental substance abuse
Risk Factors, continued

- Harsh parenting
- Lack of supervision
- Witnessing family conflict or violence
- Multiple caregivers
- Family conflict
- Lack of involvement by father
- Early aggressive behavior
- Trauma
Protective Factors

- Healthy parents
- Appropriate learning materials and experiences in the home
- Quality child care
- Self-control
- Parental supervision
- Warm, responsive, engaged and consistent parents
- Independence
- Positive relationship with a caring adult
Attachment Patterns

In general, attachment patterns:

- Are established in early childhood.
- Predict how successful a person will be at forming relationships throughout life.
- Are stable through a lifetime if there are no major changes.
Self-Regulation

- Sleep/wake cycles
- Sensory input
- Emotions
- Right/wrong
- Compliance
- Internalize acceptable and unacceptable behavior
Characteristics of Emotionally Competent Children

Emotionally competent children:

- Get along better with friends.
- Recognize one’s own emotions and the emotions of others.
- Manage negative emotions and impulses.
- Are less likely to use aggression.
- Show empathy and caring.
- Use appropriate social skills.
- Are better able to concentrate.
- Are better able to cope with problems.
## Tantrum or Meltdown?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional meltdowns:</th>
<th>Tantrums:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▶ Occur when children are overly stimulated or experience emotions that exceed their ability to cope.</td>
<td>▶ Occur most frequently when children are trying to establish their independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Require adults to help child to regain control by comforting and soothing and when calm, then addressing the problem.</td>
<td>▶ Begin as a <em>resistance</em> to an adult but often end with compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Require adults to provide reassurance once the child does what is asked.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Autonomy

- Is a sense of independence—act for a purpose, to achieve a goal

- Develops during second and third year

- Includes internal code of behavior

- Results in **defiance** when child gives up goal and resists adult
Initiative

- Is self-directed
- Includes the intent to act
- Develops during preschool
Development of Autonomy and Initiative

- Autonomy and initiative develop when children have firm limits, opportunities to explore, make choices and practice new skills.

- Children are more compliant and less defiant when adults provide firm limits with some choices.

- Children are more likely to be defiant when adults are intrusive, negative and controlling.
Frightening Conclusion

I have come to a frightening conclusion.

I am the decisive element in the classroom.

It is my personal approach that creates the climate.

It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous.

I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.

I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.

In all situations, it is my response that decides if a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.

— Haim Ginott, 1995
The **Teaching Pyramid**

A model for supporting social competence and preventing challenging behavior in young children

Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003
Quote from *Neurons to Neighborhoods*

Young children grow and thrive in the context of close and dependable relationships that provide love and nurturance, security, responsive interaction and encouragement for exploration. Without at least one such relationship, development is disrupted and the consequences can be severe and long-lasting. If provided or restored, however, a sensitive caregiving relationship can foster remarkable recovery (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000, p. 389).
The Importance of Teacher-Child Relationships

“A beautiful space and an elaborate curriculum—like a beautiful home—can be impressive, but without skilled and stable child care providers, they will not promote positive development”

(Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000, p. 315).
Common Attributions

- Effort
- Ability
- Luck
- Degree of difficulty
- Health
- Mood
- Physical appearance
- Behavior of others
Impact of Teacher Warmth, Responsiveness and Low Directiveness on Children

- Helps children adjust to the classroom.
- Promotes feeling of security.
- Fosters learning and use of prosocial skills, social reasoning skills and caring.
- Promotes exploration, complex play, creative play and friendships.
- Promotes cognitive development.
- Reduces behavior problems.
Reasons for Understanding Temperament

- Expands understanding of what is normal
- Helps understand children’s behavior
- Helps anticipate issues
- Helps plan specific approaches to issues
- Helps provide a better fit between the child and the classroom environment
Guidelines for Communicating with Children

- Talk one at a time.
- Talk as little as possible.
- Allow children to take the lead in talking.
- Be an active listener.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Allow time for responses to questions and directions.
- Be nonjudgmental in acknowledging children's responses.
Teacher Behaviors Linked to Insecure Attachment

- Ignoring negative emotions
- Failing to respond to a child’s distress
- Unpredictability
Strategies to Support Positive Relationships with Families

- Model accepting and sensitive behavior.
- Make affirming statements.
- Enhance parents' sensitivity with their child.
Steps for Connecting with Families

1. Listen to parents

2. Validate

3. Respect parents

4. Problem solve as partners
Healthy Relationships Benefit Staff, Children and Families

- Teachers enjoy their work.
- The quality of care is improved.
- Children benefit by learning about cooperation, respect and caring from the adults in their lives.
- Children feel more secure with less staff turnover.
- Parents feel more comfortable when they can leave their children in a safe and caring environment.
Challenges Working with Other Adults in Early Care Settings

- Caring for young children can be emotionally and physically draining.
- Teachers often share limited space, supplies and duties.
- Teachers are often frustrated if they must clean another teacher’s mess.
- Teachers have different temperaments and cultural and educational backgrounds and therefore may not approach problems in the same manner.
What is Play?

- Is voluntary and spontaneous, directed by the child.
- Is fun.
- Has no end goal in mind.
- Involves players actively.
- Involves exploring (child builds, creates, learns).
- Is defined by the child (rules, roles, themes).
- Expresses child’s thoughts and feelings.
Influences on Play

- Developmental status
- Environment
- Gender
- Special needs
Imaginary Friends

- Occurs equally among boys and girls.
- Occurs between the ages of three to seven.
- May last about three years.
- Acts as if imaginary friend is real, but child know friend is not real.
- Represents who a child wants to be, a scapegoat for bad behavior, someone to care about or someone to care about them.
Ways to Handle Imaginary Friends

- Accept and enjoy glimpses into child’s world.

- Avoid showing too much enthusiasm or asking specific questions.

- Take opportunities to distinguish between real and pretend.

- Seek help if child refuses to play with others, displays disturbing behaviors and does harm to others.
Aggressive Play

- Some aggressive play helps children learn to control impulses, integrate ideas of good and bad and gives a sense of competence.

- Highly aggressive play is a concern when it becomes increasingly more violent and repeats the same themes over and over with no resolution.
Strategies for Dealing with Aggressive Play

- Accept that children need a way to express anger and frustration.

- Join children at times in the play and talk for the aggressor or the victim to give a perspective on how others feel.

- Take on the role of the aggressor in the play if it is escalating and introduce a more cooperative theme.

- Terminate play if it escalates out of control.
Scaffolding Play

- Allow freedom to choose activities.
- Provide interesting playthings.
- Help children play with others.
- Help children plan their play.
- Help children develop roles.
- Allow sufficient time to play.
- Be a supportive player.
Teachers as Supportive Players

- Listen.

- Enter the scene only when needed.

- Be a supporting actor, not the star! *Follow children’s lead.*

- Make comments.

- Support children’s roles—make them look good!

- Do not judge what is happening except for ways you can help extend the play.

- Help children extend their pretend play theme with open-ended comments.

- Make comments that cause the child to extend thinking and problem solving.
# Child Engagement Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th><strong>A</strong> Number of Children Present</th>
<th><strong>B</strong> Number of Children Disengaged</th>
<th><strong>C</strong> Percent Disengaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.375</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.417</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Teacher and Child Engagement Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Number Children Present</th>
<th>Number Children Disengaged</th>
<th>Number Adults Present</th>
<th>Number Adults Disengaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Engagement Strategies

- Alternate favored activities and materials with less well-liked activities and materials.

- Allow an appropriate length of time—not too long, not too short.

- Give positive attention to children at all times (one-on-one, small group or larger group).

- Get children’s attention.
The Classroom Environment

The classroom environment includes:

- Adult-child interactions.
- Classroom design.
- Support for learning and use of appropriate behavior.
- Positive attention for appropriate behavior.
- Teaching classroom routines and rules.
- Interesting and appropriate materials.
Appropriate and Motivating Curriculum

- Is neither too easy nor too hard as measured by children’s engagement.

- Includes open-ended activities that allow children to make choices.

- Is appropriate to children’s interests, abilities, cultures and temperaments.

- Builds on children’s existing knowledge.

- Involves direct use of children’s senses.
Plan-Do-Review

➤ **Plan** — Go over the schedule with the children every morning.

➤ **Do** — Do the activities as planned.

➤ **Review** — At the end of the day, refer to the schedule and review the day's events with the children.
Engaging Children During Large Group

▸ Add motor movements (clapping, jumping, acting out story) to group times.

▸ Give children a physical prop related to the story or theme of the lesson.

▸ Use colorful props such as photographs, puppets, musical instruments and masks.

▸ Vary voice intonation and inflection.

▸ Offer jobs to children such as song selector or a book selector.

▸ Have one adult monitor and redirect or prompt children to prevent teacher from having to interrupt the lesson to attend to one child’s behavior.

(Sandall & Ostrosky, 1999)
Characteristics of Effective Rules

Rhode, Jenson and Reavis (1996) provide the following characteristics for rules:

- Keep rules and expectations to a minimum—from three to five.
- Keep the wording simple.
- Keep the wording positive.
- Make rules specific.
- Make rules describe behavior that is observable.
- Make rules that can be consistently enforced.

(Cooper et al., 2005, p. 133)
Examples of Inappropriate Rules

Rhode, Jenson and Reavis (1996) outline the following examples of inappropriate rules:

- No running in the classroom.
- Do not hurt anyone.
- Respect authority.
- Do your best.
- Pay attention.

(Cooper et al., 2005, p.133)
Examples of Appropriate Rules

Rhode, Jenson and Reavis (1996) provide the following examples of appropriate rules:

- Walk in class.
- Listen when others talk.
- Help clean up.
- Keep each other safe.
- Take care of our things.
Teaching Rules

- Clearly state the rules and expectations on an inviting chart or poster in clear view of the children.

- Accompany the rules and expectations with a visual prompt.

- Teach the rules and expectations through labeling, describing, demonstrating and rehearsing the rules.

- Monitor and affirm when children follow the classroom rules.

- Review the rules periodically, particularly when a new child joins the class.

(Cooper et al., 2005, p.134)
Steps for Teaching Social and Emotional Skills

- Model
- Teach
- Practice
- Reinforce
Scaffolding

- Set up for the activity.
- Simplify tasks.
- Complete a task jointly.
- Allow the child to take the lead whenever possible, but stay nearby to lend a hand if the child becomes frustrated or discouraged.
- Encourage the child by noticing and commenting on small successes.
Lesson 9: Visual Aid 7

Teacher Behavior that Promotes Guidance

Teachers provide guidance by:

▶ Asking if the child needs help.

▶ Persuading children to their point of view (offering a brief reason why).

▶ Explaining why they are doing something.

▶ Making suggestions.

▶ Standing or sitting next to the child.

▶ Offering verbal assistance.
Positive Discipline Strategies

- Modeling
- Distraction
- Redirection
- Setting limits
- Attending/ignoring
- Offering appropriate choices
- Praise
To Give Or Not To Give—Choices

- How comfortable do you feel giving children choices?
- What choices do children in your classroom make daily?
- What changes can you make to allow children more choices?
Ineffective praise

- Given randomly (unrelated to behavior or effort)
- Uses global positive reactions ("Good job!")
- Uses the same words with minimal attention
- Rewards participation rather than giving feedback on performance
- Focuses the child’s attention on the teacher’s approval rather than his own effort
- Is intrusive, detracting from on-task behavior
Common Mistakes When Making Requests

- Using vague requests
- Using complicated requests
- Talking too much
- Using too much reasoning
- Using inappropriate emotions (yelling, threatening, shaming)

(Cooper et al., 2005, p. 134)
Goals for Misbehavior

- Attention
- Power
- Revenge
- Inadequacy
Discipline = Teaching

- Children must be taught what is expected.

- Teachers must be consistent so children believe they will do what they say (naughty children are often just nonbelievers).

- Good behavior must be recognized and reinforced.

- Teachers must avoid triggering behaviors which are unwanted in the classroom.
Principles of Effective Discipline

- Attention
- Clarity
- Demonstration
- Follow through
- Reinforcement
ABC Analysis

Antecedent

Behavior

Consequence
Behavior

• Actions of the child.

• Described by its **form** and **function**.

  ▶ **Form** (What) — Accurate description of what the behavior looks like so others can recognize it.

  ▶ **Function** (Why) — Purpose of the behavior (obtain or avoid)
Consequences

Rewards
- Are given after a behavior occurs
- Increase the likelihood the behavior will happen again

Punishment
- Is given after a behavior occurs
- Decreases the likelihood the behavior happen again
The Sandbox Incident

Jacob and Tyler are playing in the sandbox. They are having a good time. Sydni is playing on the swings nearby. She wants to play in the sandbox also. She asks Jacob if she can play. He says, “No way, you dumb girl.” This makes Sydni angry. She gets the hose and sprays the boys and the sand. This ruins the game Jacob and Tyler are playing. They are upset and run in the house to tell their mother. Their mother is very angry. Sydni is grounded to the house for the rest of the day.

Tell the Story Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent (A)</th>
<th>Behavior (B)</th>
<th>Consequence (C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key to Understanding Behavior

Observation!

Observation!

Observation!
Easy Steps for ABC Analysis Success!

1. State the problem behavior’s form and function in clear terms.

2. Describe the antecedent events and conditions that exist immediately before the behavior happens.

3. Explain the consequences that immediately follow the behavior.

4. Examine the antecedents, the behavior and the consequence in sequence. How likely is the behavior to occur again?

5. Devise new antecedents and/or consequences to prevent problem behaviors and teach new behaviors.

6. Evaluate the outcome. Did the intervention plan work?
Teaching Positive Behavior Using Rewards

Goal: Teach children the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

- Introduce and teach new acceptable behaviors.
- Provide many opportunities to practice new behaviors until it is second nature.
- Recognize good behavior so children will want to be good.
- Avoid giving attention to only negative behaviors which will turn children off to good behaviors.
- When problem behaviors occur, use the ABC method to determine what is triggering and reinforcing the behavior, then eliminate it or teach children new ways to respond.
Rewards = Reinforcement

Reinforcers:

► Are a consequence.

► Are given after the behavior occurs.

► Increase the likelihood the behavior will happen again (reinforce).

► May be positive or negative.

► Work best when they are random and natural.
Positive Rewards

- Give *goodies* after a behavior occurs.
- Recognize correct behavior quickly and consistently.
- Give reward frequently when learning a new behavior, then fade rapidly.
- Be careful with attention—it is a powerful reward.
  - If attention is given for good behavior, good behaviors will increase.
  - If attention is given to bad behavior, bad behaviors will increase.
Using Praise and Comments

- Be specific, telling the child exactly what behavior, actions or words are liked.
  
  • “You are being a good friend when you share the blocks.”
  
  • “You are working very hard.”
  
  • “Yea! You matched all the cards!”
  
  • “You shared your toys with your friends today!”
  
- Avoid scripted, blanket praise where all children hear the same thing.
  
  • “Good job! Good choice!”
Expressions of Approval

- Send a positive note to parent.
- Hug.
- Nod.
- Smile.
- Clap.
- Give a high five.
- Pat on the back.
- Do a happy dance.
- Give a thumbs up.
Examples of Negative Reinforcers

- An alarm sounds in a car until the seat belt is buckled (buckle the seat belt to avoid hearing the alarm).

- A child hears her mother coming down the hall and immediately starts getting dressed (dresses to avoid the mother’s reprimand).

- Children behave when the teacher is present (behaves to avoid negative consequences from the teacher), but not the substitute.

- A child is required to clean up after a spill (is careful with the drink to avoid cleanup).

- The fire alarm sounds (leaves the building to get away from the very loud noise).

- A parent makes a child wear soiled clothes following a toileting accident (thinks that the child will go to the bathroom to avoid the discomfort of wet clothing).
Punishment Type I

- Involves taking away a goodie after the problem behavior occurs.

- Stops or reduces a behavior.

- Includes time-out from positive reinforcement.

- Includes extinction (ignoring).
Extinction

- Involves withdrawing a reward (attention or other) to stop or reduce a behavior.

- Causes behaviors to go away, but not quickly and not smoothly.

- Works best when reinforcing other appropriate behaviors.
Punishment Type II
(Negative Consequences)

- Involves giving a *baddie* after the behavior occurs.
- Decreases a behavior.
- May be physical (spanking) or verbal (threatening, harsh tone, criticism).
Reasons for Not Using Punishment

▶ Has a short-term effect.

▶ Never stops a behavior from reoccurring in the long-term.

▶ Fails to teach a child what to do (imagine learning to drive a car only being told what not to do!).

▶ Elicits negative emotions and behavior in children.

▶ Punishes every time or the child is rewarded when punishment is escaped.
Guidelines for Using Punishment

- Use punishment to stop a behavior immediately, such as for a health or safety concern.

- Use punishment only when positive rewards have failed.

- Use the mildest form of punishment possible.

- Never use punishment out of frustration as most acts of child abuse occur during extreme acts of discipline.

- Monitor emotions even if it means walking away briefly to calm down before administering the punishment.

- Use consistently. Punish every time the misbehavior occurs.

- Teach a replacement skill or behavior.
Natural Consequences

- Occur naturally
- Involve recognizing teachable moments
- Involve teaching child to take responsibility for actions
- Are powerful because children learn from own experiences
- Are used to teach, not blame or shame
Logical Consequences

- Are planned
- Are connected to the behavior in a way that makes sense to the child
- Often make up for a mistake
Guidelines for Using Natural and Logical Consequences

► When a problem behavior occurs, apply the most *fitting* consequence.

► Speaking calmly, point out the behavior and how the consequence relates.

► Follow through with the consequence.

► Reassure the child he will have a chance to do better next time.

► Be consistent—if the behavior is repeated, make sure there is another consequence (the same or extended).

► Be patient—teaching children to control their impulses takes time, consistency and caring.
If a Child Doesn’t Know

If a child doesn't know how to read,

...we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to swim,

...we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to multiply,

...we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to drive,

...we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to behave,

...we teach? ...we punish?

(Hemmeter, Ostrosky, Santos, & Joseph, 2006)
Early Warning Signs

Learning to manage emotions is more difficult for some children than learning to count or read and may, in some cases, be an early warning sign of future psychological problems. The failure to address difficulties in this equally important domain can result in missed opportunities for interventions. Had they been initiated early, these interventions could have yielded tremendous benefits for large numbers of children and for society.

(NSCDC, 2006, p. 1)
Strategies for Teaching Feelings and Feeling Words

- Develop a supportive, caring relationship with children.
- Model feelings.
- Label and validate children’s feelings.
- Label feelings of others.
- Use pictures.
- Introduce games, songs and storybooks featuring new feeling words.
- Play games.
Feeling Words

happy       angry
afraid      guilty
jealous     hopeful
proud       embarrassed
sad         excited
shy         tired
loved       bored
sorry       surprised
Prosocial Children

- Have conversations.
- Join in cooperative play.
- Share.
Antisocial Children

- Hit.
- Argue.
- Lie.
- Sneak.
- Act in oppositional and defiant ways.
- Have trouble regulating their emotions and behavior.
- Have trouble correctly understanding or interpreting what happens in an emotionally upsetting situation.

(Rubin, Coplan, & Fox, 1995; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000)
Indicators of Poor Emotion Regulation

Children who lack self-control as indicated by:

▶ Frequent conflicts.

▶ Physical and verbal aggression.

▶ Emotional meltdowns.

▶ Impulsive acts that disrupt play or classroom activities.
Teach Coping Strategies

Teach children to:

- Use a calm down routine.
- Ask to take a break when frustrated or annoyed.
- Talk to someone when upset.
- Ask for help.
Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

Cognitive

▶ Change the way children think about the actions of others.
▶ Assume less hostile intentions from others.
▶ Enhance children’s sense of safety.
▶ Teach positive self-talk.

Behavioral

▶ Teach children to stop and think before acting.
Six-Step Approach to Problem Solving

Goal: Teach children strategies for thinking of solutions to problems

1. Help children state the problem.
2. Brainstorm ideas.
3. Discuss how the ideas might work.
4. Agree on one workable idea.
5. Try out the idea.
6. Review the idea to see how it worked.
Aggressive Behavior

Physical aggression

- Hitting, biting, shoving, kicking, spitting

Verbal aggression

- Cursing, name calling, belittling, screaming, using cruel words, putting others down, making fun of others
Characteristics of Bullies

- Grow up in home where violence is accepted and normal
- Lack clear limits and boundaries for appropriate behavior at home
- Lack empathy and feel little remorse for actions
- Like to be in charge and are often bossy during play
Characteristics of Victims

- Often struggle with making friends
- Are socially awkward
- Are isolated
- Tend to be anxious or shy and cry frequently
- Often are physically small, overweight or have disabilities
Signs of Bullying

- Torn clothes
- Physical marks (bruising, scratches)
- Fear of a certain child
- Signs of anxiety (stomach ache, sleep and appetite problems)
- Not wanting to go to school
Finding the Balance

Teacher behavior is a major contributor to oppositional outbursts.

- Imposing adult control precipitates oppositional outbursts.

- While backing down may temporarily lessen tension and avoid a meltdown, it does not help the child’s social-emotional development and is likely to increase oppositional behavior the next time.

- Guidance and collaborative problem solving work best.
Why Children Fail to Learn and Use Social Skills

- Lack of communication skills
- Lack of knowledge of acceptable behavior—they don’t know what to do
- Lack of opportunity to practice
- Lack of feedback about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors
- Lack of sensitivity to environmental cues (knowledge of when to use)
- Lack of reinforcement for positive behaviors
- Neurological problems (ADD, autism)
Signs a Child Doesn’t Know How to Start Play with Others

- A child says “No one wants to play with me.”

- Children protest when another barges into their play.

- A child chases another child who gets upset because she doesn’t understand.

- A child uses too much physical contact to get another child’s attention.
Strategies for Helping Children Make Friends

- Organizing Play
- Sharing
- Helping Others
- Giving compliments
- Reciprocity (give and take)
Classrooms that Support Friendship

- Inclusive classroom
- Cooperative use toys and materials
- Social skills instruction
- Classroom climate values friendship
- Socially skilled children are grouped with socially unskilled children
- Prompting and acknowledgment
Modeling: Videos

- Use videos with clear examples of children using friendly behaviors.

- Introduce a discussion about the friendly behavior seen in the video.

- Refer to video as a standard for comparing children’s practice attempts.

- Use examples of unfriendly behaviors to teach children friendly and unfriendly behavior.

- Use examples of unfriendly behaviors to allow children to share ideas for a better way to act.

- Pause video to point out friendly behaviors or to let children predict what will happen next.
Modeling: Puppets

- Use puppets to engage children’s fantasy and model positive friendship skills.

- Model both examples of friendship and unfriendly play.

- Use the puppet as a responsive play partner.

- Use puppets in the image of children to increase their practice of desired behaviors.

- Use puppets to allow some children to share their feelings and friendship problems, especially if adults are historically not seen as trustworthy by the child.
The Focus

The environments that shape children’s problematic behavior, such as homes and child care programs, must be as much the focus of the treatment or intervention efforts as the children (McEvoy & Welker, 2000).
Changing Children's Behavior

- Focus.

- Get the facts (ABC analysis).

- Identify classroom practices to be changed.

- Develop a plan.
Defining the Problem

Stopping a behavior ➔ Punishment

Increasing an appropriate behavior ➔ Rewards
# Behavior Matrix

**Directions:** For each incident, record the information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did it happen?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened just before?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened immediately afterward?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where did it happen?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who was involved?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How could I respond better to the problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English Language Learners

Young children consistently move through four stages in learning English.

1. Continued use of the home language
2. Silent or nonverbal period
3. Experimentation with sound and use of a few content words
4. Productive use of the new language
Positive Behavior Support

- Working together with parents, teachers and therapists to implement across all settings

- Using a functional assessment to determine the purpose or function of the problem behavior

- Developing a behavior support plan
Purposes of a Behavior Support Plan

- Identifies strategies to promote positive behaviors
- Identifies strategies to prevent challenging behaviors
- Helps children cope with intense emotions
- Responds to challenging behaviors in ways that do not maintain them
Components of a Behavior Support Plan

- Prevention strategies
- Replacement skills to teach new skills to replace the problem behavior
- Consequence strategies to reinforce new skills and decrease problem behavior
Consequence Strategies to Obtain Objects, Activities or Attention

- Redirect to use appropriate new replacement skill.

- Prompt with appropriate prevention strategy (timer, schedule, visual rules poster, turtle poster).

- Tell the child exactly what is expected.

- Offer choices.

- Use wait-time.

- Praise or use other reinforcement when replacement skill is used.

- Respond in a way that does NOT maintain problem behavior (avoid inadvertent rewarding of challenging behavior).
Consequence Strategies to Avoid Activities, Demands or Interactions

- Redirect to use appropriate new replacement skill and then allow escape.
- Prompt with appropriate prevention strategy.
- Tell the child exactly what is expected.
- Offer alternatives.
- Use *wait-time*.
- Praise or otherwise reinforce when replacement skill is performed.
- Respond in a way that does NOT maintain problem behavior.
Types of Time-Out

» Children remain in the setting but are denied any reward.

» Children are removed from the setting and denied any reward.

» Children voluntarily remove themselves from the setting.
Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH)

Early childhood mental health (ECMH) includes:

- Promoting the emotional and behavioral well-being of children.

- Helping children develop healthy caregiver attachments and peer relationships.

- Identifying and treating children with serious social-emotional disorders.
Child Care’s Role in ECMH

Child care programs partner with parents, mental health, primary care and special education on the child’s behalf to offer:

▸ Prevention — Promoting emotional and behavioral well-being.

▸ Intervention — Handling challenging behavior.

▸ Early detection — Identifying and referring children who need ECMH services and support.

▸ Self-care — Nurturing the mental health of teachers themselves.
Support for Teachers

Ideally, teachers would have:

- Access to consultation or one-on-one technical assistance from a community mental health provider.

- Knowledge of community resources for children and families.

- Training on social-emotional issues.
Developmental Screening

- Provide routinely for children in early care settings.

- Use screening tools that focus on child strengths (tell what a child can do and what she should do next).

- Use screening tools that are a valid and reliable measure of children’s emotional and behavioral adjustment.

- Use results to modify teaching practices (curricula, activities, routines).