



## Behavior Matters: Expert Advice to Everyday Behavior Problems

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- A Behavior is determined by the environment, a child's temperament, and how the child learns pro-social behavior.
  - B Learning pro-social behavior depends on the interplay between how a child is taught and the learning skills that the child possesses.
  - C In order to be an effective teacher of behavior a parent must understand how their child processes the information.
  - D Deficits in process may be the underlying cause of a child who struggles to behave.
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- 1. A child's environment includes physical environment, the parental dynamics, and the social stresses that exist in the family. Parents that are not in sync can inadvertently undermine each other's parenting approach. Parents that fail to take care of themselves usually struggle as parents.
  - 2. Temperament is a child's innate nature or personality that permanently affects behavior, because it enables a parent to better understand a child's reactions and to modify their approach to parenting. Understanding a child's temperament leads to fewer frustrations for the parent and the child. Experts have identified 9 spectrums of temperament including:
    - a. Activity
    - b. Regularity
    - c. Initial Reaction
    - d. Adaptability
    - e. Intensity
    - f. Mood
    - g. Distractibility
    - h. Persistence and Attention Span
    - i. Sensitivity

**All great minds *do not* think alike.**

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3. Behavior is not innate, it is learned. Parents teach skills such as trading, taking turns, waiting, requesting, thanking, perspective taking, self-monitoring and recognizing feelings. The best way to teach these skills is to model them, but many other effective strategies exist and when used properly, can be powerful parenting tools.
4. Even in the presence of excellent parenting, children sometimes fail to learn pro-social behavior. When this happens the child often has a deficit that hinders their learning. The most common deficits affecting behavior include:
  - a. Executive dysfunctions
  - b. Social cognition
  - c. Language processing
  - d. Sensory processing
  - e. Motor planning
  - f. Emotional dysregulation

### **Five Steps to Positive Behavior Intervention Planning:**

Step 1. Define your child's problem behavior and the goal/behavior you want to see

Step 2. Understand and alter the predictors/triggers (antecedents)

Step 3. Identify the function of the problem behavior

Step 4. Teach and reinforce a functionally equivalent replacement behavior (FERB)

Step 5. Prepare reactive strategies (what to do when)

### **Recommended Reading:**

#### **Websites**

The Center for Developing Minds website, [www.devminds.com](http://www.devminds.com), and Facebook page provide resources and valuable links.

Parenthood.com [www.Parenthoodweb.com](http://www.Parenthoodweb.com)

National Parenting Information Network <http://ecap.crc.illinois.edu/eearchive/books/fte/npin.html>

#### **Books**

*The Explosive Child*, by Ross W. Greene, PhD.

*The Difficult Child*, Stanley Turecki, M.D.

*1,2,3 Magic*, Thomas Phelan, Ph.D.

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