

CFISD Psychological Services Department

# Building Positive Behaviors: Part 3

Parenting Our Children



# Agenda

What major topics will we be covering tonight?



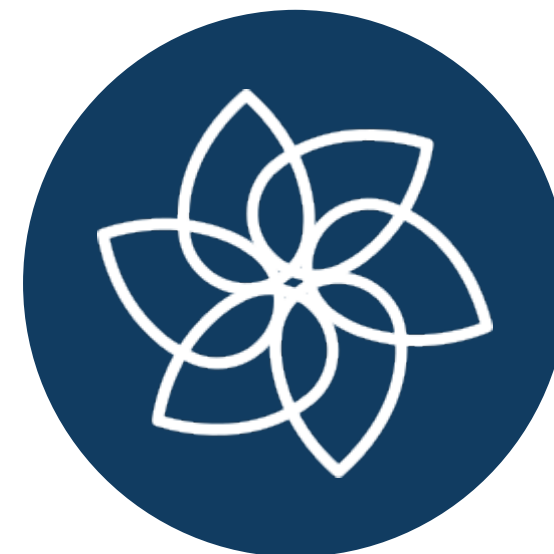
Consequences



Troubleshooting



Generalization  
& Maintenance



Special  
Situations



Self-care



Reflections

What are some expectations you have for tonight's session?

What are you most excited to learn about?

What gaps have you noticed need to be addressed in the things that may have been implemented in your home in the last few weeks?



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# Consequences

# Time -Out

- Intended to be time out from ALL positive reinforcement
- Time out should be brief
  - General rule: Age = number of minutes in time out
- Optimal setting
  - Away from reinforcing environment, boring
  - Decide on a consistent place
  - Visible to the adult for monitoring
- Completion of time-out should be followed by praise
- Practice time out when the child is calm

# Time -Out

- Stay calm
- Give time out in a matter-of-fact tone
- Escort the child to the time out chair
- Give your child a clear instruction of what they are supposed to do
- Can use a timer
  - Visible but out of reach of child
- Ignore misbehavior in time out IF child is staying in time out
- If child leaves time-out, instruct child to go back to time-out
  - Alternatives: extra time, removal of privileges

# Low -Rate Behaviors

What if the unwanted behavior I'm trying to get rid of doesn't happen very often, making it hard to reinforce its positive opposite enough?

## Low-Rate Programs

- Behavior doesn't occur frequently enough to reward the opposite; simulations would be hard to set up
- Occur infrequently (e.g., stealing, lying, running away, shoplifting, destroying property)

# Consequences

- Effortful and purposeful chore (e.g., scrubbing the floors, raking leaves, pulling weeds, washing the baseboards, straightening the garage, etc.)
- Fifteen minutes for younger children (ages 5-6) and 30 minutes for children (over age 7)
- Have a regular and longer set of chores (30 minutes for younger; an hour for older) for more serious offenses



# Consequences

- No consequence other than the designated chore should be used
- No lecture, no humiliations, no spanking
- Chore lists/options should be prepared in advance

# Steps for Designing a Low -Rate

## Program

1. Be sure you can observe the behavior you want stopped, or can see clear signs that the behavior has occurred
2. Select a chore that is tedious
3. Stay calm
4. Before you instruct the child to do the low-rate chore, explain the program to him/her
5. Assign the chore immediately
6. Don't threaten the chore; no warnings
7. Don't debate or argue

8. If your child won't do the chore at first, calmly tell them that you won't be able to start the timer until he/she starts the chore
9. If your child still won't do the chore, give him/her a choice of either doing it or losing a privilege
10. If your child complies but in an unacceptable way, calmly stop him/her and take away the privilege
11. Don't forget to praise your child for doing the chore assigned as a consequence for the unwanted low-rate behavior
12. Continue to praise the positive opposite of the problem behavior

# Jump Starting Behaviors

What if my child doesn't do the desired behavior enough that I can reinforce/reward it?

- “Jump start” the behavior
  - Break down the behavior into steps
  - Suggest the child engages in the first step (or only for a couple of minutes) with the promise that they will not have to engage in the rest
    - Don't nag or go back on a promise



# Troubleshooting: W h y? W h e n?

# Why Should We Troubleshoot?

- Our strategies are research-based and had been shown to have predictable results
- We want to treat the BEHAVIOR, not the child
- When a child's behavior improves, parents' levels of depression, anxiety, and stress go down and families get along better
  - Thus, we want to do everything we can to try to make these changes occur

# Questions to Ask

- Are we doing it right?
  - Fidelity
- Do we need to change the program to better fit the situation?

# When to Troubleshoot

1. No change in behavior
2. Change is too small
3. No effect or behavior has gotten worse
4. Change occurs but does not last
5. Change does not occur in all contexts





# Troubleshooting: The Basics

# Check Your Prompts

- Prompts need to occur in close proximity to the desired behavior
- Prompted behavior needs to be reinforced with praise and/or other rewards
- Prompts include: statements, notes, messages, gestures, guidance, help

# Other Things to Consider

- Is the behavior bar too high?
- “Shape” the desired behavior, if needed
- Does my praise reflect the pizza chart?
- Too many rewards indiscriminately
- Am I providing too many reminders?
- Consistency across settings/caregivers

# Common Questions

- What if I relapse into some of my previous strategies?
- Examples: yelling at my child or spanking
- What if the program is suspended?



# Generalization and Maintenance

# Important Questions to Ask

- Is the behavior where I want it to be, **realistically**?
- No – continue with the program troubleshooting where necessary until the answer is yes
- Yes – continue to the next question
- How do I ensure that the improved behavior **lasts and extends to other situations**?

# Maintenance

- The most important way to make changes endure is to do the program correctly and consistently
- Continue the program fully for a few weeks
  - When behaviors are well-rehearsed, they will become so ingrained that they will continue without the need for antecedents and consequences
- Pair praise with rewards to increase self-esteem and motivation
- Rewards can be faded out

# Generalizing Behaviors to New Situations

- Transfer to other settings isn't always necessary
- Some programs are designed to target multiple settings and people
- Oftentimes the program itself transfers appropriate behavior to other settings



# Determining Whether Generalizing the Program is Appropriate

- Step 1 – Get control of the behavior in one specific setting for at least a brief period of time
- Step 2 – Ask yourself if the behavior changed in the situations you want it to
- Step 3 – If it hasn't, then extend the program to one or two situations it hasn't transferred to yet

# Situations that Could be Generalized

- Determine if target behavior occurs on a regular basis in this situation
- Determine if the support person is able and willing to implement the program
- Consider implementing an abbreviated version of the program to one or two key behaviors
- Use of index card, text or email to communicate daily progress

# Specific Examples

- Evening babysitter
- Daytime babysitter/nanny
- Daycare
- Coach or other group leader
  
- School\*

# School

- If a problem-behavior occurs at both home and school, and your home-based strategies have resulted in a decrease in the behavior, you may be able to coordinate with your child's teacher to encourage generalization
- Try to make the plan across settings simple, easy to implement
  - May require some adjustment so it coordinates with the teacher's existing practices

# Home -School Collaboration

- Have open conversations with your child's teacher about your family culture, beliefs, and practices
- Ask yourself: One thing I wish my child's teacher knew and understood about my child and family is...
- You can share important features of your family at parent-teacher conferences and/or meet the teacher



# Special Situations



## Reflection

What are some special situations in my home that I may need to be prepared to adapt for?

What are some situations that I already have had to adapt a behavior chart for?

# Vacations

- Make sure children are fed and well-rested to avoid making them irritable
- Distractions
- Make a travel point chart
  - Choose two behaviors (may be different or same)
  - Choose different rewards that you'll have access to on vacation (e.g., extra swimming time, picking place to eat)



# Joint Custody

## Three things to consider

1. How often/long is the child in each home?
2. Is the behavior as likely to occur in the other home?
3. How likely is the other parent to implement the program in their home?

## Three options

1. Behavioral card
2. Create a separate program for other home
3. Suspend program at other home

# Consequence Sharing

What if I have more than one child but only one really needs the program?

- Only consequences that are shared are rewards
- If both/all children have charts, both/all children get rewarded when they reach their goal
  - One child may be additionally rewarded for reaching goals related to training or school
- When siblings are pleasant or engage in the desired behavior they both earn tokens that can purchase rewards
  - Can reduce sibling fighting, disrespect, etc.

# Group Programs

- The group as a whole must perform the behavior in order to earn a reward that they share
- Uses:
  - For all children in the home
  - For special events such as sleepovers
  - For classrooms



## Final Thoughts



# Self - Care

Parenting Stress and Healthy Strategies

# Parenting Stress

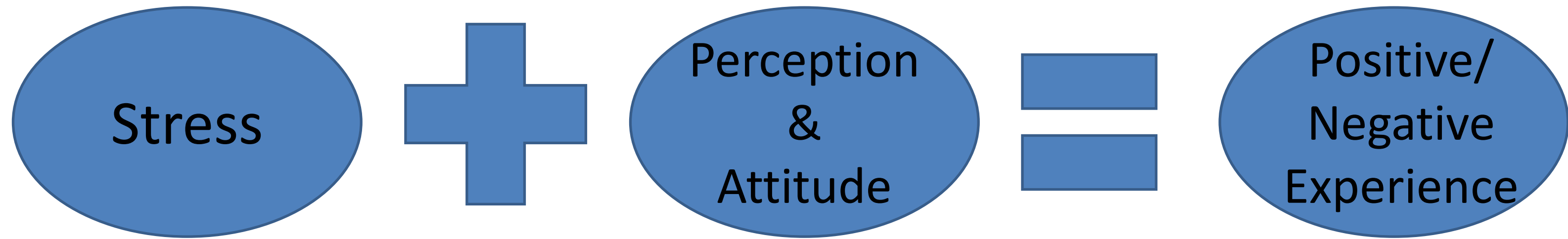
Daily Parenting Hassles	Pervasive Stressors	Highly Stressful Events
Dealing with school problems	Financial insecurity	Divorce
Details of child-care	Food insecurity	Loss of employment
Managing schedules	Family discord	Move
Arranging for rides	Medical conditions	Death

*Also, a pandemic ...*

# Warning Signs of Stress

Physical	Emotional	Behavioral	Mental
Headaches	Anxiety	Crying	Poor concentration
Stomachaches	Nervousness	Nervous habits	Poor memory
Chronic fatigue	Excessive worry	Sleep problems	Confusion
Heart palpitations	Anger	Over-reacting	Mind racing
Weight gain/loss	Depression	Increased eating/drinking	Going “blank”
Trembling	Fear	Smoking	Indecisiveness

# Parenting Stress Equation







## Reflections

Take a moment to reflect on your daily stresses. How would you rate yourself on a stress scale?

# Effects of Parenting Stress

- Stressed parents are...
  - More likely to be harsh and authoritarian in their interactions with their child
  - More hostile and aggressive in their communication
  - Likely to rely more on corporal punishment
  - More reactive and unable to let things go
  - Less involved with their child emotionally

# Effects of Stress on Attachment

- Stress disrupts healthy attachment
- Prevents secure connections between parent and child
- Has long-lasting developmental effects on child

# Proactive Practices

- Positive parenting behaviors!
- Social supports
- Make time for yourself
- Schedule time with your partner
- Increase the amount of quality family time
- Lead a less programmed, simplified life
- Increase opportunities for family time that is routine and ritual (e.g., family dinners)
- Participate in some group activity that makes you feel part of the community
- Develop healthy routines
- Manage money well
- Consider psychotherapy

# Normalize Mental Health

- Make an effort toward prioritizing mental health in the home setting
- This may take on a more or less clinical approach, depending on your family's comfort
- Some ideas include:
  - Open and honest discussions about stress and emotions (emotion coaching)
  - Practicing positive self-talk and making encouraging statements
  - Following through on self-care strategies
  - Psychotherapy/medication

# Emotion Coaching

- Parents:
  - Monitor their children's emotions
  - View their children's negative emotions as opportunities for teaching
  - Assist them in labeling emotions
  - Coach them in how to deal effectively with emotions
  - Model their own positive coping strategies to their children during times of frustration

# Self-Care: Carve Out Time for YOU

- Healthy daily routines
  - Quiet walk around the block
  - Family walks
  - Doing yoga
  - Other exercise
  - Eating healthy food consistently
- Listen to your favorite music in the car
- Watching a light-hearted television show
- Bubble bath
- Massage
- Mindfulness activities
- Deep breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation



## Reflection

What are some self-care examples you can apply to your daily life?

What are some barriers you may experience for practicing self-care?



# Seeking Professional Assistance

- Parents may consider seeking professional assistance to manage feelings of stress, depression, and anxiety related to difficulty implementing effective parenting methods
- Psychotherapy (and medication, in some instances and with physician support and input) can be effective to lessen stress and help parents regain equilibrium

# Additional Resources

- <http://onetoughjob.org/?gclid=CLrukuus158CFQ4HagodJV5xaQ>
- Website that assists parents on various aspects of raising children (i.e. assistance for discipline ideas, positive parenting, school and childcare, nurturing your family, health and safety, growth and development, and parenting tips sorted by age. This website is also available in Spanish.
- [www.parenting.com](http://www.parenting.com)
- Website with a wide variety of information in regard to fertility, pregnancy, baby, toddler, child, mom, recipes, activities, gear, and community.
- [http://www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com/stress\\_management.htm](http://www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com/stress_management.htm)
- Website with additional stress management tips for parents
- [www.parenting.org](http://www.parenting.org)
- [Parenting.org](http://www.parenting.org) is a Boys Town owned and operated website, which offers free parenting tips, advice, resources and guidance. Advice on school, safety, parenting and life's lessons are designed to give you ideas that are easy to use and effective. There is even an area on how to teach [social skills](#) to your children.
- <http://www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com/chorecharts4-10.htm>
- Variety of free chore charts and a variety of articles relating to behavioral management.
- Free printable reward charts by age.
- [http://www.childavenue.com/pages/family\\_corner\\_pages/printables.html](http://www.childavenue.com/pages/family_corner_pages/printables.html)
- Free printable reward coupons for kids and potty training cards.
- [Common Sense Parenting: Using Your Head as Well as Your Heart to Raise School-Aged Children: 3rd edition](#) by Ray Burke, Ron Herron, and Bridget A. Barnes (Paperback - Aug. 1, 2006).

# References

Kazdin, A.E. (2008). *The Kazdin Method for Parenting the Defiant Child: With No Pills, No Therapy, No Contest of Wills*. Houghton Mifflin Company: New York, NY.

Webster-Stratton, C. (2006). *The Incredible Years*. Incredible Years Press: Seattle, WA.



Thank you for attending!

- Questions?

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