Trauma Informed Responding Strategies: Remind, Redirection, Reteach, and Build Relationships

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Outcomes

1. Learn to Develop Definitions of Challenging Behavior
2. Learn Trauma Informed Strategies for Responding to Escalating Challenging Behavior
3. Apply Strategies to Your Classroom
4. Share Resources
Pyramid Model: Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children

http://www.pyramidmodel.org/
Welcome!

The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning is a national center focused on strengthening the capacity of child care and Head Start programs to improve the social and emotional outcomes of young children.

The Center will develop and disseminate evidence-based, user-friendly information to help early childhood educators meet the needs of the growing number of children with challenging behaviors and mental health challenges in child care and Head Start programs.

The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning will:

- Focus on promoting the social and emotional development of children as a means of preventing challenging behaviors.

- Collaborate with existing training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers for the purpose of ensuring the implementation and sustainability of practices at the local level.

- Engage in a comprehensive, culturally sensitive approach that is inclusive of and responsive to the needs of programs, families, other professionals, and communities.

- Provide ongoing identification of training needs and preferred delivery formats of local programs and T/TA providers.

Resources:

- Training Modules
- What Works Briefs
- Practical Strategies
- State Strategic Plans
- Chat
- Links

Hurricane Katrina Resources

Training Modules are now available! View or Order them now!

Introduction to the What Works Briefs

Check out the What Works Briefs. The Briefs describe evidence-based practices that have been implemented in a variety of settings.
Pyramid Model
Building Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

- All children should receive sufficient density of positive feedback from their caregivers.
- All families should be positively engaged.

Sources: Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993; Brendekamp & Copple, 1997
Pyramid Model
Building High Quality Supportive Environments

1. Maintain a predictable schedule
2. Minimize and plan effective transitions
3. Provide visual reminders of rules
4. Teach appropriate behavior
5. Use positive reinforcement to promote appropriate behavior
6. Provide choices where appropriate, and
7. Maximize child engagement to minimize problem behaviors.

Sources: Laus, Danko, Lawry, Strain, & Smith, 1999; Strain & Hemmeter (1999)
Pyramid Model: High Quality Supportive Environments

1. Define 2-3 social values and align with theme
2. Maintain a predictable schedule
3. Define behavioral expectations within routines and aligned to core values
4. Create Cool Tools to teach the key expectations within each routine using effective practices
5. Provide visual reminders of expectations and post at student eye level
6. Acknowledge students for exhibiting expectations
7. Provide frequent pre-corrections
8. Minimize and plan effective transitions
9. Provide choices where appropriate, and
10. Maximize child engagement to minimize problem behaviors.
Pyramid Model: High Quality Supportive Environments

1. Identify and **define** challenging behavior
2. Determine **strategies for responding** to challenging behavior
3. Develop a system to **document incidents** and use for data-based decision making
“The most significant consequence of early relational trauma is the loss of the ability to regulate the intensity and duration of affects.”

Schore (2003)
Likely Classroom Behaviors

Continuum of Frequency, Intensity, Duration

1. Reactivity and Impulsivity
2. Defiance/Non-compliance
3. Aggression
4. Withdrawal
5. Perfectionism
Step 1: Identify and Define Challenging Behavior

1. Physical Aggression
2. Verbal Aggression
3. Self-injury
4. Property Damage
5. Disruption/Tantrum
6. Non-compliance
7. Social Withdrawal/Isolation
8. Inappropriate Language
9. Running Away
10. Unsafe Behaviors
Defining Challenging Behaviors

- **Physical Aggression** – forceful physical actions directed towards adults/peers that may result in physical contact and injury (e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting, pinching, and throwing objects).

- **Verbal Aggression** – the use of threatening, offensive or intimidating words directed towards an adult/peer (e.g., screaming, name-calling, swearing/profanity, use of threats).
Defining Challenging Behaviors

- **Disruption/Tantrum** – an outburst or action that prevents learning or interferes with teaching and persists despite an adult’s request to stop or attempt to provide support.

- **Non-compliance** – refusal to follow a reasonable request, direction or the established routine, which persists after multiple requests and a reasonable amount of time.

- **Running away** – the act of leaving a designated area of supervision or boundary of play without permission and without responding to the requests of an adult to return.
Activity: Challenging Behavior

WHAT: Choose a child that you have worked with and identify 1 or 2 challenging behaviors that you would like to see reduced or eliminated (5 minutes)

SHARE OUT: Volunteers (5 minutes)
Step 2: Determine strategies for responding to challenging behavior

• Establish a continuum of strategies to respond to problem behavior in early childhood settings
• Attuned to young children who have experienced trauma
• Emphasis on a teaching or instructional approach (replacements)
• Prepare for escalating behavior
The Practice of Co-regulation
Bath (2008)

1. Focus on emotional state rather than surface behavior*.
2. Priority is Calming
3. First goal is regulation – to bring the arousal levels down as close to non-arousal state as possible
Responding by authoritarian commands, threats, and punishments lead to resistance and resentment and often lead to power struggles and conflict cycles.

Infants and young children need the soothing presence of caregivers to help them manage strong emotions such as fear, frustration, sadness and anger.

Development process of co-regulation is essential to learning to manage strong emotions.

Repeated cycles of emotional upset, followed by calming influence of caregivers provide a sense of safety and trust.

In time, child learns to expect the soothing response which is the foundation for learning self-regulation.
1. Convey overall warmth
2. Convey overt desire to make it better together
3. Make overt attempts to comfort
4. Avoid the child’s personal triggers
5. Use a low and slow physical presence
6. Initially more non-verbal than verbal language
7. Use a soothing tone of voice
8. Validate the child’s feelings of distress
9. Affirm any successes
10. Offer simple choices
Goals of Responding to Minor Infractions in ECE

- To teach students acceptable behaviors to get their needs met
- To keep the relationship intact
- To teach students that the problem behavior is not acceptable
- To increase the likelihood that the problem behavior will not escalate or reoccur
Consistent = Identical or Effective?

- We know that effective programs are predictable and consistent.
- We understand that some see consistency as using identical strategies for everyone, while others understand the need for a consistent approach with flexible strategies.
- We believe in a consistent approach where the goal is to find effective strategies to change behavior.
When Young Children Refuse
CSEFEL

Remember, the child may

1. Need a reminder that you expect him to stop and follow directions
2. Be thinking about something else and not hear the request
3. May not understand the request
4. Used to receiving negative attention and refuse to get that attention
Responding to Minor Behavioral Infractions

- Handle minor rule violations quickly, quietly, neutrally, with positive follow-up
  - Respectful, non-critical, non-argumentative
- Resolve privately if possible
- Focus on behavior, not student
- Demonstrate the replacement behavior
Basic Responding Skills
R’s

- Reminders/Requests (Before/During): Quiet lips. Finger over lips for quiet. Time to clean-up. Gentle hands and feet.
- Redirection (During): Specialized reminder/request in which to positive behavior is designed to change non-mentioned behavior.
- Reteaching/Practice: (After) (e.g., Here’s what walking feet looks like. Show me walking feet)
- Relationship (Appeal to) (During): (e.g., Howard, remember when you helped me.....)
Teacher Responses Defined…

- **Verbal Reminder** – a technique in which the teacher directly states the specific rule/expectation immediately after the child displays a challenging behavior (e.g., “It’s time for quiet voices.”) This is most effective when paired with eye contact.

- **Re-teach and Practice Expected Behavior** – a technique in which the teacher instructs the child on the expected behavior, models the expected behavior, has the child practice the expected behavior and then acknowledges the expected behavior.
1. **Format:** The use of questions instead of direct requests reduces compliance. For example, "Would you please stop teasing?“ vs. "I need you to stop teasing."

2. **Distance:** It is better to make a request from up close (i.e., one desk distance) than from longer distances (i.e., across the classroom).

3. **Eye Contact:** It is better to look into the child's eyes or ask the child to look into your eyes than to not make eye contact (culture matters here!)
Ten Variables That Affect Compliance

4. **Two Requests:** It is better to give the same request only twice than to give it several times.

5. **Loudness of Request:** It is better to make a request in a soft but firm voice than loud voice.

6. **Time:** Give the student time to comply after giving a request (three to five seconds).

7. **Start Requests:** It is more effective to make positive requests of a child to get appropriate behavior (e.g., "Please start your arithmetic assignment.").
Ten Variables That Affect Compliance

8. Non-emotional Requests: It is better to control negative emotions when making a request.

9. Descriptive Requests: Requests that are positive and descriptive are better than ambiguous or global requests (i.e., "Please sit in your chair, with your feet on the floor, hands on desk, and look at me."

10. Reinforce Compliance: It is too easy to request a behavior from a child and then ignore the positive result.
Logical Strategies
CSEFEL What Works Brief

- Actions or responses that are implemented following challenging behavior that serve to discourage the child from doing it again
- Provided as Choice: The child may engage in the expected behavior to access an activity, object, person, or material
- Alternative to punishment strategies such as reprimands or scolding
- Help guide children in the right direction by helping them connect their behavior to the results of their behavior
- Learning experience for children, teaching them that they have responsibility for and control over their own behavior
## Logical Strategies

### CSEFEL What Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Behavior</th>
<th>Illogical Strategies</th>
<th>Logical Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not cleaning up after a snack</td>
<td>Teacher makes student sit at a different table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaving tricycles out in rain</td>
<td>Teacher scolds student student</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Throws sand at sand table</td>
<td>Teacher ignores behavior</td>
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The Solution Kit

Get a Teacher

Wait and take turns.
“First, we talk about it. Then we fix it. Then I smile!”
(from Sam, Age 5)
General Procedure for Responding to Challenging Behaviors

1. Observe Challenging Behavior

2. Calmly address behavior with child at child’s developmental level; move to alternate area if needed

3. Problem Solve
   - Identify child’s feelings
   - Restate the rule
   - Review: What could you do next time?
   - Use Solution Kit to find different solutions
   - Practice new solutions

4. Determine Strategy to resume Activity

- Complete Behavior Incident Report if behavior meets defined criteria for documentation (see behavior definitions) and submit to main office;
- Review with Director/Administrator;
- Ensure Universal supports are being implemented and revise if needed
### Escalating Behavior Cycle

**Period of Escalation**

A time when the student calls upon existing coping skills to resolve a problem presented by a trigger.

**Peak**

This phase is characterized by serious disruption and behaviors that often represent a threat to the safety of others. Logical cognitive processes are impaired and impulsive behavior rules.

**Period of De-escalation**

This phase marks the beginning of the student’s disengagement and reduction in severity of behavior. Students are still not especially cooperative or responsive to adult influence.

1. Calm
2. Triggers
3. Agitation
4. Acceleration
5. Peak
6. De-escalation
7. Recovery

Sources: Colvin (1992); Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey (1995)
Goals: To develop a relationship, promote respect, provide appropriate instruction and prepare for conflicts.

1. Work on the relationship itself using a strength-based approach:
   - Understand your student’s strengths, interests, needs and triggers.
   - Focus on positive attention and acknowledge appropriate behavior frequently (4:1).
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stages 1 & 2 Calm & Triggers

2. Provide an appropriate and meaningful developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum that is matched to student needs and interests
   • Address any needed accommodations and modifications
   • Insure high rates of success
Activity: Personal Triggers

WHAT: Choose a child that you have worked with and identify any triggers that are likely to increase the likelihood that challenging behaviors would occur (5 minutes)

Triggers?
In what routines/activities do they occur?

SHARE OUT: Volunteers (5 minutes)
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stages 1 & 2 Calm & Triggers

Develop a program-wide curriculum approach to:

- Teach social skills
- Teach emotional literacy
- Teach self regulation strategies
- Teach problem solving skills
What Is Social Emotional Development?

- A sense of confidence and competence
- Ability to develop good relationships with peers and adults/make friends/get along with others
- Ability to persist at tasks
- Ability to follow directions
- Ability to identify, understand, and communicate own feelings/emotions
- Ability to constructively manage strong emotions
- Development of empathy
Social Skills are

Specific, identifiable, and learned social behaviors, performed effectively that produce social consequences in social situations
Types of Social Skills

1. Basic Social Skills or Classroom Survival Skills
   - Listening, Asking for Help, Asking a Question

2. Friendship-Making Skills
   - Introducing Yourself, Beginning a Conversation
   - Offering Help, Sharing, Apologizing

3. Skills for Dealing with Feelings
   - Expressing Feelings, Showing Understanding of Another’s Feelings, Dealing with Anger
Types of Social Skills

4. Skill Alternatives to Aggression
   • Dealing with an Accusation, Responding to Teasing

5. Skills for Dealing with Stress
   • Dealing with Losing, Saying No, Responding to Peer Pressure

6. Social Problem Solving and Planning Skills
   • Setting a Goal, Making a Decision
Friendship Making Skills
McGinnis and Goldstein (2007)

1. Greeting Others
2. Reading Others
3. Joining In
4. Waiting Your Turn
5. Sharing
6. Offering Help
7. Asking Someone to Play
8. Playing a Game
What to Teach...Friendship Skills

- Gives suggestions (play organizers)
- Shares toys and other materials
- Takes turns (reciprocity)
- Is helpful
- Gives compliments
- Understands how and when to give an apology
- Begins to empathize
Skills for Dealing with Feelings
McGinnis and Goldstein (2007)

1. Knowing Your Feelings
2. Feeling Left Out
3. Asking to Talk
4. Dealing with Fear
5. Deciding How Someone Feels
6. Showing Affection
Key Concepts About Feelings

- Feelings change
- You can have more than one feeling about something
- You can feel differently than someone else about the same thing
- All feelings are valid – it is what you do with them that counts
Problem Solving

• Learning problem solving steps
• Thinking of alternative solutions
• Learning that solutions have consequences
• Learning to evaluate solutions - *Is it safe? Is it fair? Good feelings?*
• What to do when a solution doesn’t work
Problem Solving Steps

1. What is my problem?

2. Think, think, think of some solutions

3. What would happen if…?
   Would it be safe? Would it be fair?
   How would everyone feel?

4. Give it a try!
Get a Teacher

Ask Nicely

Ignore

Say, "Please."

Play together

Say, "Please Stop."

Share

Trade

Wait and take turns.

Get a Timer

2 X 2 SOLUTION KIT CUE CARDS
Learning Self Control

- Recognizing that anger can interfere with problem solving
- Learning how to recognize anger in oneself and others
- Learning how to calm down
- Understanding appropriate ways to express anger
Games that Develop Impulse Control

- Red Light, Green Light
- Simon Says
- Mother May I?
- London Bridge
- Ring around the Rosie
- Freeze Dance
- Ready, Set, Go!
- Tip-toeing
- Moving to Music with varied tempos
- Duck, Duck Goose
Tense/Stressed

Relaxed
Relaxation Thermometer

Adapted from Incredible Years Dinosaur School

Take 3 deep breaths…1..2..3
Turtle Technique

Recognize that you feel angry.

Go into shell. Take 3 deep breathes. And think calm, coping thoughts.

“Think” Stop.

Come out of shell when calm and think of a solution.
Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think

A scripted story to assist with teaching the “Turtle Technique”
By Rochelle Lentini
March 2005
Tucker Turtle is a terrific turtle. He likes to play with his friends at Wet Lake School.
But sometimes things happen that can make Tucker really mad.
When Tucker got mad, he used to hit, kick, or yell at his friends. His friends would get mad or upset when he hit, kicked, or yelled at them.
Tucker now knows a new way to “think like a turtle” when he gets mad.
He can **stop** and keep his hands, body, and yelling to himself!
He can **tuck** inside his shell and take **3** deep breaths to calm down.

![Step 3](image)
Tucker can then think of a solution or a way to make it better.
Tucker’s friends are happy when he plays nicely and keeps his body to himself. Friends also like it when Tucker uses nice words or has a teacher help him when he is upset.
The End!
Video 2.13: Turtle Technique
Dear Parent,

Billy did a great job today handling frustration and not getting angry when we ran out of his favorite cookie at snack. Instead of getting upset, Billy took three deep breaths and decided he would try one of the other cookies. That was a great solution and he really liked the new cookie too!

You can help Billy at home by: Asking him what he did at school today when we ran out of his favorite cookie. Ask him how he calmed down. Comment on what a great job he did. Tell him that you hope that he will do that again when he gets frustrated about something.

Thank you so much!
Mr. Phil
3. Develop a personal plan for self-control
   • Understand your own triggers and accelerators
   • Identify your own reducers and reinforcers
   • Put it in writing
   • Practice
Managing Personal Stress: 
**Thought Control**

**Upsetting Thoughts**

“That child is a monster. This is getting ridiculous. He’ll never change.”

“I’m sick of putting out fires!”

**Calming Thoughts**

“This child is testing to see where the limits are. My job is to stay calm and help him learn better ways to behave.”

“I can handle this. I am in control. They have just learned some powerful ways to get control. I will teach them more appropriate ways to behave.”

CSEFEL
Managing Personal Stress: Thought Control

Upsetting Thought
“I wonder if the corner grocery is hiring?”
“He ruins everything! This is going to be the worst year of my career.”

Calming Thoughts
“I feel undervalued right now – I need to seek support from my peers and supervisor.”
“Having her in my class is going to be a wonderful Professional Development experience.”

CSEFEL
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 3 Agitation

Goal: To use supportive techniques to provide calming support

1. Recognize/decode behavior and communicate
2. Provide support
3. Provide choices
4. Suggest self-regulation or calming activities
5. Refer to behavior support plan
The Need for Drain Off
Emotions are processed in the right hemisphere, and done so nonverbally & subconsciously.

Language to communicate about emotions is processed in the left hemisphere.

Learning to “link” the two hemispheres through interaction with a caring adult provides the first step towards effectively understanding and self-regulating feelings and behaviors.

When kids learn how to communicate positively about their needs and emotional experiences, they are able to develop empathy and compassion.
Good Listeners

• Are fully present in the moment
• Convey listening through verbal and non-verbal means
• Communicate clearly and concisely
• Listen intently, not only for the overt content of what is said, but also for the underlying messages and meaning
• Track a person’s line of thought and expression of emotions without introducing distracting digressions
Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication

The meaning transmitted from any interaction is the result of:

Facial Expression 55%
Tone of Voice 38%
Words 7%

100% Communication
Advanced Responding Skills: Validations

- Validation is the recognition and acceptance of another person's thoughts, feelings, sensations, and behaviors as understandable.
- Validation is one way that we communicate acceptance of others

“I can see you’re mad.”

“Sitting in circle was hard.”

“I’d be sad too.”
Advanced Responding Skills: Affirmations

- Affirmations are verbal statements that convey a positive view of the student and reflect on some positive quality or behavior.
- Affirmations communicate that the adult likes the student and believes that there is a better side of them than their problem behavior (optimism).

“Look at you. You calmed down.”

“Thanks for talking.”
Advanced Responding Skills: Reassurance

- Reassurance is a verbal strategy that involves communicating that you are there to help.
- Reassurance shows that you are on the student’s side and optimism that you can solve the problem together.

“I can help you.”
“We can make this better.”
“I want to understand you.”
Activity: Agitation

WHAT: Choose a child that you have worked with and identify what you would do to support them when they are at this stage in the escalating behavior cycle (5 minutes)

SHARE OUT: Volunteers (5 minutes)
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 4 Acceleration

Goal: To prevent further acceleration and de-escalate the behavior.

1. Avoid escalating language, physical proximity, and body language. Refer to triggers.
2. Maintain calmness and respect.
   - Move slowly
   - Speak privately
   - Speak calmly
   - Stay on their level; maintain a reasonable distance
   - Be brief
   - Stay focused on the issue at hand
   - Acknowledge cooperation (affirmations)
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 4 Acceleration

3. Use crisis-prevention strategies
   • Provide options and time to decide
   • Ignore mumble grumbles, sulking, etc
   • Follow through without judgments
   • Debrief at a later time
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 5 Peak

Goal: Insure safety of all concerned.

1. Preparations and precautions
   1. Crisis Response Team
      1. Who/Back-Up
      2. Training
      3. Alignment with District Policies
         1. Restraint, Timeout, Hands on Student
   2. Physical Environment
   3. Procedures to Get Behavior Support
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 5 Peak

2. Short-term interventions
   • Procedures to Keep the Other Students Safe
   • Procedures to Keep the Student and Staff Safe
   • Safe Physical Environment: A time to deescalate and recover

3. Long-term interventions
   • Behavior Plans
   • Family Conferences
   • Referrals to mental health services, wraparound, collaboratives, etc.
**REACH De-escalation Communication & Response Protocol**

1. **Emergency Assistance Needed**

2. **Child Exhibits Major Problem Behavior that is Unsafe to Self or Others And Not Responding to Primary Caregivers**

   - Walkie-Talkie to Responder – “I Need REACH Assistance in _____”

3. **All Available Responders Go Immediately to Location**

   - **Resolved in Location**
     - Process with Child, As Appropriate Communication with Teachers
     - Complete Documentation
     - Inform Family/Guardian
   
   - **NOT Resolved in Location**
     - Move to OT Room or Evacuate Area
     - Process with Child, As Appropriate Communication with Teachers
     - Complete Documentation
     - Inform Family/Guardian

Updated 2-2-17
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 6
De-escalation

Goal: To provide time to cool down, regain controls and recover.

1. Suggested space/places
2. Time to cool down
3. Independent activities
Strategies for Managing Behavior at Stage 7 Recovery

Goal: To re-establish relationship, learn from the experience, and suggest alternatives for the future.

1. Focus on typical routines
2. Continue high rates of positive contacts
3. Strongly acknowledge problem-solving behaviors (Affirmations)
4. Communicate expectations that student can do it right (Affirmations) and that you are there to help (Reassurance)
5. Establish or review next steps including logical consequences