

Behavior Intervention in the Home Environment

CAC Meeting - January 13, 2020

Presented by OUSD School Psychologists

Why Behavior Occurs

Why Behavior Occurs

At the most basic level:

Behavior occurs because the child is trying to communicate something



Why Behavior Occurs

They may be trying to communicate one of the following:

Social Attention

Tangibles/(Preferred) Activities

Escape or Avoidance

Sensory Stimulation

Why Behavior Occurs

Behavior is maintained through reinforcement

Positive Reinforcement - gets an individual something

Negative Reinforcement - gets an individual out of something or away from something

Each of these are broken into two additional means of reinforcement

Why Behavior Occurs

Positive Reinforcement

Social Positive - individual gets something through the action of another individual (i.e. acting “goofy” in class and getting laughs from peers; child asks parent for a new toy when in store and parent buys it)

Automatic Positive - when a behavior gets an individual something as a result of their own actions (i.e. child turning on video game to play)

Negative Reinforcement

Social Negative - behavior results in individual getting away from something or something is taken away through the actions of another individual (i.e. child asking teacher to not be near another student and the teacher agrees to change seats)

Automatic Negative - individual gets away from something or something is removed through their own actions. (i.e. avoiding homework by cleaning room; removal of clothing to avoid uncomfortable sensation)

Strategies

Strategies

First and foremost:

There are MANY strategies and not all work with every child.

Strategies

- Provide the fundamentals (i.e. well-nourished, well-rested, daily personalized time with parent)
- Focus on strengths (i.e. verbal appreciation for flexibility, adaptability, etc.)
- Avoid labeling (i.e. “hyper,” “difficult”)
- Encourage self-awareness and coping strategies (i.e. “I know starting Kindergarten is scary. What can you do to make a new friend?”)
- Use reflection to help child come to a solution (i.e. “I see that sweater is scratchy. Is there something else you could wear?”)
- Be patient, empathize, and interpret their emotions (i.e. “I know you are disappointed I couldn’t take you to the zoo today.”)

Strategies

- Maintain a predictable schedule
- Try to make smooth transitions
- For distractible children, state one task, etc. at a time
- Limit the number of choices, especially for the easily overwhelmed child
- Keep the home environment calm and predictable
- Ensure that hands-on active daily play occurs to use energy constructively, but DON'T overschedule activities as this leads a child to become exhausted overwhelmed, and/or stressed.
- Provide more structure if the child is regularly overwhelmed or out of control.

Strategies

- Create safe, cozy, and calming spaces at home for child to go to when overwhelmed, out of control, etc. to regain control.
- Rehearse changes that can be anticipated
- Respect children's preferences in regards to food taste, texture, and scent. This also allows you to role model flexibility.
- Coach children towards self-control (i.e. use language that encourages them to express their feelings and identify their goals)
- Help children regain control during tantrums (i.e. "I cannot understand your needs well when you yell, when you have calmed down we can talk and I can help you.")

Strategies

- Model and encourage positive social skills, such as trading, sharing, inviting others to play, negotiating, asking for help, offering help, etc.
- Choose your battles wisely. Avoid the power struggle

Strategies: Effective Programs

Crisis Development Model – overview

Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Model (NCPI) Program– Seven years to develop and has been presented to several million educators and parents. The training covers verbal/nonverbal de-escalation techniques along with research-based physical restraints.

Anxiety – What does it feel like?

Defensive – Beginning to lose rational control

Acting Out Person – Rational is gone

Tension Reduction – Rational control is returning

Verbal Escalation Continuum

Questioning

Information – seeking: a rational question seeking a rational response (Intervention: give a rational response)

Challenging: Questioning authority or being evasive (Intervention: stick to the topic, redirect, set limits if child persists)

Refusal

Noncompliance, slight loss of rationalization (Intervention: Set limits)

Release, Intimidation, Tension Reduction

Verbal Escalation Continuum-*Setting Limits*

Setting Limits:

-Is a result of recognizing that you cannot force individuals to act appropriately. When you set limits, you are offering a person choices as well as stating the consequences of those choices.

-Limits usually are better received when a positive choice and consequences stated first. Starting with a negative consequence may be perceived as a challenge for an ultimatum, and the individual may not even hear the positive choice.

*Limits will be most **effective** when they are:*

Simple/Clear – Reasonable – Enforceable

Resources

1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12 by Thomas W. Phelan, Ph.D.

Educate Autism <http://www.educateautism.com>

Behavior Support Planning by Diana Browning Wright

Parenting Difficult Children: Parenting Strategies of Preschoolers to Preteens by Michael Hammond

Parenting without Power Struggles: Raising Joyful, Resilient Kids While Staying Cool, Calm, and Connected by Susan Siffelman

Power Parenting for Children with ADD/ADHD: A Practical Parent's Guide for Managing Difficult Behaviors by Grad L. Flick

Resources

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SOS! Help for Parents by Lynn Clark

Unconditional Parenting: Moving from Rewards and Punishments to Love and Reason by Alfie Kohn

Question and Answer Time

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