Chapter 8 UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE OF DISCIPLINE

The process of instilling discipline in children is a challenging task for any parent.

Children who are placed with foster families and with adoptive families may have experienced a variety of ways adults attempted to facilitate responsible behavior in children, e.g.:

- No discipline at all;
- Harsh punishment; and
- A variety of caregivers with different approaches to discipline.

Children have intense feelings about the circumstances that caused the separation from their families, the separation itself, and the loss associated with the separation. The ways they express these feelings may be harmful to themselves, others and to property.

The behaviors of children placed with you may be confusing regarding: what is appropriate child behavior; what is appropriate given the child's background, particularly if the child is developmentally delayed or has emotional or behavioral difficulties, but requires discipline at home.

Many people, including your own relatives, school officials, parents of the children in your care, and the agency have strong ideas about how children should be disciplined.

Parenting children born to someone else – when we don't have shared history with those children – may require an approach that is different from your approach with children born to you.

Foster parents and adoptive parents need to examine their own views and disciplinary practices to consider their positive and possible negative effects on children.

Unfortunately, some foster parents and adoptive parents do not understand the angry and sad feelings and behaviors of the children placed in their care, and they don't know how to manage them,

Sometimes, too, caseworkers without specific training in discipline do not know how to help. The result is that foster parents and adoptive parents request that the child be moved. The result of this experience is that children learn once again that adults cannot be trusted to protect and nurture them and they suffer another disruption and loss.

1. Ask participants why they think the topic of discipline and disciplining children is such a challenge, especially for foster parents and adoptive parents.
2. Acknowledge ideas and be sure the following points are covered in the discussion if not already mentioned:

    Foster parents and adoptive parents are aware that others (family, friends, the community, the agency) have higher expectations of them.

Children placed with foster parents and with adoptive parents have experienced a loss of control, anger sadness and other emptions which can result in extreme behaviors.

Instilling discipline and facilitating responsible behavior in children is compounded by their diverse and special needs and the urgency to get to know children. Establishing a trusting relationship, at the time of placement, is hampered by the children's past experiences with adults which can have an effect on discipline and responsible behavior.

Incorporating a new child or children into your family and household requires extra planning for change.

Defining Discipline

1. Introduce this discussion.

    As we have just discussed, it is essential that we have a pre-service training session focused on discipline and, for the reasons we identified. Disciplining children in need of foster care and adoption can be very challenging. This challenge can be met, and we're going to talk about how.

    But first, we're wondering if we all have the same idea about what discipline is.

    When people are asked to think about what discipline means, they often identify words that describe it as a process. Some of these descriptive words were mentioned such as teaching and learning.

    Another way we think of discipline is to associate the word with examples of it. Words such as rules, grounding, time out, consequences, punishment, are ways people discipline.

    Also, people identify the goals of discipline as they define what it is. Words or phrases used to describe discipline having a purpose include: self-control, responsibility, order, growth, and changing behavior.

2. Discuss discipline as a process with desired outcomes.

    Discipline is more than just the application of a specific behavior management technique in response to an unacceptable behavior. Discipline is intended to result in a child's self-control, self-respect, responsibility, and orderliness. Specifically, a disciplined person is one who has learned self-control and is governed by a system of internalized rules. Discipline helps a child understand feelings and emotions and the responses he/she can exhibit to those feelings and emotions. Discipline teaches

the child how to control inappropriate behaviors. Thus discipline is a long process that evolves to meet the changing needs of the growing child.

The Difference between Discipline and Punishment

It is very common for people to think that discipline and punishment are the same. However, discipline is not the same as punishment for several reasons. Before we identify these reasons, lets determine what punishment is.

*How were you punished or how have you punished your children?

- Ask the following question:
  In your judgment, would you say that you turned out well, even though you were physically punished?

  The majority of individuals in our groups do tell us they were physically punished, and most tell us they are doing fine today. What factors do you think influence the fact that most people in our groups turned out okay despite being physically punished?

- Conduct an activity to illustrate the differences between discipline and punishment.
  *Conduct this activity as follows:
  On the wall you will have two flip charts posted, one entitled Discipline and another entitled Punishment.

  Hand out paper strips containing each one of the descriptors (see advanced prep-list point 12) and ask participants to move, individually but quickly, to the chart where they feel their strip belongs and place it there.

  There may be some confusion about which descriptors go where. Be sure to assist participants with their choices, and explain any confused items.

  Be aware that some people may not read; if this is true, be sure to partner participants so they work together on this activity.

  If the group is very small, consider giving each participant a number of characteristics. If doing a session with and individual, consider scrambling the descriptors and having participants draw a line from each one to the proper title.

  *Based on the definitions of discipline and punishment and the exercise we just completed, how would you describe the key differences between the two?

The definitions themselves convey the primary difference between discipline and punishment. Let's look at some of the differences in more detail.

This resource lists the differences between discipline and punishment.

Cover the following points quickly
- o Discipline is something that parents instill in children. Punishment is imposed on children.
- o Discipline can be used to prevent problems from happening. Punishment focuses on dealing with problems after their occurrence.
- o Discipline fosters self-control and self-responsibility. Punishment relies on the person with the power to control the child's behavior to be responsible for changing it.
- o Structure and guidance are key words associated with discipline. Sanctions and enforcement are the key words associated with punishment.
- o Discipline teaches the right way to solve or prevent problems. Although it may stop the wrong behavior, punishment does not teach the right or expected behaviors.
- o Discipline encourages the child to be capable and responsible for making decisions. Punishment prevents children from learning to make their own decisions.
- o Discipline encourages the desired behavior. Punishment may reinforce unacceptable behavior if misbehaving is the only way to get parental attention.
- o Discipline is intended to protect and nurture children. Punishment often uses, and may cause, emotional and physical pain.
- o Discipline may help children feel better about themselves as they develop confidence in their ability to meet their needs in responsible ways. Punishment may reinforce poor self-esteem, especially if the punishment was demeaning.
- o Discipline encourages children to rely on their inner controls or rules for conduct. Punishment implies that responsible behavior is expected only in the presence of authority figures.
- o The teaching-learning approach of discipline promotes a cooperative, mutual, positive relationship between children and adults. Punishment increases avoidance and fear.
- Ask for and respond to participant's questions or concerns in response to the information conveyed about the difference between discipline and punishment and provide the following:

*Are there any questions concerning the differences between discipline and punishment.

- The decision to rely on punishment as means of dealing with a child's behavior is usually based on the parent's past experiences. Some effective parents believe that they have to punish their children once in a while. Others believe they can deal with children's behaviors without ever having to punish them. A lot depends upon how we were dealt with as children and how those experiences may have influenced our ability and willingness to manage children's behavior as adults.

- Punishment may be effective now and then as a reminder of for order and everyone's safety. For instance, having a child pay for damage caused by a child's irresponsible actions such as bouncing a ball in the dining room is an effective reminder to not play in a space that is off limits for such activities. Also, teenagers can learn that if they come home two hours late, they lose that much time in staying out privileges the next weekend.

- Punishment should never be the main ingredient o effective discipline. Although it may have resulted in a desired outcome such as stopping an unacceptable behavior, punishment may result in unwanted consequences in the long run. It might just be that the best amount of punishment is actually the least amount as a means to encouraging the development of responsible behavior in children.

- Punishment may be used as an effective part of discipline. Having a child pay for damages he/she causes, establishing an earlier curfew in response to returning home late, or taking the three year olds truck away that he continually throws at his sister may all be effective means to manage behavior.

- Even though punishment may be a part of discipline, it is not the main ingredient because punishment will not instill self-control. As noted on resource sheet 7, punishment means the adult takes control. This may be necessary in some situations; however, on a routine basis, it denies the child the opportunity to take responsibility for his/her behavior.

- Punishment that is used harshly, without love, or that inflicts physical pain will not be effective part of the discipline process. Part of gaining self-control requires the child to feel good about his/her abilities. This type of punishment reinforces poor self-esteem and promotes avoidance, fear, and anger in the child.

We have compared discipline and punishment and identified the reasons why they are not the same. Let's examine the goals of effective discipline as a way of

summarizing this discussion, as a means to introducing our agency's policy on discipline, and for setting the stage for teaching children responsible behaviors.

The disciplinary process should be concerned with:

- Protecting and nurturing the child's physical and psychological wellbeing.
  This ensures that children do not experience physical pain or discomfort and that their self-concept, of which self-esteem is a part, is protected and enhanced.
- Advancing the child's development.
  This includes enhancing the child's physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and moral development, as well as considering the child's uniqueness and developmental stats.
- Meeting the child's needs.
  Needs are what drive people to behave. Discipline should be focused on helping children meet their needs in an acceptable way.
- Teaching ways to prevent and solve problems
- Maintaining and building the parent/child relationship.
  Children grow through nurturing, accepting, trusting relationships with adults important to them. Methods used as part of the disciplinary process should not damage this crucial ingredient to healthy growth and development.
- Building self-control and responsibility.
  Discipline should provide children with the capacity to control impulses, to use their internal rules for governing conduct, to make decisions, and to encourage them to take responsibility for their actions.
- Producing the desired behavior.
  The disciplinary action should result in the effect that is desired. It should not contribute to avoidance behavior, fear, or the opposite of what is considered to be the goal of the disciplinary process.

Later, we will discuss ways we can teach children responsible behavior without having to rely solely on punishment or our use of power. These goals of effective discipline will serve as a guide for the things we can do. First, however, we need to look more closely at the negative impact of physical punishment on abused or neglected children.

The Negative Effects of Physical Punishment

Introduce the discussion of the effects of physical punishment.

Children in need of foster care and adoption share the same needs as all children, and all children need to have their developmental needs met in safe and nurturing ways.

*Review the contents of the Resource Sheet, adding examples to enhance the learning:

- It teaches children that adults and older children use power and force to stop them from doing certain things. The use of physical punishment models for children that difficulties are to be resolved by physical means. The use of physical punishment therefore, increase the chances that older of larger children will hit younger, smaller children.
- It teaches children that the use of force or violence is a way to solve problems and conflicts and a way to respond to someone when you are angry.
- It increases the possibility that the person receiving the physical punishment will be resentful.
- It reinforces poor self-esteem by not treating the child and the child's body with dignity and respect. Children may not understand that they are being hit as a result of something they did wrong. Instead, they may think that they're no good and that others don't like them.
- Research in child development and psychology has demonstrated that physical psychology has demonstrated that physical punishment may stop s behavior immediately, but not for long. It simply means that a child might stop doing a particular behavior around the parent.
- Physical punishment tends to set the child against the parent who inflicts it on the child. Emotional pain may well last longer than physical pain.
- It teaches children to hide their actions in order to avoid getting caught and suffering the physical punishment.
- It perpetuates the cycle of abuse, a cycle we strongly wan to break.

The Case against spanking

Introduce the activity that focuses on concerns people have about spanking.

In a little while, we're going to talk about some effective ways to provide discipline for the children in need of foster care and adoption. But, before we do so, we thing it is important to address some concerns that people usually raise every time we note the negative effects of physical punishment. Often, these concerns are centered on the use of spanking as a form of punishment.

You will have an opportunity to address issues people raise in response to the Agency policy that prohibits the use of physical punishment or spanking.

- "I was spanked and I turned out okay."
  Many of us were spanked otherwise physically punished, and we did turn out okay. That's because while our parents were using that form of punishment, they

probably were also doing things that made us feel good about ourselves, and helped us problem-solve. In other words, they were not physically punishing us all the time.

- "Some children just ask for it."
  Children who have been neglected and maltreated may have learned that the only way to get attention is to disobey and behave inappropriately. It also may be that some children don't know they are behaving inappropriately. A child who expects or wants to be physically hurt is a child with some emotional problems. Physical punishment won't help and will make the problem worse.
- "You said treat all children equally and I spank my children."
  Treating all children equally means treating all fairly, and with dignity and respect. Parents don't deal with their teenagers the same way they deal with preschoolers; there are different expectations.

  Certain kinds of punishment given to a child who has had a loving, nurturing, caring background is vastly different from that same punishment given to a child who has been abused physically, sexually, and/or emotionally.
- "I don't want my children to become spoiled so an occasional spanking is good for them."
  Children learn to become "spoiled" through inconsistent parenting, a lack of structure and a lack of clear expectations for their conduct rather than from not spanking. Being aware of, and meeting, children's needs is the best way to prevent them from becoming self-centered or spoiled.
  Being "good" for them makes it sound as if there is a benefit for children to realize through this action. Being hit doesn't feel good at the time it happens nor does it produce a long term benefit.
- "Spanking is all right if the parent remains calm and in control of him/herself."
  If a parent is calm and not angry, the parent is in control and should be able to manage a child's behavior through a better way than spanking. Using spanking to relieve parental frustration or to diffuse parental anger serves the parent and has no positive benefit for the child.
  Being aware that spanking may become harmful to a child should lead a parent to doubt the value of spanking any time.
- "I feel obligated to obey the biblical lesson, 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'."
  *In dealing with the above topic area, the trainer is advised to avoid a lengthy philosophical debate and remind participants that physical discipline is not allowed by agency policy.

All these factors contribute to the rationale for the Agency's policy prohibiting spanking or hitting children.

- o Spanking causes hostility and anger. No one feels good about being hit.
- o Spanking creates more problems as it brings anger into an already existing problem.
- o Spanking can lead to child abuse. Most children in care have had a history of being abused. Resource families are responsible for keeping children safe.
- o The spanker becomes a model for aggressive behavior and risks teaching children that hitting others is an acceptable and legitimate way to express one's anger. The child may want to imitate this behavior on someone else.
- o Spanking leads to fear and avoidance.
- o Spanking violates a child's right to be safe. IF the same behavior was inflicted on an adult, the aggressor could be charged with assault.

Summarize the above points by asking participants:

- What do you see as the disadvantages of using physical punishment on foster or adoptive children?
- What are some possible risks for the children?
- For you?
- What are the main components of the physical discipline policy of this agency?
- What are the main components of the physical discipline policy of this agency?
- What are some challenges for you as you face using not using physical discipline with children in CPS custody?

Conclude this part of the session by stating that the remainder of the session will be devoted to examining effective ways to use discipline.

Agency Policy on Discipline

Ask the participants to offer reasons why agencies have policies on discipline, and especially on physical punishment, including restraints.

Child welfare agencies have not always had policies that prohibit certain kinds of punishment. These policies have been developed, and almost every public and private agency you work with would have this kind of policy.

*Based on what we have learned in previous sessions about the children in need of foster care and adoption and the goals of discipline, what are some reasons agencies have these policies?

Acknowledge their ideas and make sure to cover the following points:

Children who are in need of foster care and adoption have had serious losses: loss of significant others, health and/or self-esteem or identity.

Most often, these losses are due to the fact that they have been abused either physically, emotionally and/or sexually.

Some children have lived for many years with inappropriate physical punishment and abuse leaving them with emotional scars. The trauma from this abuse cannot be overcome in a short period of time. Physical punishment does not help the child overcome the emotional, mental, and physical effects of past abuse.

For some children who have experienced severe physical punishment, a spanking would do little if used to change the child's behavior. Imagine that a child was like Vernon in the film. Vernon was physically abused with beatings and cigarette burns.

*How effective would just a spanking be?

Other forms of physical and emotional punishment (such as humiliating a child, with holding food, threatening to stop visits with the parents) do not make much sense for children who already have been hurt badly enough that they need to be separated temporarily or permanently from their families.

Many children who have been subjected to cruel and/or extreme punishments will not respond to punishment unless it is abusive or severe. Others will over-react to any form of punishment.

A goal of foster care is to provide children with a safe nurturing environment where they can experience physical and emotional growth and a feeling of security and positive self-esteem. Physical punishment is obviously a poor tool for providing these conditions. And CPS prohibits all types of restraints.

Our agency has a policy on discipline which prohibits physical or corporal punishment and some other kinds of punishment. Let's take a few minutes to review this policy.

Discipline and punishment are often interchanged because they do have some things in common such as the goal of changing one's behavior. Some methods used as punishment, such as taking away privileges, when used appropriately, are acceptable.

There are other forms of punishment that are not acceptable because they do not accomplish the goals of discipline. They are prohibited because of the serious harm they do to the child's development.

The disciplinary needs of adoptive children remain the same after consummation, despite the fact that after consummation, the family will not have the 'formal' policy to which to adhere.

AGAPE DISCIPLINE POLICY & BEHAVIOR MODIFICAITON PROGRAM

Provided to Managing Conservator Agape Manor Home will emphasize the importance of nurturing behavior, stimulation and promptly meeting each child's needs as a measure of promoting positive behaviors and avoiding negative consequences.

Agape Manor Home will use appropriate authority and discipline practices as necessary to set limits for behavior and help each child and young adult develop the capacity for self-control. Agape Manor Home shall ensure that all de-escalation techniques of behavior intervention have been exhausted before utilizing more restrictive and intrusive behavior management or behavior management intervention.

All types of discipline and limit-setting must be age appropriate. Discipline shall be individualized and related to the misbehavior, the child's age, developmental level, previous experience, and the child's previous reactions to discipline. Discipline of any type is not appropriate or permitted for infants. Great care and caution must be exercised when disciplining an abused child. Only foster parents or adult caregivers may discipline a child. All children and young adults must be advised of the reason they are being disciplined. It is important that families nurture a child's positive behaviors, provide stimulation to that end, and promptly meet each child's need according to age and developmental level.

Children may not be spanked. Physical punishment of any kind is not an acceptable form of discipline to be utilized on a child who has experienced abuse or neglect. Therefore, other forms of discipline, such as withholding privileges, grounding, time out, etc. should be used in the place of physical discipline.

Discipline of any child that may result in bruises, welts, burns, fractures, sprains, exposure or poisoning are prohibited; Any discipline that consist of withholding of food, water, shelter, significant sleep, clothing or bedding, supervision, medical or educational care or violate any of the specific prohibitions in the Minimum Standards or state laws that protect children from abuse or neglect. No restriction or loss of privilege should exceed 7 consecutive days.

Only a trained caregiver who is known to and knowledgeable of the child is authorized to discipline a foster child, and may utilize only approved methods of discipline according to Agency guidelines. These measures of discipline will be applied by the caregiver consistent with discipline policies and procedures. A passive personal restraint is the only allowable method of restraining a child, and may only be administered by an adult caregiver trained/approved by Agape Manor Home in the proper techniques for its use. For more information, refer to the Emergency Behavior Intervention Policy.

Disciplines hall be recorded in the Discipline Log section of the Foster Parents Notes.

PROHIBITED FORMS OF PUNISHMENT

- Physical punishment inflicted the body

- Ridicule, verbal abuse or threats, or derogatory or humiliating remarks directed at either the foster child or his/her family

- Rejecting, shaming or yelling at a child using abusive or profane language

- Punishment for bedwetting or actions related to toilet training

- Delegation of punishment to another child or group of children

- Denial of nutritious food, water, shelter, sufficient sleep, clothing, or bedding

- Denial of any elements of the Individualized Service Plan (ISP)

- Denial of mail, communication, or visits with their biological family as punishment

- Assignment of physically strenuous exercise or work solely as punishment

- Pinching, pulling hair, biting or shaking of a child no matter what age

- Requiring the child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's or young adult's age

- Non-productive work– physical or mental (i.e., moving rocks from one location to another then back to the original location)

- Maintaining an uncomfortable position for any length of time, such as kneeling or holding out arms

- Placement of a child in a locked room

- Group punishment for the misbehavior of an individual child

- Delegation of discipline to persons not known by the child

- Threats of removal from the foster home

- Putting anything in or on the child's mouth as a form of punishment, such as soap or hot sauce

- Children must not be threatened with the loss of foster home placement as punishment

- A child must not be confined/restricted to a particular room or isolated building for more than 12 hours as a form of discipline

- A child must not be confined in a locked room, dark room, bathroom, closet, high-chair, box or similar furniture or equipment as a form of punishment

- If a child is restricted to a foster home for more than 24 hours, the restrictions must be recorded in the child's record

- A child may not be threatened with the use of emergency behavior intervention techniques

- Physical, mechanical or chemical restraints of any kind may not be used in an Agency certified home.

Agape Behavior Intervention Techniques:

Levels

1.   Warning system: It is a structured way of managing behavior in which the child is aware of the consequences of his behavior. A warning consists of a verbal re-direction and a loss of the corresponding points during that day based on the home's behavior modification point system. If the child continues to misbehave, he will be sent to time out.

2.   Time out: Time out is the actual removal of the child to a designated area at the home. The purpose of time out is to stop the escalation of inappropriate behavior. In time out, the child must sit quiet in order to regain his control. The duration of such time out will not exceed 15 minutes. Any violation of the time out or continued misbehavior may result in room time out. A child cannot be locked in their room as their bedroom door cannot have locks on them.

3.   Room time out: is the removal of the child to his room for a longer calming down time. Room time out will not be longer than 30 minutes.

4.   Activity time out: It is the removal of the child from the activity he/she is engaged in. This is to stop the child from the disruptive behavior and allows slower entrance back in to the activity.

5.   Behavioral contract: It involves establishing behavioral expectations (rules of conduct) and contingencies e.g., Rewards and consequences. It is a promise by the child to behave appropriately and to accept a specific consequence if the promise is broken. The child is reinforced for positive behavior and consequences for negative behavior. Behavior contract must specify desired behaviors that can be monitored.

6.   Emergency Behavior Interventions

Types of Emergency Behavior Interventions allowed by the Agency

Following forms of emergency behavior interventions are permitted by Agape Manor Home CPA

1.   Personal restraints
2.   Short personal restraints
3.   Emergency medication.

Use of all kinds of Chemical restraints, Mechanical restraint and seclusion are prohibited at Agape Manor Home CPA.

At Agape Manor Home CPA, any form of restraint is used only in Emergency situations. An emergency situation is a situation that requires the immediate use of restraint or to administer emergency medication to prevent the child from (a) imminent probable death or substantial body harm because the child is threatening or attempting to commit suicide or serious bodily harm (b) to prevent physical harm to others because of threats, attempts, or other acts of child overtly or continually makes or commits and preventive, de-escalate or verbal techniques proven ineffective in diffusing the potential for injury.

Behavior and Discipline

Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Qualities Essential for Instilling Effective Discipline

Introduce the discussion of knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for instilling effective discipline.

> Thus far we have talked about the difference between discipline and punishment, the negative effects of physical punishment (particularly spanking), and the goals of effective discipline. In addition to being able to use disciplinary techniques, there are other factors that influence the process of ensuring effective discipline. Let's take a few minutes to identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are essential for instilling effective discipline.

- Patience
  If discipline is taught and learned, it should be apparent that no one becomes a disciplined person spontaneously or even quickly. The effective disciplinarian understands that change happens slowly. Part of patience also involves consistency in the application of discipline. Lastly, patience is manifested in calmness, and the ability to decide when to take time out to care for one's own needs.
- Determination
  Learning discipline is an educational process that takes time and involves trials and tribulations. An effective disciplinarian never gives up on a child and always searches for other ways to bring about change or to solve problems.
- Confidence
  Teaching discipline involves challenges and risk-taking and the realization that no one has all the answers. The effective disciplinarian acts upon his/her own feelings of self-worth and self-assurance.
- Genuineness and Concern

Effective discipline is based on the quality of the parent-child relationship. Therefore, relationship building is an important ingredient of successful discipline.

- Openness
An effective disciplinarian sees more than one side to any problem or situation is eager to consider or try different options in the disciplinary process, and is willing to try to understand a child's concerns, feelings and needs, even when challenged by a child's unacceptable behavior.

- Separateness
The effective disciplinarian understands that there needs to be a distance between parent and child and that this attitude helps the parent to avoid making excuses for the child, to allow the child to experience the consequences of the child's behavior, to not become engaged in power struggles with the child, and to resist feeling like a failure when the child does something wrong.

- Friendly Firmness
An effective disciplinarian sets limits, and provides consistency and predictability in a friendly, trusting manner.

- Understanding of Child and Adolescent Development and the Factors that Affect Development
An effective disciplinarian knows the characteristics, tasks, and needs of a child's stage of development and can apply this understanding to the disciplinary process. Remembering what was covered in the previous session on development is essential to being an effective disciplinarian.

- Effective Communication
A successful disciplinarian is an effective communicator. The disciplinarian is an effective communicator. The disciplinary process is based on the parent's ability to communicate understanding. This is why two entire Foster PRIDE In-service Training Sessions are devoted exclusively to enhancing communication skills.

- Understanding the Goals of Effective Discipline
Discipline serves more than meeting the goal of stopping or changing an unacceptable behavior. The measure of effective discipline is whether it has met the criteria established through our previous discussion of the goals of effective discipline.

- Understanding the Meaning of Behavior

A critical element of effective discipline is behavior management and the crux of behavior management is understanding what motivates one to behave.

Conclude this discussion by stating that the next activity will focus on understanding the meaning of behavior as a prerequisite of knowing what disciplinary techniques are available to them as resource families.

As you can see, we need to possess certain general attitudes in addition to competencies (knowledge and skills) to be able to use disciplinary techniques effectively. Also, we can apply what we have already covered in this training, i.e., our knowledge of human growth and development, characteristics of children in need of foster care and adoption, and the dynamics of loss and separation to the disciplinary process. And, through participation in Foster PRIDE In-Service Training, the skills needed to use the disciplinary techniques can be developed further.

As a preliminary step toward developing the knowledge of these techniques, let's look at the purpose of behavior.

The Meaning of Behavior

Introduce the topic of the importance of understanding the meaning of behavior

The first step in managing or changing a child's behavior is to understand what motivates the behavior. Too often, we react to the behavior without recognizing that there is a purpose for this behavior. The more unacceptable a behavior might be, the grater the possibility of our reacting to it, while ignoring the underlying motive for the behavior. When all our energy is spent trying to change or control a behavior without paying attention to, or trying to determine, the purpose of the behavior, the child will use other behaviors to meet his needs. We, including the child and others involved in the behavior, will all face problems if the child chooses unacceptable or irresponsible, purposeful behaviors.

Relate the following story to illustrate the two sides of a behavior.

Let's imagine that while you are shopping at your local supermarket, you notice a young man take several items off the shelves and place them in his pockets. You observe further that, instead of stopping at the check-out station to pay for them, he walks right out the door.

It is obvious to you that he has taken some things that do not belong to him. But, no matter what you know or say, there is something you don't know.

You don't know the inside story; the reason(s) for doing what he did.

Ask participants to identify possible reasons the young man might have taken these items without paying for them.

Acknowledge their ideas and present the following information:

The outside story of behaviors, when performed openly, are the acts that are observable. In this case, you observed the young man taking the items without paying for them, but what prompted him?

As we identified, there is an inside story, the force or motive which drives the person to act. In the story just discussed:

- The person might have been starving.
- He could be taking these items to give to another who cannot afford to buy them.
- He might sell these items so that he can have money to meet some other needs.
- He may have been doing it to experience the excitement of "getting away with something."
- He might have been threatened by someone and "forced" to take the items.
- He might have done this to impress another or to gain self-confidence through risk-taking.
- He might have wanted to gain revenge if he was upset with the storeowner or company.
- He may have wanted to get caught for doing something against the law.

Discuss that we often will not know the inside story and that all members of the team will have to work together to support the child.

We do not know the inside story of the youth who stole. Unfortunately, it will often happen in CPS that we will not know the inside story, especially with younger children. We will need to work, along with members of the foster care team to piece together the inside story of some children we receive.

Conduct an activity to show Kay's inside and outside stories.

Let's look at the outside story of another young person and determine what the inside story might be.

Conduct activity as follows:

Distribute post-it notes to various participants. These post its should each have a part of Kay's outside story written on them:

- Behaves aggressively
- She fights with peers
- She calls peers names
- Makes negative remarks about their families
- She picks on smaller children in school and the neighborhood
- She avoids unfamiliar tasks
- She avoids new or different people
- Comes home later than curfew
- She defaces school property.

Ask for one person to volunteer to play the role of Kay. She's 12 years old and in foster care in your home.

Provide a 'Kay' with large heart, which she will wear around her neck as she proceeds through the activity. (see advanced prep).

Move Kay around the room, asking for participants to remove their post it and place it on her heart as they read it out loud.

When all of Kay's outside story is told, ask Kay how she is feeling. Ask participants how they feel about Kay.

Ask someone in the group to summarize Kay's outside story.

Ask the participants to identify, knowing only the 'outside story', the need(s) or purpose of Kay's behavior.

Acknowledge their ideas that Kay has a lot of misbehaviors which could be motivated by a variety of circumstances.

Knowing what little we do about Kay, there are many conclusions that could be drawn about her behavior.

Disclose Kay's "inside" story to the group:

Bring Kay back up into the front of the room.

Lift the "outside story" sheet up, and read from what is written on her big heart, the inside story.

The Inside story is that Kay was:

- Physically abused as a child
- Separated from family and placed in care at 3 years' old
- Has had sever placement disruptions
- One disruption was caused by severe illness of her foster mother
- Another disruption was caused by the use of physical discipline by her foster father
- Another disruption was caused by relocation of her foster family.

Ask Kay how she feels now that her inside story has been disclosed.

Ask for reactions to Kay now that the inside story is known. Acknowledge that once the inside story is known, it is much easier to understand why she is behaving the way she is.

> Victims of abuse and people who see themselves as victims of circumstances usually have low self-esteem and feel very powerless. Kay is attempting to gain power and control. Unfortunately, the behaviors she is choosing are at the expense of others. Not wanting to take risks and defying rules (curfews) protect her from confronting her beliefs about her abilities and allow her to show others "who's in control."

Explain that we will come back to Kay and her situation a bit later as we look at ways to help her with her behavior. We need to look deeper to understand the meaning of Kay's behavior first.

Explain the importance of understanding the meaning of behavior.

> The behaviors we just discussed in the two stories are a few of the many you may have to manage in your role as a foster parent or adoptive parent. The first step in managing or changing a child's behavior is to understand what motivates the behavior. Too often, we react to the behavior without recognizing that there is a purpose for this behavior. The more unacceptable a behavior might be, the greater the possibility of our reacting to it, while ignoring the underlying motive for it. When all our energy is spent trying to control or change behavior, the child will use other behaviors to meet his/her needs.

In Kay's situation, feeling powerless and that she has not had control over her life, she will find other ways to experience some power and control.

When we focus not only on the behavior itself, but also on identifying the possible needs that are motivating or driving the behavior, we will be in a much better position to provide the structure and parental behaviors that can help children meet their needs in acceptable ways. This, after all, is one of the primary goals of effective discipline.

Explain the factors that influence behavior.

Human behavior is complex. Behavior is influenced by many factors including the child's inborn qualities, temperaments, environment, and organic factors.

- Inborn qualities such as physical and mental characteristics influence.
- The society and sub0cultures within which each person lives affect what behaviors are learned and valued.
- Environmental conditions (community, housing, school) influence behaviors and the developmental stages a child progresses through contribute as well.
- The child's family environment is probably one of the strongest factors influencing behavior. Child rearing practices, parent-child relationships, how developmental needs were met, the family atmosphere, etc., are just a few family determinants of a child's behavior.
- The child's history of loss, trauma, abuse, neglect, and the effect of these and others incidents on attachment influence a child's behavior.

All of these factors have an influence on behavior. However, to be competent in understanding and managing a child's behavior, one must realize that behavior is the means for meeting one's needs. Behavior occurs for a purpose and it is learned. If these behaviors have been successful in getting our needs met, we will use them again when these needs are present.

Behavior is not just <u>DOING</u>. Rather, behavior is comprised of doing, thinking, feeling, and physiological actions such as muscle tension, sweating, or vigorous flow of adrenalin.

Behavior is the outward expression of the internal needs that underlie or motivate the behavior. Behavior is observable; whereas, needs are not.

To understand that behavior is more than just doing something, we can refer to a child who chooses to use anger. The manifestations of anger could be:

- External as exhibited by striking a person or object.
- Experience of muscle tension or rapid heartbeat.
- Internal by thinking how I can get moved if I show them how bad or uncontrollable I can be.
- Internal feelings of fear, sadness, or anger.

Begin a discussion on needs by asking the group to identify the needs that children must attempt to meet.

What are the needs that humans must attempt to meet?

Acknowledge the group's ideas and provide the following information.

It is important to understand that needs which motivate behavior entail more than the basic survival needs of food, clothing, shelter, safety, etc. Children also have the following needs:

- Belonging.
  Children, like adults, desire connections to significant others and groups. Children desire to have identified roles and have a connection to the past. A sense of belonging helps the child to feel <u>loveable.</u>
- Recognition.
  Children desire to be recognized. They want people to know they are around. Recognition helps the child to feel <u>worthwhile.</u>
- Power.
  Adults have a desire to control the environment, to make decisions, and to use our special or unique skills to influence our lives and others. Children also have this desire. It is through the use of power that children can feel <u>capable.</u>
- Freedom.
  Like adults, children have a desire to have choices and to be able to exercise options. Parents are able to help children achieve a sense of freedom by allowing children to have choices and exercise options within a set of boundaries. It is by successfully satisfying the need for freedom that children can feel <u>capable.</u>
- Enjoyment.

Childhood should be a time of happiness. Children should experience laughter, recreation, hobbies, and relaxation. Appropriate satisfaction of the enjoyment need helps children feel <u>loveable</u> and <u>worthwhile.</u>

As parents and foster parents, we desire to see positive responses from children. It is through positive responses that children build self-esteem. Children with higher levels of self-esteem generally will have a good self-concept.

Self-concept is the set of beliefs that a person has about himself or herself. These beliefs evolve out o the relationship the individual has with others over a period of time. The individual's beliefs also shape the way the individual feels, thinks, and behaves in relation to oneself and others. The primary characteristics of self-concept are:

- Loveable
- Capable
- Worthwhile
- Responsible

Summarize.

Children have needs to belong, to be recognized, to exercise power, to experience freedom, and to experience enjoyment. Satisfaction of these needs through appropriate and acceptable behaviors builds a child's self-esteem. Over time, positive interactions that are required to meet the child's needs result in the development and improvement of the child's self-esteem. The end result is a child who develops a positive self-concept because of feeling loveable, capable, worthwhile and responsible.

Warning signs for serious behaviors

Indicators exist to help identify a troubled child.

There are certain emotional and behavioral signs that when viewed in context, may signal a child is troubled. However, we must always be cognizant that early warning signs are just indicators that a child may need help.

Early warning signs can help frame concern for a child. However, it is important to avoid the traps that early warning signs can cause. Based upon identification of early warning signs, we need to avoid inappropriately labeling or stigmatizing a child because he or she appears to fit a set of early warning indicators. In other words, it is okay to worry about a child, but it's not okay to overreact and jump to conclusions.

Identify ways to increase the ability to identify early warning signs.

Foster families can increase their ability to recognize early warning signs by establishing close, caring, and supportive relationships with children and youth. In a new foster care setting this can take some time. It is important for foster parents to gather information about the child. This is done by asking questions about the child's needs feelings, attitudes, and behavior patterns. Observation of the child should also be utilized. Gathered information should identify a baseline for behaviors. This will then allow a foster parent to observe any changes to the child's pattern of behaviors

What are some sources for the information you will need?

There is a real danger that early warning signs can be misinterpreted. Foster parents can avoid misinterpretation by following some basic principles that can help better understand early warning signs. These principles are:

- Do No Harm
  The intent of early warning signs is to get help for the child. Early warning signs should not be used as a rationale to exclude, isolate, or punish a child. Nor should early warning signs be used as a checklist for formally identifying, mislabeling, or stereotyping children.
- Understand Violence and Aggression Within a Context
  Violent and aggressive behavior may result from many factors that exist within the home, school, or the social environment. To understand violence and aggression, these factors need to be examined. In addition, some children may act out if stress becomes too great, if they lack positive coping skills, and if they have learned to react with aggression.
- Avoid Stereotypes
  A foster parent must be aware of false cues that can include race, socio-economic status, cognitive or academic ability, or physical appearance. Stereotyping a child can cause significant harm.
- View Warning Signs Within a Developmental Context
  Children and youth at different levels of development have varying social and emotional capabilities. It is important to know what is developmentally typical for each developmental stage. This knowledge will help foster parents to determine if behavior is typical of development.
- Understand that Children Typically Exhibit Multiple Warning Signs
  Research confirms that most children who are troubled and at risk for aggression exhibit more than one warning sign. Research also indicates that these multiple warning signs are repeated over time with increasing intensity. Because most children exhibit multiple warning signs, it is important for foster parents not to overreact to single signs, words, or actions.

Let's divide into small groups and take another look at the vignettes of Dee, Jay, Kay, and Al. Pass out a copy of the vignettes but if times is limited or only limited people in class can read it aloud.

Within your groups reread the vignettes and decide the following:
- o Is the behavior a serious concern? Why or why not?
- o Are there any warning signs that are present?
- o If warning signs are present, what are those signs?

Informing others when early signs of serious behaviors are observed.

The early warning signs, especially when they are presented in combination indicate a need for further analysis to determine appropriate intervention. When you see warning signs, it is important that you work in partnership by informing the child's caseworker and/or therapist of the signs.

Bring closure to the discussion by summarizing the above section.

- What do you see as most important about behavior management?
- What have you learned about the meaning of behavior?
- Why is it important to know the inside story?
- Why do we need to understand early warnings for serious behaviors?

Behavior Intervention Techniques

Behavior and Discipline

Effective methods of Discipline

Considering those goals, let's identify all the methods of discipline, those things we could say or do, that would be considered "effective" according to the criteria listed on this worksheet.

*Record participants' responses on the flip chart and make sure the following are covered:

- Ignoring
- Modeling desired behavior
- Changing the environment
- Rules
- Time out
- Applying natural and logical consequences
- Allowing children to take risks
- Listening
- Asking questions
- Providing encouragement
- Restricting activities to specific places
- Changing activities
- Anticipating situations which may produce stress for children
- Planning and structuring activities
- Building children's self-esteem
- Teaching children how to solve problems on their own and with others
- Teaching children how to communicate effectively
- Stating expectations for behavior in advance
- Giving children an opportunity to learn from their mistakes
- Praising desired behaviors
- Rewarding appropriate behavior
- Giving "I-messages"
- Preparing children ahead of time for any changes in schedules or routines
- Encouraging children to set rules for themselves

This resource offers a listing of the effective methods of discipline we identified today. Also, it includes the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential to possess, no matter what methods we use as part of the disciplinary process.

As you can see from the list we developed, there are many things we can say and do that contribute to achieving the goals of effective discipline. Many of these methods are probably quite familiar to you, but you may not have considered them to be part of the disciplinary process.

Discipline is so much more than reacting to a child's misbehavior. You are a disciplinarian every breathing, thinking, doing, and feeling moment as a parent.

Many of these methods are intended to prevent inappropriate behavior. Some of them are used in reaction to a child's unacceptable behavior. And, some can be used as preventive and reactive methods.

As stated earlier, effective discipline involves effective communication. That's why listening, asking questions, using "I-messages" are included as disciplinary methods.

To be effective in using these methods, we must remember the importance of having the general knowledge and attitude we talked about earlier, such as patience, openness, an understanding of child and adolescent development, etc.

Most important, we must realize that it takes time and a willingness to learn and practice these methods of discipline. That is why we have structured specific Foster PRIDE In-service Training sessions to teach foster parents the skills needed to use all these methods.

Factors Affecting the choice of the Disciplinary Method

Introducing this discussion

Now, we have an activity designed to provide you with an opportunity to apply your understanding of what we covered in session 6A. But, before we do so, we need to consider some important factors that influence the method you might choose in response to a child's behavior.

All the methods we identified can be effective in the disciplinary process. However, we must consider several factors which will help us to ensure they are used successfully:

- The behavior itself
  Some methods are more effective than others, depending on the particular behavior.
- Our feelings about the behavior
  We will react according to our beliefs about the behavior. Individuals might react very differently to the same behavior. A driving force behind a parent's responsibility to intervene is based on a determination of the behavior as being either dangerous, destructive, or self-defeating.
- The child
  We must always consider the uniqueness of the child. Special consideration is given to the age, developmental status, and background of the child.
- The purpose we assign to the behavior
  Our perceptions of the purpose of the child's behavior will influence our response to it (e.g., attention-seeking, power, fear, etc.)
  - Where the behavior is occurring

We will react very differently to a child's misbehavior at home vs. in public.

- Who is present in the setting?
  The number of people, their ages, and the relationships we (including the child) have with those present will influence our reaction.
- Factors affecting our ability and willingness to respond effectively
  Our level of confidence in dealing with the child's behavior, as well as the mood we're in and our own health, are just a few of these factors.
- Our relationship with the child
  The degree of familiarity, trust, and past experiences with the child contribute to the reaction we will have to a particular child's behavior.

The Range of Discipline Methods and Techniques

Note that there is a great variety and range of discipline methods and techniques.

> While discipline is extremely challenging, at least there are a number of discipline approaches, technique, and methods available for our use.

Direct attention to Resource Section 6B-B: The Range of Disciplinary Techniques. Note the three categories "Promoting Positive Behavior," "Promoting Self-Control", and "Responding to Lack of Control".

This resource provides an overview of the range of available techniques. You can see there are three main categories. We will be looking at each category and the techniques within each category throughout the remainder of this training.

Behavior Intervention Techniques

Promoting Positive Behavior

The importance of positive behavior

Earlier we discussed, a child, like an adult has needs for:

- Belonging,
- Recognition,
- Power,
- Freedom, and
- Enjoyment.

The satisfaction of these needs through appropriate and acceptable behaviors helps to build a child's self-esteem and self-concept.

Introduce the use of techniques to promote self-esteem and positive behavior.

On a daily basis, a child provides us with rich and carried opportunities to facilitate his/her development and promote his/her self-esteem. You may not even think about the love and recognition you provide to a child as being a discipline smile that says. "I'm so glad to see you" are hopefully part of your everyday interactions with a child.

Present the importance of promoting positive behavior rather than focusing on negative behavior.

> The quick hugs, loving glances, and bursting smiles become critical when looking at behavior management, and may be particularly significant with a child who has been identified as a "behavior problem." It seems that more time is spent focusing on problems, once a child is labeled as a behavior problem, than on building the child's strengths. In fact, we can easily become pre-occupied with negative behavior, allowing valuable opportunities to recognize positive behavior to slip by.

> Let's look at an example.

> Two mothers once complaining to one another about the temper tantrums their children would exhibit at the grocery store check-out counter. Each admitted that they usually gave in and allowed their children to get the candy. The third mother stated, "Do you ever give them the candy when they don't have a temper tantrum?"

> There are always opportunities to recognize positive behavior – NO CHILD EXIBITS BAD BEHAVIOR ALL THE TIME.

It is just as important to "catch" a child being good as it is to identify his/her problem behavior. Resource 7 provides a summary of responses that can be used when you "catch" a child exhibiting positive and appropriate behavior.

PRAISE

Introduce the technique of praise

The first four responses on Resource 6B 7 relate to a technique that is familiar to us. Praise is simply an acknowledgement of approval in response to an action or behavior.

Identify the types of praise that can be used.

Praise can come in a variety of forms from verbalizations to physical contacts. These forms include:

- Verbal praise
  (this is simply when we tell someone how pleased we are.)
- Nonverbal praise
  (Includes gestures such as smiles, winks, or nods)
- Physical praise
  (Includes hugs, kisses, a pat on the back, "high fives," or holding a child.)
- Sharing positive feelings
  (Includes telling the child how "good" they make you feel, as well as how much you care for or love him/her.)

Demonstrate how to deliver effective praise.

Let's take a look at how praise should be delivered.

Do you have any ideas?

REWARDS

When we talk about reward we are not referring to a behavior modification technique that a behavior psychologist might use. We are talking about an expression of approval for certain behaviors or actions. We are also talking about rewards in a very broad sense – not just tangible or concrete rewards.

Rewards, quite simply, are positive responses to positive behaviors. Like praise, you may not even think of rewards as a discipline technique. The types of rewards that you can use include:

- Tangible rewards,
- Privileges,
- Increasing responsibility and
- Encouraging interests and talents.

Note that praise and rewards should not be overused.

Praise and reward are god techniques for recognizing positive behaviors. However, it is important to think about the way you use these techniques. Over use of praise can cause a child to believe that his/her worth depends on the opinions of others, or a child will only behave if he/she knows a rewards will be received. The problem with praise and reward is that they rely primarily on external means to influence or motivate behavior.

Let's take a look at an additional technique – encouragement – that you may choose to use instead of or along with praise and reward.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Introduce the technique of encouragement.

Encouragement is another means to promote positive behavior, and some argue that it is more effective than praise or reward. Encouragement implies reasonable expectations (one step at a time), and that we accept the child's mistakes was well as successes.

"Ground Rules" for providing Encouragement.

- Focus on internal evaluation – not external.
  "You must be very proud of yourself."
  "How do you think you are doing?"
  "What kinds of things can you do so that you will be more pleased with this?"
  (Vs. "I'm so proud of you.")
- Focus on contributions and appreciation – not value judgments.
  "I appreciate the help you gave me."
  "Your hard work sure did help the family."
  "When you do _____, it makes my job much easier."
  (VS. "What a good boy you are!" or "What a good job you did.")
- Focus on effort and improvement – not winning or competition.
  "You have really been practicing hard."
  "I can see the progress you've made."
  "Being part of a team takes a lot of work and dedication."
  (VS> "I'm so proud of you for winning!" or "You're a good basketball player.")

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

PART III: Promoting Self-Control

ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS

Introduce the category "Promoting Self-Control"

> Promoting self-control refers to the use of planning and preparation as a means to avoid acting-out and negative behaviors. It is recognized that a child cannot always be totally responsible for his/her own behavior. In this category, the parent and the child share responsibility for preventing acting-out behavior.

> Ideally, the parent assumes this responsibility only to the degree that the child cannot. For example, if a child is capable of setting his/her own rules, the parent does not do it for him/her. Even in modifying the environment (a technique where the parent begins to take the great responsibility for behavior), changes are made to the point in which the child can achieve some success. As time goes on, fewer modifications are needed.

> Note that establishing expectations is one of the cornerstones of promoting self-control.

> Establishing expectations for behavior is one of the cornerstones of promoting self-control. Expectations provide a child with a purpose and a structure for building and maintaining his/her self-control. A child may not have "internalized" all standards of conduct that adults may assume, and he/she may never internalize them if he/she is not made aware of them.

> Establishing expectations involves a working relationship between parent and child around acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior, and how the family responds to both. We're talking about:

> - Rules,
> - Planning for changes,
> - Anticipating stressful situations, and
> - Modifying the environment to make expectations easier to achieve.

> > Like promoting positive behavior, promoting self- control is a process. It is not simply the application of a technique.

> Ask participants to identify the ways in which we convey our expectations to children in family foster care.

> > Trainer's Note: Ensure the following responses are covered:

> > - Set rules,
> > - Tell the child what we expect,
> > - Have family meetings,
> > - Through glances and other nonverbal cues,
> > - Modeling,
> > - The child learning what is expected from the other children in home, and
> > - The caseworker and service plan sometimes spell out expectations.

Summarize the discussion.

Indeed, there are many ways and opportunities to convey our expectations. Talking to a child and clearly conveying expectations involves communication skills. Modeling the type of behavior, you expect is also important. The process of establishing rules is also important. Let's focus on the use of rules as a means to covey expectations.

Ask participants to define the word, "rule."

Trainer's Note: The following are likely responses

- A specific expectation about how one is supposed to do something,
- Something that states what people can or cannot do, and
- A way to help people know what is right or wrong.

Ask participants how rules can be used for the good, or the advantage, of the household.

Trainer's Note: The following responses need to be covered if they are not:

- Rules can prevent problems from happening,
- Rules can respond to problems that repeatedly happen,
- Rules can replace ineffective ways of dealing with situations,
- When a child is aware of what the limits are, he/she does not have to test to discover the limits,
- Rules help make the world feel safe and predictable for a child, and
- Rules eliminate a lot of discussion and decision-making about ordinary life events (i.e, supper is always at 5:30 and you are to be at the table with your hands washed and ready to eat.)

Summarize the discussion.

Indeed, rules are useful for providing predictability, consistency, and stability that a child needs in order to feel safe and nurtured. Rules can be used for a variety of reasons that range from preventing problems from happening to responding to problems when they do occur.

Ask participants what challenges they have faced in using rules effectively.

Trainer's Note: Ensure the following responses are covered:

- Being consistent about enforcing rules,
- Making rules that are clear but not rigid,
- Getting the child to understand why the rule is important,
- Enforcing the rules sometimes seems like punishment for me,
- Arguing about the rules being unfair,
- Trying to establish rules that are fair to all family members, and
- Establishing consequences.

Summarize these discussions.

It is clear that simply setting rules is not going to ensure good behavior. Rules involve a lot of work on the family's part in developing, establishing, and consistently implementing them. The following guidelines reflect some of your concerns and ideas during this discussion.

- Prioritize and establish a few rules that are most important to the well-being and safety of the family.

  Too many rules are overwhelming. Decide what is most important and prioritize. Children are overwhelmed by too many rules.

- Involve family members in setting rules.

  Rules need to belong to the family – not the parent. Children need to be involved in the decision-making and learning process that will help them in developing their own sense of right and wrong. In addition, ownership will help build commitment to the rules, and reduce the need for power struggles.

- Make sure children understand the reasons of rationale for the rule. Discipline is about learning and there is a learning process involved with every rule. The toddler must learn that some things re hot. The preschooler must learn how to play and share with peers. The adolescent must learn how to make choices that will not damage her/his health. "Because I say so!" does not teach children anything. Children are more apt to follow a rule that they can understand and that seems important. Exploring the meaning of rules can be useful activity with your child or as a family group.

- Make sure the rule addresses the issue it is intended to address. One of the difficulties with rules is that they present fairly rigid expectations of behavior as if always assuming that life presents itself or happens in a prescribed way. The way we word rules may address our beliefs or assumptions about life, but not the issue that needs to be addressed. Think about the rule "Take no candy from strangers." What does this mean to a child? Is it fine to take other things from strangers? Is it fine to go places or talk to strangers so long as you don't eat their candy? Adolescents are particularly adept at adhering to rules that don't address the issue. Many of us many remember plotting how to adhere to a rule, knowing all the while we were violating its basic intent.

- Make rules clear.
  Telling the child to behave means only that he needs to please you. Be specific about what it is that is expected. Some "house rules" may be vague – such as "Treat everyone with respect. "You may need to spend time with the family defining what "respect" means in your household. Again, this is a valuable learning opportunity.

- Make sure children understand expectations to the rule.
  If you have talked with the child about establishing the rule and ensuring he/she understands the intent of the rule, in most cases he/she understand the exceptions to the rule. "Don't interrupt me when I'm talking" is a fine rule – except when the pot is boiling over, the baby sister is crawling near the steps, or the child needs to go to the bathroom.
- Make rules positive and action oriented. Save "don't" for specific safety situations.
  The word "don't" may almost guarantee instant rebellion in a child. In addition, a child tends to respond to action – not inaction. "Park your bicycle in the garage each night" is preferable to "Don't leave your bicycle in the driveway." Wording rules in this way helps you and the child to find acceptable alternatives for the behavior. Again, this provides another opportunity to teach the child. Instead of saying "You can't leave your art work all over the house." Try "I know there's no space in your room to do your art. How can we work this out?" Save the word "Don't for safety situations such as "Don't go near the road."
- Make sure rules "grow" with the child.
  As the child's world expands, you want old rules to grow and expand. "Don't go near the road" is intended to keep the child safe from traffic and danger. This same intent is satisfied in the older child with, "Always stop, look and listen before you cross the street. "Later, "Always keep to the side of the road when riding your bike." Still later, "Don't drive the car if you've been drinking or if you have taken any kind of drug."
- Make only those rules that you are confident you can enforce over time.
  There are many ideals we may hold about what we want for our lives and for our families. In moments of zealousness we may decide to develop a whole new approach to family life. However, this may be unrealistic for your family, and may not be soothing you can manage in the long run. Rules are meant to bring sanity, safety, and comfort to family life. Don't decide one week that there will be no television except on weekends, only to find yourself backing down after two days because everyone (mostly you) is going through "television withdrawal." It is probably better to allow unacceptable behaviors to continue than to develop a rule that you then ignore. If television has become a problem in your house, then deal with it gradually by finding alternative activities and working on the issue as a family.
- Be consistent.
  Once the rule is established it cannot be ignored. If television is limited to an hour, you can't extend it to two hours for your own

convenience. If there are no snacks after 4 pm, no amount of whining or begging can result in snacks.

Summarize the activity and this section of the training.

Continue to think about how rules are used in your family. Rules are important in providing for safety, predictability, and comfort for the family. Rules, when developed with children, can be used to teach children about right and wrong and how to keep safe in our world. Let's move now to look at how we help children develop self-control in times of stress or change.

PLANNING FOR CHANGE

Ask participants why planning for change is especially important to helping children in family foster care develop self-control.

Trainer's Note: Ensure the following responses are covered:

- Children in family foster care experience tremendous amounts of change.
- Children are most likely to lose control of their behavior during periods of great stress or change.
- Preparing the child for a change that is to occur will help the child translate what has been learned in your family to the new situation.
- Due to the many losses that led to placement in family foster care the child may have extreme reactions to even the smallest changes, and will need help in dealing with the intensity of these reactions.

Summarize the discussion.

Change is difficult for everyone. However, a child in family foster care is perhaps more sensitive to change, and at the same time experiences more change than other children in their age group. Change places tremendous strain on a child, who responds best to structure, consistency, and routine. It is when a child is stressed that he/she often exhibits the most challenging and out of control behavior.

Note that the child's behavior will reflect the child's concerns about change.

Remember we talked about how behavior fulfills a need. During times of change a child feels the least amount of power and sense of belonging. In fact, he/she may even be concerned about his/her basic needs for shelter, food, and clothing not being met. It is no wonder that his/her behavior will express these concerns.

By helping the child deal with change, the child will have less need to express his/her lack of power and sense of belonging through misbehavior. We do this by preparing and addressing the child's concerns about change.

Ask participants to identify what they can do to help children in family foster care develop self- control in regard to the reality of change.

What can you do to help children in family foster care develop self-control in regard to the reality of change?

Trainer's Note: Ensure the following responses are covered:

- Pay attention to the little changes, as well as the big changes.
- Take a lot of time to prepare children for anything that is going to happen.
- Help identify and predict strategies for dealing with situation.
- Plan for any changes.
- Make incremental changes whenever possible.
- Give the child tasks upon which to focus and have control during the change period.

    o Try to be aware of pending changes in the child's life.
        o As discussed, sometimes it is hard to even be aware that a child will interpret something as a "change". However, try to be sensitive to these small changes and the impact they have on a child. Be sure to stay in contact with the caseworker and other members of the foster care team to make sure you are aware of changes in other aspects of the child's life – school, therapy, visits etc.
    o Talk with the child about the change ahead of time.
        o There is no value to protecting a child from things that are going to happen. He/she needs time to prepare and deal with his/her feelings. You will have to determine, given the child's developmental level and situation, how far in advance you begin planning with the child. Obviously, you do not begin to talk weeks ahead of time about a change for a toddler that will occur months down the road. You will have to use your discretion about when and how to talk with a child about things that may happen. Many children cannot deal with this type of uncertainty and, indeed, are better off not knowing something until it is sure to happen.
    o Talk with the child to identify potential feelings the child might experience.
        o Helping children identify and label potential feelings is part of the disciplinary (teaching) process. When the child knows to expect fear, nervousness, or sadness, these feelings become a predictable part of the child's world. You have put the child in charge or in control. The child is less likely to become overwhelmed or consumed by the feelings that often lead to out-of-control behaviors.
    o Talk with child to identify strategies to deal with these feelings.

- o Once potential feelings are identified you can talk with the child about ways to handle those feelings. Identify ways the child to cope during the change period (plan a telephone call to a good friend, talk to the school counselor, give your "blankey" an extra hug etc.). Help the child plan ways or activities to focus the child's attention and that allows the child to be in control (reading books, listening to music, writing in a journal). Remember that a child responds best to action. Directing the child's attention to "do" something puts him/her "in charge" of their self and lessens the sense of powerlessness that change brings.

Respond to any additional questions or comments and proceed to the next topic.

MODIFYING THE ENVIRONMENT

Ask if anyone is familiar with the technique of "modifying the environment" and if so to please explain.

Trainer's Note: Ensure that the following is covered:

- o Modifying the environment refers to steps the parent takes to change or structure the child's environment – room, play area, desk – in a way that helps the child to succeed at tasks and remain safe.

Summarize the response and make additional comments.

Modifying the environment can be a very useful tool in helping a child to develop self-control. It is precautionary in that it attempts to prevent difficulties from arising. It is reactive in that it can be done in response to a problem.

It is also important to note that we all modify our environments so that we can achieve and succeed at our tasks. Just look around the room right now. Each of you has set up your space and organized it in a fashion that promotes your learning. Some of you are very organized with your papers and writing instruments stacked very neatly. (Identify other examples such as those who have cough drops or tissues set up next to their training materials, those who have turned their chairs to see or hear better etc.)

As adults we constantly work to make the most of our environment. We know how to do this. However, a child does not. The child does not think, "The television interrupts my ability to do my homework. I will turn it off."

Review techniques for building success in a child's environment. (See Resource 6B-14: Building Success into the Environment.)

Let's look at each of these techniques for building success into the child's environment. As we review techniques, I would like you to identify concrete examples or ideas that you have actually used.

- o Organizing.

- o Organizing helps children learn how to sort, pickup, and find their own things. Organizing increases, the child's ability to accomplish self-care tasks.
- o Trainer's Note: The following example is provided to assist in directing discussion:
  - It was always a struggle to get three-year-old Martin dressed. However, his parents organized his clothes in three boxes on the floor. Martin couldn't reach the drawers and had a hard time getting them open and closed. They put pants in one box, shirts in another, and socks and underwear in the third. Now Martin thinks he is really big stuff because he dresses himself.
- o Enhancing.
  - o Making the child's "world" full of age appropriate and interesting items, posters, books, wall hangings, and toys is all a means of enhancing the child's environment. This helps the child learn how to spend time alone, occupy his or herself, develop hobbies, focus and concentrate.
  - o Trainer's Note: The following example is provided to assist in directing discussion:
    - Twelve-year-old Patti wanted to do nothing but watch television. She was depressed. She didn't do very well I in sports or in school. Her foster parents were at a loss. For a while they just let her watch television. Her foster mother noticed she never did anything with the space in her room. Most of the kids her age put up posters and stuff. Patti was told they were going to work on her room. At first she wasn't very into it. However, then she developed an interest. She was allowed to pick out something's she waned. Some were for a younger kid, but that was okay. She still watches television. However, she also spends some time in her room playing with toys and listening to music.
- o Soothing.
  - o The technique is used most often with babies and particularly babies who are born cocaine-effected. Essentially, sources of stimulation are removed from the environment. This may be light, noise, activity, bright colors etc.
  - o Trainer's Note: The following example is provided to assist in directing discussion:
    - Nine-year old Trina could never get her homework done. It was a battle every night at the kitchen table. She would cry and whine. Even if she did the work, it was usually wrong. One day, no one was home except for her foster mother

and the house was very quiet. She noticed Trina did all her homework with no problem and it was all correct. They now have a plan where the television, stereo, radio – everything – is off. The adults in the family make sure there are no distractions and she is in a room by herself. The change is amazing.

- o Redirecting.
  - o Redirecting does not restrict activities, but rather structures them to occur in a different way. Establishing certain rooms for certain activities is one way to redirect. Exchanging a safe item for an unsafe one is another way.
  - o Trainer's Note: The Following example is provided to assist in directing discussion:
    - Six-year-old Damien would masturbate in front of the other children. It was embarrassing to them and would get things in an uproar. He was taught to go to his bedroom. If his parents are there, they try to get him involved in a favorite play activity.

- o Childproofing.
  - o We probably do this and don't even think about it. This is critical in terms of making the child's world safe. If you are concerned about the child breaking something, it is best to put it away. It is the "job" of the toddler to grab and explore. Help him to do his job well. Don't be concerned that the toddler will be unable to learn not to touch or break things. It would be impossible for you to control the child's entire environment to the extent that the child would never be exposed to forbidden items.
  - o Trainer's Note: The following example is provided to assist in directing discussion:
    - Brendon was fascinated with the telephone. If his older sisters were on it he would pick it up and listen. That drove them crazy. He would leave it off the hook to get that loud noise. Basically, he liked al the noises it made. Face it – it's a great toy. The girls stayed upset with him, and he was in trouble all the time. His father wanted him to learn that the phone was off-limits. However, to Brendon it was just too much fun to give up. Then, he really liked making the girls mad. Finally, his family had to change to wall phones.
- o Adolescent proofing.

- You need to make the environment safe and promote healthy behaviors. If you are concerned about stealing, you don't leave money lying around. If there is a history of sneaking out, you don't locate the adolescent's bedroom next to the door.
- Trainer's Note: The following example is provided to assist in directing discussion:
  - Mark had a history of substance abuse. His foster parents have a bar in their basement. Generally, they don't take older kids. Mark was only 13; however, he was an experience 13-year-old. They decided it wasn't worth the risk. They threw out or gave away anything with alcohol. Mark has to make difficult choices out in the world all the time. The foster parents wanted him to be free of those choice while under their roof.

Summarize this discussion.

You can be creative in how you wish to use modifying the environment to help promote the child's self-control. This is an excellent means to prevent problems and a smart way to handle problems.

MAKING DECISIONS

Introduce the importance of making decisions

Children can make decisions on the spur of the moment with little thought. Solutions tend to all or nothing, yes or no, do it or don't do it. Children focus on the present and have difficulty looking ahead to see the effects of the decision.

The ability to make responsible decisions allows a child to develop self-control. Responsible decision-making results in examinations about problems, issues, or choices. Parents can help a child learn ways that have potential to make the best decision.

Boys town uses a five-step method for problem solving known as SODAS. The SODAS method is based on simple principles and accomplishes two goals.

- The SODAS method provides parents and children with a process to solve problems together.
- The SODAS method helps parents teach children how to problem solve and make decisions on their own.

Identify what SODAS stands for.

SODAS stands for:

- Situations
- Options
- Disadvantages
- Advantages
- Solutions

Process the concepts associated with each letter in SODAS.

- Situation
  - No problem can be solved until it is defined. In this step, the parent and the child will identify the problem or issue that needs a solution. This step can take some time because a child can use vague or emotional descriptions. In addition, a child may not always be aware that certain situations can cause problems or have consequences.
  - Trainer's Note: Tips for defining the situation:
    - Ask open-ended questions to determine the situation. Avoid questions that could result in one-word answers.
    - Teach the child to focus on the entire situation. Don't focus on just a part of it.
    - Summarize the information because emotions associated with the problem can overwhelm children. Specifically state the problem in simple language. Ask the child if the problem summary is correct.
- Options
  - After you have described the situation, then you will begin discussing options to address the situation/problem. The options are to address the situation/problem. The options are the choices a child could have in dealing with the situation. In many cases a child will only look at options that are "all or nothing." It is also common for a child to see only one solution to a problem, or to act on the first solution that pops into his/her head. In some cases, the child may not be able to identify an option.
  - Your role as a parent is to help your child think. You do this by asking questions such as:
    - "Can you think of anything else you can do?"
    - "What else could solve the problem?"
  - Consistently asking these types of questions will help your child learn a process to make decisions without your guidance.
  - Trainer's Note: Tips for identifying options:
    - Let the child list good and bad options. This is a brainstorming activity. A purpose of the activity is to get your child to think of ways to make a decision on his or her own.
    - Choose no more than three options because to many can become confusing to the child.
    - If your child is having trouble identifying options, then suggest options. This will allow the child to learn that in many situations there is more than one option.
- Disadvantages and Advantages

- o This is the step where the pros and the cons are discussed about each option. This step helps the child see the connection between each option and what could happen if the option were chosen.
- o Trainer's Note: Tips for reviewing disadvantages and advantages:
  - ▪ Be sure to ask the child about his/her thoughts concerning each option. You will be trying to elicit from the child what is good or bad about the option, and why the option would or would not work.
  - ▪ Help the child identify disadvantages and advantages for each option. This will be easier for the child on different options. The difficulty in identifying advantages and disadvantages could result because of the child's lack of experience of knowledge.
- Solutions
  - o The solution is the point where the option that would work best is chosen. The parent should briefly summarize the disadvantages and advantages for each option and ask the child to choose the best one.
  - o Trainer's Note: Tips for choosing a solution:
    - ▪ Make sure the child knows the options along with each option's possible outcomes. This helps the child learn how to make informed decisions and sets a pattern for making future decisions.
    - ▪ If the decision is hard to make and does not require an immediate solution, let your child take some additional time to think.
  - o Sometimes a child may pick an option that does not sit well with the parent. In general, if the decision won't hurt anyone, is not illegal, or contrary to religious or moral beliefs, then let the child make the choice and learn from the decision. Occasionally a child will face an option that is illegal, immoral, or harmful to self or others. In these cases, a parent should clearly and firmly state his/her disapproval, repeat the disadvantages to that solution, and let the child know what consequences will be imposed for choosing the option. If despite your best efforts, the child makes the wrong decision, the parent is to follow through with the consequences.
  - o While encouraging a child to make independent decisions a parent should also let the child know that he/she will be here to help the child. This means helping the child implement the solution, and to offer support and empathy if the solution does not work as expect. Of course a parent should check with the child to see how the solution worked.

Summarize the discussion of the SODAS method.

>If you are not familiar with the SODAS problem solving technique, then start with a small problem first. It is also important to give the child time to become comfortable with the process because they are not used to being empowered and can get impatient.

>SODAS is an excellent way to teach your child how to make decisions. It is simple and can be applied to many situations. Helping the child learn to make his/her own decisions is a great way to help the child learn self-control and to feel loveable, capable, worthwhile, and responsible.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

Responding to Lack of Control

SENDING AN "I-MESSAGE"

Introduce the category "Responding to a Lack of self-control"

> Regardless of how much you promote positive behavior, or seek to promote self-control, there will be many times when the child's behavior becomes out of control. As the adult and teacher it is our responsibility to intervene and help the child reestablish control.

> The purpose of these behavior management techniques is to help the child regain control. It is important to take only the amount of control that is necessary to help the child regain control. Otherwise, your actions will be seen only as punishing.

Introduce an activity to help participants see how techniques present roadblocks to changing behavior.

> Please imagine that you are all sitting in my living room with your feet – socks, shoes, and all – on my beautiful new coffee table. I love my new coffee table, and at this moment I have only one interest. I want to get your feet off my table. I am going to try a number of techniques.

Conduct the activity.

> Go around the room and direct each of the following statements at a participant. After you have made the statement ask if it was effective and how it made the participant feel.

> - If you don't get your feet off my table, I'll never invite you back to my house again.
> - You should treat others' property as you would treat your own. You shouldn't do this.
> - Hey, listen, floors are for feet. Coffee tables are for coffee.
> - I can't believe you would be this inconsiderate and rude.
> - Where were you born – in a barn?
> - I sure am glad to see those good looking big shoes right up there on my new coffee table where we can all admire them.

Summarize the activity.

> There are many approaches you can use to try to get someone to change their behavior. I just tried threats, moralizing, logic, criticizing, name-calling, and even sarcasm. Some may have worked, or perhaps would work with some people in terms of getting their feet off the table. However, even if they result in behavior change, they may also result in bad feelings and a lowered self-concept. "I-messages" can be useful with all ages, but especially with adolescents.

Introduce the use of the "I-message"

It is more helpful to try to make children aware of how their behavior is affecting us. We want to let the child know how we feel, but leave responsibility for behavioral change with the child.

For example:

- When you are late getting home, I get very worried and afraid, and then I am unable to sleep.
- When the stereo is on that loud I get upset because I can't hear the phone ring/

A proper "I-message" identifies:

*Trainer's Note: Write on a flip chart the following information as you state it. A prepared flip chart or overhead can also be used.

- The behavior,
- How it makes you feel, and
- A concrete impact this has on your life.

Note that a properly sent "I-message" does not contain blaming.

A properly sent "I-message" does not contain blaming.

For example:

- I get upset when you're so pigheaded and thoughtless that you have to have everything your way.

This type of statement contains blaming and even name-calling. While it doe describe how one is feeling, it does not demonstrate proper use of an "I-message."

NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Introduce the use of natural and logical consequences.

Natural and logical consequences are effective ways to intervene while maintaining respect for the child's ability to make decisions. Consequences rely to some degree on the natural order of life itself to teach lessons about the world. Consequences promote an understanding of how the world operates in relation to how one behaves.

Using natural and logical consequences is helpful when behavior is unacceptable.

Define natural consequences.

People sometimes use the terms natural consequences and logical consequences and logical consequences as if they are the same. They are not. Let's look first at natural consequences.

Natural Consequences are things that happen in response to a behavior. No one has to make these things happen. They are often the result of "rules of nature."

- When a child does not eat his dinner, he will get very hungry before he goes to bed

- When the bike is left out in the rain it will rust

Sometimes a natural consequence is the result of human nature.

- The child, who hits his friends, will soon be without playmates.

Summarize the discussion of natural consequences.

Natural consequences can be very effective. The advantage is that the adult is not imposing the consequences. This is particularly useful with anyone who tends to get in power struggles. That is why you may want to use this technique with adolescents.

A disadvantage is that natural consequences sometimes take a long time to work. While the child may learn that the bike rusts when left in the rain this is a lengthy process – as well as being costly. Also, young children may have difficulty understanding natural consequences. While hitting may result in no playmates, it is doubtful that a three-year-old will make the connection. However, this might be effective for a five-year-old. Some natural consequences are not desirable. Smoking in the bedroom may well lead to a fire. However, this is not something you would want to encourage in order to make the point!

If you determine that a natural consequence is not useful, you may wish to consider logical consequences.

Explain the use logical consequences.

Logical consequences require that the parent impose a consequence for a given behavior. The consequence connects to the behavior that is not acceptable. For example:

- If the child leaves the bike out, the parent restricts bike riding the next day.
- If the adolescent destroys someone's property, he must work to pay for the damage.
- If the child throws his toy trucks at the wall, his toy trucks are removed from him for a set period of time.
- If the child smokes in the bedroom, he/she no longer has the privilege of closing the door. In addition, special cleaning may be needed to get the smell out of the room.

As you can see, logical consequences must relate directly to the behavior in question. You do not restrict the child's television because the bike is left out. Nor would you restrict bike riding because the child destroyed someone's property. This technique helps children to remember and understand the connection between their behavior and the result.

Note that natural and logical consequences must be implemented correctly in order to be effective.

In order for consequences to be effective you must use them correctly. Be sure to provide choices and allow child to make the decision. For example:

- "You may turn down the volume of your radio, or listen to it in your room without disturbing others."
- "You may pick up the papers and writing materials when you had finished your school work, or they will be considered unimportant and thrown out."

Be calm and firm in your efforts. Also, make sure that the consequence holds meaning for the child. If the child can no longer ride the bike, but would rather lay on the couch and watch television anyway, it is doubtful that this strategy will lead to any behavioral change.

Remember too, that change in behavior may take time. It is not instant. There may be a tendency to want to jump in and "save" the child. It might be hard for you to watch the child experience the consequences. However, this is what is necessary in order for the child to develop good self-control.

Challenging Behavior

Where Do You Stand activity?

You have 4 cards included in the materials for this session: strongly agree,

agree, strongly disagree, and disagree. Tape these on the wall in different places in the

room. You can use the statements below or create your own. Explain that this is an

activity aimed at appreciating and celebrating the variety of beliefs and values

represented by the people in this room. Tell them that you are going to read a

statement and then they will go and stand by the card that represents how they feel

about the statement. Please remember that we are not here to judge, debate, or defend

each other's beliefs. We are here to listen and to respect each other and us

differences. After people have moved to their first location, invite one or

more participants to describe how their own personal experiences shaped them

response to the statement. You can use the statements below or create your own.

Statement 1:

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

Statement 2:

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

Statement 3:

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

Statement 4:

Children who hurt other children should be removed from that setting (park, preschool, etc.).

When you finish the activity, thank everyone for participating. Explain that this was a fun way to show how we all have different ideas and thoughts about things—especially challenging behavior! It is also a reminder that we should feel free in this group to express our thoughts and know that our comments will be respected.

Now, let's go back to our discussion about behavior. Does trying to determine the meaning of behavior make you want to go home and observe your child? Do you want to try and see if you can figure out why he/she does some of the things he/she does? It is fun to try to figure out your child's behavior! It is kind of like being a detective. The more you observe, the more clues you will have to figure out why they do what they do.

Let take a look at Things to Try at Home. Take a few minutes to look at the form and then we can talk about it to make sure that everyone understands what they are supposed to do. (Give everyone time to look at the form.)

Determining the Meaning of Behavior

Describe the Challenging Behavior

Describe the challenging behavior	Number of times the behavior occurred	How long the behavior lasted

What Happened Before?

___ I told or asked my child to do something   ___ My child was playing alone

___ Changed or ended my child's activity   ___ My child moved from one activity to another

___ I removed an object from my child   ___ I told my child "No," "Don't," "Stop"

___ An object was out of reach   ___ I was giving attention to others

___ My child was doing an activity he/she didn't like   ___ The task/activity was difficult for my child

___ My child requested something   ___ Other (specify) _____

What Happened After? How did it end?

___ I gave my child attention   ___ I punished or scolded my child

___ I gave my child an object/activity/food   ___ I withdrew my request or demand

___ I removed my child from activity/area   ___ I hugged my child

___ I ignored my child   ___ I helped my child

___ I used "time-out"   ___ Other (specify) _____

As you can see on the form, you will be observing your child when he/she is using a challenging behavior (one of those that you would like to see less of—from last week). You will look at what happens before the behavior starts and record that information. You can check one of the areas on the form or write down what happened before the behavior began if it is not listed. Then observe what happens after the behavior stops. Again, you can check one of the areas on the form or write down what happens after the behavior stops if it is not listed. You will also try to determine what you think your child is trying to communicate!

Why do you think your child was using this behavior?

What do you think he/she was trying to tell you?

TIME-OUTS

When behaviors happen, we may need a time-out. This is a strategy that most families have heard of, but let's talk about time-out. A time-out may be necessary for some behaviors and for some children. Time-out is effective when the behaviors are done to get the parents' attention. Time-out may also be used when a child is so angry or destructive that he/she must be removed from a situation to calm him-/herself.

When children engage in these types of behaviors, parents are usually very angry and also need a chance to cool down before they address the behavior with the child.

If you use time-out with your child, it should be implemented in the following way:

Step 1: When the challenging behavior occurs, provide a very brief explanation (such as, "You cannot hit me to get my attention, so you need to sit in time-out until you're calm.") and immediately guide the child to sit in a chair. Do not interact with the child, either positively or negatively, while the child is in time-out.

Step 2: Time-out is brief. No more than the number of minutes for the child's age. Set a timer for your child or let him/her know you will watch the clock or your watch. Only end time-out if your child is calm. If he or she continues to be upset, state calmly that "when you are calm, you can leave the chair."

If your child gets up from the chair before the time-out is over, calmly guide the child back and tell him or her, "You must sit in time-out until you are calm and the time is up." It is very, very important that you do this calmly and with a minimum of talking to your child. Time-out works because the child can't get your attention by using the problem behavior. If you talk to your child (either explaining calmly or being angry), your child gets your attention.

Step 3: Once the time-out is over, the child can return to an acceptable activity. You can calmly remind the child to behave appropriately by saying, "I'm glad you are calm, you can go play; remember to …(e.g., use your words, solve problems with words, share your toys, etc.).". This statement should be brief (not a time for a lecture) and positive. As soon as possible, praise your child for appropriate behavior in that activity.

Emphasize that time-out is not punishment.

A common misunderstanding about time-out is that it is a punishment. It is not. It is simply providing the child an opportunity to regain control of his behavior. You are helping in that process by removing the child from the situation or the stimulation that brought about the loss of control. If you are angry or yelling, it is doubtful that the time-out will be effective.

Note that time-out is one of the most intrusive and reacting methods of discipline.

Time-out is one of the most intrusive and responsive methods of discipline. It should not be used constantly, or it will lose its meaning and value. You must determine that the child is truly not in control. You are, in effect, taking control for the child and then allowing him to take it back. If the child is simply frustrated it is best to use other techniques such as distraction or modifying the environment (replace the toy that is so frustrating). If you use time-out too soon, you do not allow the child to handle or divert anxieties, frustrations, or anger on his/her own.

Introduce "time-out" as a technique for parents to gain control of their behavior.

> We often think of time-out only in terms of a child. Time-out can be an effective tool for anyone feeling overwhelmed or angry. However, we know it will not be an effective tool with a child if it is used in anger. There will always be situations where you find yourself overwhelmed with feelings. It may be helpful to you to think about whether you need to give a time-out for the child, or take a time-out for yourself.

Ask participants what techniques they use to take "time-outs" for themselves.

Summarize the discussion.

> As adults we can generally regain our composure in a very short period. Whether it takes three deep breaths or ten, a quick breath of fresh air, or simply counting to ten – this is time well spent. While we know it is important to implement a discipline technique in a timely manner, nothing is lost in a momentary delay that allows you to gain control.

Taking Time and Giving Time.

> This resource provides some basic guidelines for using time out. The first step, you can see, is about taking time for yourself to ensure that you are in control of your feelings.

- Take time to gain your composure and self-control.
  We have just finished talking about this, but it is critical. You want to approach the child in a firm and calm manner.
- Give the child an opportunity to change the behavior.
  Ask the child to stop the behavior and provide some time for the child to respond. If the child does not respond, demand in a firm manner that he behavior stops.
- If these efforts fail, tell the child where to go for a time-out.
  Have one established place for time-outs. This spot should be free of stimulation and removed from the activities of the household. The child should be allowed to go on his/her own.
- Tell the child how long the time-out will be, but explain that you will only begin timing when he/she becomes quiet.
  A rule of thumb is that a time-out needs to be the same number of minutes as the age of the child (consider developmental age, not the

child's chronological age). For some children this may be too long. Some parents choose to use a timer.

- Ignore the child's behavior while in time-out.
  If the child is interacting with you, then the child is not using himself/herself to calm down and gain self-control. In fact, further interactions with you are likely to escalate the situation. If the child gets up you can calmly place the child back in the chair, explaining that you will have to start the timer all over again. Sometimes this may occur repeatedly.

- Focus the child on a positive activity after the time-out.
  When the time-out is over simply informing the child that he/she is in control again and therefore, may go play with his toys, or ride his Big Wheel, etc. However, do not reward the child. If a time-out has been especially difficult, a parent may feel guilty afterward. This is not the time to confuse the child with special rewards.

Common Mistakes: Time-out

Be careful about using this technique correctly. You should never:

- Angrily threaten your child with "time-out" if he/she does not behave. You must calmly state to the child the behavior you expect, and then state (calmly), "If you cannot ___, you will go to time–out."
- Allow your other children to tease the child in time-out.
- Apply time-out after the episode has occurred as a delayed punishment (for example, giving a time-out after arriving home from the store where your child has misbehaved will not be effective).
- Use it as your only approach. We have reviewed many approaches; they should be used to teach your child new skills.
- Scold or berate your child when putting him/her in time-out.
- You must be calm.
- While time-out can give you and your child time to calm down, it does not teach your child a new skill. Remember that you must teach your child new ways to behave, express emotions, and solve problems.

Ask for a volunteer to do the role play on time-out. You take the role of the parent,

Role Play

Scene:

Child is hitting his younger brother.

Mom: You hit your brother; you need to use your words to solve problems. You will have to go to time-out until you are calm.

Child: No, I don't want to go.

Mom: You can go by yourself, or I can help you.

Child: Okay, okay. (Walks over to chair and sits down. After a few seconds, he gets up from the chair and walks off.)

Mom: If you do not stay in the chair, you will do a time-out in the bedroom hall.

Child returns to the chair.

After four minutes have passed, and the child is calm, Mom walks over and says: All done with time out. You may go play.

Remember to use your words to solve problems.

Make Your "Expectations" Clear.

Now I want to give you an additional powerful parenting tool to think about. That tool is to make sure your child knows what you expect. Often we give children information about what we do not want them to do without ever really teaching them what our expectations are! What do we want them to do? You may have even given up on asking your child to do things because you are so frustrated by his/her behavior. So, stop and carefully consider if your child knows what you want them to do! Some behavior occurs because your child doesn't know how to act differently and some because your child won't. Either way, it helps to know that your child is not being expected to read your

mind.

Give one clear instruction at a time.

When confronted with challenging behavior, we tend to conclude that the individual either can't or won't do otherwise." Can't suggests that the child lacks a necessary skill or ability. Won't suggests that the child has the necessary equipment but appears to be deliberately refusing to engage in a more desirable behavior. And remember we tend to react differently depending on which way we're leaning. Or sometimes we just

freeze because we're so uncertain about why the child is doing what he/she's doing that we don't know what to do next. In the middle of a challenging situation, it can be very hard to determine whether the child's behavior is the result of a "can't "or a "won't" situation. Here's a good rule of thumb: When in doubt, assume "can't"—at least until you are able to get more information about the child in same or similar situations across

time. A very important approach to getting a better understanding of "can't" or "won't" is to be very clear about what you're expecting in the way of desired behavior. And an excellent technique in that regard is to give just one instruction at a time.

Can your four-year-old make his/her own bed? Will your four-year-old make his/her own bed? Maybe. Especially if you walk through the process with him/her. Ask him/her to begin by taking the pillows off the bed. Then pull up the sheet first on one side and then the other. Bed too close to the wall? Practice kneeling in the middle of the bed to pull the covers in place. Take it step by step until the bed is reasonably well made.

What's a Better Way to Say?

Activity: If needed, have parents practice stating clear and positive directions. On chart paper, list some commands (examples below), and ask parents to brainstorm more

- appropriate and effective directions. Have parents think of directions that they often give to their child to add to the list.
- Stop yelling
- Don't throw your toys.
- Stop bothering your sister.
- Don't spill your milk.
- Stop whining!

Also talk about the fact that some directions we give our children are just too vague, and a child may not be sure what we want him/her to do! Use the following examples, and ask parents to come up with clear and positive directions.

- Be nice.
- Be careful.
- Watch out.
- Be good.
- Enough of that.
- Cut it out.

Positive Words

Re-explain that directions are more effective when they are stated in terms of what you would like the child to do instead of what you would like the child to stop doing.

Open your workbooks to the Positive Words Activity. Get with a partner. Take a look at the "Don't" column. At times, we may use phrases like this when talking to our children.

However, young children often cannot figure out what our expectation is when we say "no, don't, or stop." So, we need to tell children what to do instead of what not to do.

Let's look at the first example together.

Positive Words Activity - Let's Practice
Tell your child **what to do** instead of **what not to do**. Clearly and simply state what you expect your child to do. Have age-appropriate expectations.
Use language that your child can understand. Young children often have difficulty with contractions (two words that are combined to form one, such as "don't" and "can't").

Don't	Do
Don't run!	
Stop Climbing!	
Don't touch!	
No Yelling !	

Stop Whining !	
Don't Hit!	
No coloring on the wall!	
Don't Throw your truck	

Instead of saying

"Don't run," what could we say instead? (Allow for responses. Possible correct responses might include walk, or use walking feet inside.)

Get with a partner and try to come up with alternative phrases to use so that your child would know exactly what to do. Write your responses in the "Do" column. (Allow for time to write responses.) Now that you have completed the worksheet, let's go down the "Don't" list and you can share how you rephrased the statements. How did it feel doing this activity? Was it hard to rephrase the statements? Do you think you could try? this with your children? Do you think part of the reason your child uses? challenging behavior might be because he/she doesn't understand what you expect him/her to do? To help your children know what your expectations are, let's develop a few simple household rules. We all probably have household rules that we want our children to follow—but have we written them down and taught them to us children? We are going to talk about ways to create your household rules with your child, teach them to your child, and then use encouragement and positive comments to help him/her learn and practice them.

DE-ESCALATION

Introduce the concept of de-escalation

Ask participants what they think de-escalation means.

Acknowledge participant responses and make sure the following points are covered:

There are a variety of interventions that can be utilized to aid children and parents in dealing with stressful situations and feelings. You need to understand these techniques so that you are able to control yourself when/if you feel yourself losing control. You also need to be able to teach these to the child and role-play with them so that they become comfortable in utilizing the techniques discussed.

People who successfully negotiate stress attend to three aspects:

- They pay attention to their breathing
- They pay attention to their body-tension points.
- They pay attention to their self-talk.

One cannot control change, but can control one's response to it. People, who remain healthy in times of great change, tend to exhibit three "stress resistant" attitudes:

- They find a way to feel in control
- They feel connected and have a strong support system
- They are receptive to change.

Self-Care and De-escalation

Think about the times you have flown on an airplane and the flight attendant has given the speech about what to do if the oxygen masks drop down. Remember, they always point out that, if you are traveling with young children, be sure to get your own oxygen mask on before assisting the child? Obviously, you cannot help the child if you have just passed out due to oxygen deprivation!

The same principal is true when you are facing stressful behaviors from the child. If your stress accelerates and you start losing control, you are certainly in no position to be able to help the child with is needs.

What are some ways you could take care of <u>yourself</u>, both before or during a stressful event?

Make sure the following points are covered:

- Find some time for yourself, as needed. Utilize respite care if you really feel family stress building.
- Take a deep breath, and again, and again.
- Count to 10
- Think positive thoughts
    - All feelings, thoughts and actions belong to you.
- Give yourself a time out

How could you give yourself a time out?

- "I need some space to calm down before I can deal with this."
- "I need some time to think before further discussion."
- Remove yourself from the situation.
- Call a friend or relative for support or to take care of the baby while you take a break.
    - Move Muscles

What are some ideas for moving your muscles?

- Take a walk
- Shake your body
- Touch your toes
- Do the hokey pokey

Modeling and De-escalation

How do you express anger?

How is it appropriate in your family to express anger?

Remember, you are modeling for your children when you express anger. We need to work to teach our children how to be angry and one way is through our own modeling.

Child centered de-escalation

What do you think child-centered de-escalation means?

Child centered de-escalation refers to techniques that children can learn to calm themselves down when they see they may be losing control. So, let's talk about what some of those techniques might include.

Feelings Identification

Feeling identification assists the child in recognizing how his/her body feels and in being able to name and describe those feelings. This leads to the child's being able to control. His reactions and behaviors, related to bodily feelings.

Identification of feelings provides a non-stressful way to begin the discussion of feelings, as well as offers the caretaker a chance to evaluate the child's verbal and emotional ability to recognize and express feelings. The caretaker can also share various feelings. This will encourage trust and open dialogue with the child.

How can you assist a child in recognizing feelings?

You can utilize a "Feelings Chart" or have the child write down all the different feelings he/she can imagine in 3 minutes. Then you and the child can select a feeling and describe the last time he/she felt that way.

You and the child can also look at pictures (or make a collage out of magazines) and ask the child if he/she ever felt like this. This provides a chance for exploration of "what it was like". Be creative. Teens are very receptive to writing poetry and there are commercial games available, such as the "Talking, Feeling, Doing Game", "Moods Game", "Angry Monster Game", "Feeling Card Game" can assist in feelings identification. Also, play dough and finger-paints appeal to the younger set.

Deep Breathing.

Deep breathing (or "belly breathing") has been used in yoga to decrease stress related symptoms. This is breathing so that the abdomen protrudes during inhaling and recedes during exhaling. The benefit of deep breathing is the "focused attention". The child may need assistance in redirecting his/her thoughts back to the breathing exercise. This aids the child in coping with

intrusive thoughts or over whelming stressful situations a can be utilized during intervention.

Belly breathing can teach children to slow down and relax. The relaxation effect is presumed to exist in part from calming one's thoughts and refocusing on the breathing rather than attending the external stimuli. Counting can assist children in mastering this skill. You can teach the art of belly breathing by placing a cook on the child's lower abdomen and asking the child to inhale through the nose to the count of 5 and exhale through the mouth to the same count. The child should be able to see the book rise during inhales and descend during exhales. The importance of quieting thoughts and focusing attention is important.

Thought Stopping

Thought stopping assists the child in redirecting and correcting thoughts that cause them more anxiety and stress. This technique teaches the child that he/she can have control over what thoughts he/she has and how those thoughts impact his/her feelings and behaviors.

Some people have automatic thoughts that are unreasonable and unquestioned ideas that rule their lives and lead to anxiety and depression. Thought stopping assists children in ending their negative thoughts and replacing them with more objective thoughts.

How might "thought stopping" be achieved?

- Interrupting an unwanted thought verbally.
  Child tells himself to "snap out of it".
  Child tells the thought to "go away".
- Replace an unwanted thought with a welcome one.
  Helping the child to define a positive thought or create a mental image, assists in terminating the negative thoughts.
- Ask the child to look in a mirror.
  This re-focuses the child's attention. Have him/her point out positive things about him/herself.
- Hold up a "stop sign" every time the child expresses a distorted thought. Eventually, the child may learn to think of the stop sign when negative thoughts begin.
- Ask the child about what might be a better way of thinking about an event.

It is important to teach the child to replace the misguided thought with a more accurate one. Ask the child to consider sights, sounds, smells, weather conditions, and detail the surroundings.

- Empower the child to control thoughts. Suggest the child close his/her eyes think about a place where he/she feels safe and comfortable to promote safety.
It is expedient to assist the child in discovering the positives in his/her life and reemphasize that these positives remain the same. Difficult children can be helped to realize that they are now in a safe place. Then, encourage them to open their eyes and see it.

Positive Self-Talk

Positive self-talk requires the caretaker to help the child identify areas in which the child has strengths. Recognizing "survivor" capacity of these children is one way to encourage the child to "give himself credit" or "pats on the back" when he is feeling discouraged. This will take many repetitions as the child's distorted view of the world includes a distorted view of himself as unworthy and worthless.

What are some ideas for positive self- talk for a child?

- "I can get through this."
- "Things are difficult now, but they will improve."
- "Lots of people care about me and my family."
- "I'm still good at baseball, school, dancing, etc…"

Remind the child that some things have changed but some things still remain the same.

Behavioral Scenarios

Split each group up into at least 3 people per group and give them at least 5 minutes to discuss their scenario and then it will be discussed allowed. If a small group, then can pick a couple to read aloud.

1. Johnny, age 8 has been placed in a foster home for 6 months. You have determined that he has been stealing money from your wallet and from the other's children lunch money. You recently had $100 disappear. When you ask him about it, he tells you he has been saving up his money.

2. Tameka, age 10 has been in the foster home for almost 3 months. She has been throwing things at your small dog, who is limping. The usually calm dog has now become aggressive with Tameka and other children. You recently saw her throw a rock at the dog when she thought you were not looking.

3. Rafeal is 14 years of age. He was placed in your foster home about a year ago when his brother was sent to jail. At first, he was very compliant but now he has difficulty obeying and has become openly defiant. The last few times you have asked him to do something, he has started cussing at you loudly and then leaves the house but does return later.

4. Jessica age 3 has been in your home about 6 months. The first 4 months things went pretty well. For the last two months she has been having serious tantrums, throwing herself on the floor and screaming loudly. She has been trying to bite others who come near her.

5. Bob is 6 years old and has been in your foster home only 2 weeks. Whenever you enter his room you smell a strong odor. You discover that he has been urinating in the corner of the bedroom. Upon further investigation you realize he has been hiding food under the bed for the last few weeks.