

## Positive Solutions for Families

### Session 3

#### Why Do Children Do What They Do?

Originally developed by the Center on the Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. Adapted for use in California by WestEd for the California Collaborative on the Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CA CSEFEL) March 2013

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## Shared Expectations

- We are Friendly and Kind
- We are Respectful
- We are Safe and Healthy



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## What's Happening Today?

- Share your *Things to Try at Home* activities
  - Playing with your child (following his/her lead)
  - Behaviors to see less of and more of
- Determining the meaning of behavior
- Making our expectations clear
- Developing household rules
- Review *Things to Try at Home* activities

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## Let's Celebrate!

- Please turn to Activity 10 in your workbook
- Parent Encouragement and Positive Comments
- Write an encouraging note or positive comment **to yourself** about something that you did with your child this last week that you feel really happy or proud about!

Proud



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## Behavior Communicates...



- What the infant, toddler, or young child is experiencing
- What it is like to be in that child's body
- What it is like to be in that child's world

**Behavior =  
Communication!  
Behavior has  
Meaning!!**

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## What is This Behavior Communicating?



Video 3a\_5a

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## Understanding Behavior

- Often we understand what a child is communicating through his/her behavior
- Sometimes it is difficult to be sure
- Looking at four things can help us understand
  1. What happened before the behavior?
  2. What is the **FORM** (type) of the behavior?
  3. What happened after the behavior?
  4. What is the possible **FUNCTION** of the behavior?

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## Challenging Behavior Works

- Children engage in challenging behavior because it "works" for them.
- Challenging behavior meets the function for the child
  - Obtaining access to something or someone (i.e., gain/request/initiate) or
  - Avoiding something or someone (i.e., escape/avoid) or
  - Expressing emotion
- The function is the purpose/the meaning behind the behavior. What the thought bubble above your child's head would say.



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## Documenting Behavior

- Writing down what you see can help you understand the reason behind the behavior
- There is a form in your workbook that can be used to document behavior



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## Use the Form to Document What You Observe in This Video



Video 3a\_5a  
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## Where Do You Stand?

Statement 1:

- I think children should never drink soft drinks (soda).

Statement 2:

- I would rather buy my child whatever he wants than have people stare at me because he has a temper tantrum in the grocery store.

Statement 3:

- It's the parent's fault when a child continues to exhibit challenging behavior. It is just bad parenting!

Statement 4:

- Children who tantrum in public places should be removed from that setting (airplane, park, etc.).

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## Behavior is in the Eye of the Beholder

- Given how differently we can feel about different behaviors, it isn't surprising to find that children get mixed messages about behavior
- Making our expectations for behavior clear can be helpful in preventing and addressing challenging behavior

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## Make Your “Expectations” Clear

- Your child cannot read your mind
- We have been practicing telling children what to do instead of what not to do
- Expectations at home can take that one step further
- You can use simple, broad statements that will guide what you tell your child to do

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## Remember our Expectations

- We are Friendly and Kind
- We are Respectful
- We are Safe and Healthy

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## Expectations are Broad

- By choosing three or four main expectations, you can help guide behavior through examples
  - For “We are Safe,” an example could be picking up toys (to prevent tripping)
  - For “We are Kind,” an example could be gently petting the dog
- For your examples
  - Clearly and simply state what you expect your child to do and link it to the expectation
  - Know what is appropriate for your child's age
  - Use age-appropriate language

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## Expectation Examples

- Our Family Is Friendly and Kind
  - Let your sister have a turn with the book
  - Help Mommy set the table
- Our Family Is Respectful
  - Ask before you use something that belongs to someone else
- Our Family Is Safe and Healthy
  - Get to bed on time
- Other ideas?
- Add your ideas to your workbook, Activity 12

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## Help Me Be Successful! Teach Me What to Do!



1. Show and Tell
2. Practice Makes Perfect
3. You Got It!

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## Using Pictures to Teach Expectations

- Get out your camera
- Snap a photograph of what you want your child "to do"
- Post it, model it, practice it, and notice when it's done and use positive descriptive acknowledgement!
- If your expectation is to "clean up"...show him/her



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## Things to Try at Home!

- Observations – Determining the Meaning of Behavior
  - (Activity 11)
- Developing Household Expectations
  - (Activity 12)
- Have fun with your child!



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## Words of Wisdom

**You are raising adults, not children. The work you do now will make life much easier as they get older...**



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