Managing Challenging Behaviors Webinar

Thursday, January 14, 2016
1:00 to 2:30 PM

Learning Objectives:

As a result of participation in this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Explain factors that lead to challenging behaviors
2. Describe resources to use to help families whose children are at risk for suspension or expulsion from child care
3. Identify strategies to help manage children with challenging behaviors
4. Identify policies to promote behavior management

Time for A Polling Question:

What is your primary role?

What is the definition of challenging behavior?

Any behavior that:

• Feels overwhelming to the caregiver
• Interferes with a child's cognitive, social and emotional development
• Prevents optimal learning

Examples of challenging behaviors

• Biting
• Hitting
• Throwing things
• Screaming
• Crying
• Defiance
• Self-injurious behaviors
Risk Factors for Challenging Behaviors

**Biological**
- Genes (family history)
- Gender
- Temperament
- Substance Abuse During Pregnancy
- Neurological Problems (ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities and/or speech disorders)

**Environmental**
- Family Factors (single parenting, financial hardship, depression, violence, marital conflict)
- Peers
- Conditions Surrounding Poverty (exposure to violence, drugs, homelessness, overcrowding)
- Violent Media

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Child Development

Understanding normal child development allows caregivers to:
1. Set reasonable expectations based on the child’s developmental stage
2. Anticipate typical challenging behaviors as a child ages
3. Identify a child with a delay in development

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Watch Me! Resources

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Child Development Resources

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Child Development Resources

Developmental Milestones
Developmental Milestones Checklist

Time for A Polling Question:

What is the most common way staff learn about child development in your program?

Health Issues that May Impact Behavior

- Chronic illness
- Hearing loss
- Vision loss
- Seizure disorder
- Medication side effects
- Sleep disturbances
- Lead poisoning

Managing Challenging Behaviors in Young Children

Supporting Everyone to Experience Success as a Lifelong Learners

Julia Slater, MEd

Key Social Emotional Skills Children Need as They Enter Kindergarten

- Confidence
- Develop good relationships with peers and adults
- Concentration
- Persistence with challenging tasks
- Ability to effectively communicate emotions
- Ability to listen to instruction and be attentive
- Ability to solve social problems

Prekindergarteners Left Behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems

Walter Gilliam, 2005

Preschool children are THREE TIMES more likely to be “expelled” than children in grades K-12

*For preschool-age child care programs, the rates were far higher. Expulsion rate more than 13 times higher than K through 12.

*Not state funded PK

[Link to article: http://psychologybenefits.org/2014/12/13/preschool-expulsions/]
Expulsions and suspensions in our early care and education programs

- Boys represent 54% of the preschool enrollment
- But 79% of children suspended once were boys
- And 82% of children suspended multiple times were boys
  - Developmentally appropriate for boys versus girls
  - What is available during routines of the day?

Factors (other than child behavior) related to an increased risk for expulsion

These include:

- **Program factors** (group sizes, child-teacher ratios, availability of consultants and support staff to assist teachers with managing challenging behaviors)
- **Teacher factors** (teacher depression and teacher job stress)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Can Preschool Expulsion Be Prevented? Research Says Yes!

We now know how to help teachers

- Children who are sad and mad are not just bad

**Support to teachers** dealing with troubling or difficult behaviors
  - Confidence
  - Competence
  - Commitment

Support is available in Pennsylvania!

Time for A Polling Question:

What is the most challenging time/routine during the day?
Teach children (& you!) what to do to prevent challenging behavior

Function of Behavior
• I want something
  o Attention
  o Object
• I want to get away from something
  o Escape
  o Avoid
  o Delay

Promote Children’s Success
Prevent Challenging Behaviors
• Respectful, responsive relationships
• Children engaged in meaningful activities
• Teach social and communication skills: What To Do!
  o Behavior expectations
    (Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Team Player)
  o Consistent classroom routines

Pennsylvania Support
• PA Key Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project (ECMH)
• PA Positive Behavior Support www.papbs.org
• Social Emotional Resources for Early Learning Programs
  http://www.eita-pa.org/sedvelopment/behavior-supports-for-early-learning-programs/
• Behavior Resources for Families
  http://www.eita-pa.org/sedvelopment/behavior-for-families/

Scenario
• Preschool age girl attending child care
• Screaming, hitting, spitting, running, dumping, throwing classroom materials
Function of behavior? How was this resolved?

Pennsylvania Support
OCDEL Draft Guidance on Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood Programs

- OCDEL collecting stakeholder input on draft guidance (Fall 2015 with additional comments accepted through January 18, 2016)
- Draft Next Steps included:
  1. Policy development
  2. Professional development
  3. Share policy and resources with families
- Look for more details from OCDEL soon

Access the draft announcement:

Access the list of comments received to date:
http://www.eita-pa.org/assets/UPDATEDexpulsionandsuspensioncommentschart.pdf

Comment period is open until January 18, 2016
Submit comments until that time to:
RA-dewocdnet@pa.gov

Helping Children with Difficult Behaviors to Succeed in Early Learning Settings

Nathan J. Blum, M.D.
William H. Bennett Professor of Pediatrics
Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics
The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

A CHILD WHO CAN SUCCEED WILL SUCCEED
- If a child is not succeeding, s/he is being asked to do something s/he can’t do (or at least s/he can’t do it as much as adults want him/her to)

How Does One Mange Difficult Behavior in Young Children?

- Reward success when child is meeting expectations
- Provide sufficient support for child to be successful in situations that tend to be difficult
  - Nurturing interactions with parents/teachers
  - Successful interactions with peers
  - Successful learning
- Not primarily a mental health system intervention

Most Behavior is Learned

- How do young children learn behavior?
  - Imitation (modeling)
  - Repetition with Contrast
    - Young children repeat the behaviors that get them attention (or things they want)
    - Attention (or other rewards) for successful behavior is the best way to prevent problem behaviors
How Does One Support Young Children to be Successful

- Modify Physical Environment
- Classroom Management
- Systematic Use of Adult Attention

Physical Environment

- **Classroom Layout**
  - Can children be visually monitored at all times
  - Can child vary their level of stimulation (spaces for large, small, or individual activities)
  - Centers for high interaction vs low interaction activities (why do so many classrooms have an aquarium?)
- **Safety**
  - Allow safe exploration (both physical and cognitive)
  - Minimize large open inside spaces that promote running in the classroom

- **Access & Interest**
  - Appropriate and engaging activities (enough activities, easy access, can child select activities at their level?)
  - Organization (Can children find activities?)
  - Change available activities to maintain interest
- **Cues**
  - Paths and Boundaries for movement
  - Crowding—feet on floor for lining up
  - Number of children at learning center (laminated cards)

Classroom Management

- **Schedule**
  - Predictability decreases behavior problems
  - How is it communicated to children (pictures?)
  - Minimize transitions that every child is doing at the same time
  - Balance activities:
    - Active vs quiet
    - Small vs Large group
    - Teacher vs Child Directed
- **Rituals and Routines**
  - Helps children prepare for or stay engaged during transitions

Classroom Management

- **Limited number of rules**
  - Engage children in developing rules and preparing visual reminders of rules
  - No more than 5 rules
    - Lots of rules leads to inconsistency
- **Giving Directions**
  - Have child’s attention
  - Limited number, positive, and specific
  - Give choices when possible (but don’t give a choice if there isn’t one – Do you want to clean-up now?)

Adult Attention

- Powerful **motivator** for most children
- Often **misbehavior** is the most reliable way of getting adult attention
Systematic Use of Adult Attention?

- Increasing attention for appropriate behavior
  - Praise, attention for appropriate behaviors at least 4-5 times an hour
- Ignore mildly inappropriate behaviors that were previously resulting in adult attention
  - May initially see an increase in inappropriate behaviors

What to Check When Behavior is Not Improving

- How often is child getting attention for appropriate behavior vs. inappropriate behavior?
  - Attention for appropriate behavior must occur 5x for every time the child gets attention for inappropriate behavior
  - Number of rules; are rules clear?
  - Inconsistency, intermittent reinforcement of inappropriate behavior
    - Escape from demands for inappropriate behavior
    - Expectations-too high or too low (poor limit setting)
    - Bribing instead of rewarding
    - Family Psychosocial Stressors

Promoting Successful Behavior in Young Children

- Adults responsibility to create an environment in which the child succeeds
- Consider Physical Environment, Classroom Management Strategies
- Systematically Use Adult Attention
- Targeted Interventions
  - Increase repetitions (more praise and attention)
  - Increase contrast
    - Use of rewards
    - Use of time out (never use this alone)
  - Reduce intermittent reinforcement of misbehavior
    - Ignore mild problem behaviors
    - Don’t bribe

Some Children Need Targeted Supports

- Need more REPETITIONS or more CONTRAST (or both) to LEARN appropriate behaviors
  - Medical and Developmental problems
  - More frequent adult praise and attention (at least 10-15 times an hour)
  - Reward systems, more frequent rewards
  - Time Out
    - Time out only creates a contrast if the child is getting frequent praise & attention for appropriate behavior

Bribing vs. Rewarding

- Definition of Bribe: something valuable given to a person to get them to do something dishonest or illegal (i.e. to misbehave)
- Bribes: occur when children are offered something valuable to stop misbehaving
  - Child would not have gotten bribe if they had not misbehaved. Thus the bribe is reinforcing misbehavior
- Rewards: are given for appropriate behavior

Resources

Administration for Children and Families
- Resources Related to Reducing Suspension and Expulsion Practices in Early Childhood Settings

Caring for Our Children Standards
http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/2.2.0.8
- Preventing Expulsions, Suspensions, and Other Limitations in Services
Questions and Comments

Wrap Up

Download the form at www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org.
Select Professional Development > Webinars, then the title of this webinar. Fax or scan and email your completed evaluation form to ECELS at 484-446-3255.

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