

Managing Difficult- Extreme Behaviors:

Social and Emotional

Development of Elementary-
Age Children

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Principles of development

- Principle 1 ---- Certain areas of development are influenced by heredity
Garlick, D. (2002).
- Principle 2 --- Learning waits for maturation.
Semrud-Clikeman, M, PhD, LP, ABPdN (2015)
- Principle 3 ----The environment can act positively or negatively on development
Brady, Roberts, & Giardino (2005, 3rd ed.)
- Principle 4 --- Development is usually orderly when physical, however not always psychological.
Scoresby, L & Prince, A, (1997)
- Principle 5 --- As children mature, they go through stages with rapid progress and stages with little progress, both physically and psychologically.
Scoresby, L & Prince, A, (1997)

Helping all Children Develop

Upper Level

Children's Environment
(what Parents Provide)

Principle 3

Physical

Mental

Emotional

Principle 2, 4, 5

Zone of Proximal Development

Language

Social

Moral

Lower Level

Biological Abilities
(What Children Inherit)

Principle 1

Communication

- Communication is important
 - **Aggressive ---** Sarcastic, mocking, violent outbursts, intimidating, blaming, name calling, and put downs and jokes about others
 - **Passive --** Hesitant, unsure, self-silencing, dishonest about feelings, self-blaming, whining, mumbling, and monotone
 - **Assertive --** Level in tone and polite, congruence of mood, eye contact, listening, speaking for self, and avoid blaming

Things To Remember or Try

when dealing with problem behavior

1. Take a deep breath and try to remain calm.
2. Try to set a positive tone and model an appropriate response, even if it means you must take a few moments to compose yourself.
3. Make sure your child understands that it's their misbehavior you dislike, not them.
4. Give the misbehaving child a chance to respond
5. Never resort to blame or ridicule.
6. Avoid win-lose conflicts.

Things To Remember or Try

when dealing with problem behavior

7. Don't insist that child accept responsibility for their behavior.
8. Try to remain courteous in the face of hostility or anger.
9. Treat *child* respectfully and politely.
10. Be an attentive listener.
11. Model the behavior you expect from your children/students.
12. Specifically describe misbehavior and help child understand the consequences of misbehavior.

Things To Remember or Try

when dealing with problem behavior

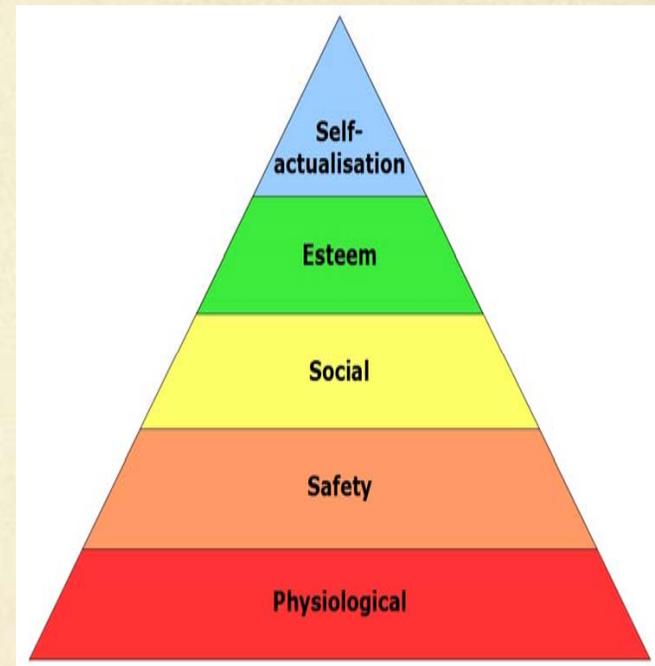
13. Avoid labeling students as "good" or "bad."
14. Focus on recognizing and rewarding acceptable behavior more than punishing misbehavior.
15. Ignore or minimize minor problems instead of disrupting the family/class.
16. Where reprimands are necessary, state them factually and simply.

Elementary-age Children

- A child's life revolves mainly around the family.

Groupings for today

- Pre K to 3 graders
- 4 to 6 graders



Pre K to 3rd Grade

- Important stage to teach about helping others and not hurting others. (Moral Conduct)
 - One way assistance.
(getting needs meet--- Physiological and safety)
 - Concept of building Empathy.
(beginnings of belonging)
 - Building up social rituals
(beginnings of belonging)

Behaviors

- Individuals with challenging behaviors have difficulty understanding the consequences of their actions.
- Appear to purposely defy adults.
- Hit or become aggressive to get what they want.
- Appear unable to control their emotions.

Sleep problems and electronics may be contributing to the issue.

4th to 6th Graders

- Individuals with challenging behaviors can have unfulfilled needs.
(anything lower than esteem)
- Difficulty managing emotional outbursts
(beginnings of belonging, critical mind)
- Difficulty managing impulses
(safety and belonging, puberty)
- Behavior that does not respond to discipline
(physiological and safety)

What are they trying to get?!

- All behavior is communicating.
 - What's it telling you?
- Let's compare what we do and what it is saying.
 - Child has a headache.
 - The Child fell and hurt her/his foot
 - Child has a stomachache.
 - Child is yelling at you
 - Child stomps her/his foot and hits you as they walk away.

Dealing with problem behaviors

- Attempt to understand why
- Know your response
- Engage in communication when you know you missed the mark.
- Model

Interventions

- **Model values and behaviors you'd like the kids to adopt**
 - Are you on time for work/school/class/family events?
 - Do you treat others with respect?
 - Your kids are watching. You are a role model.
- **Interpret the behavior**
 - Placing the unknown or scattered feelings into perspective.
 - Use "*symptom estrangement*"
 - Fritz Redl's term for separating the inappropriate behavior from the child ... in other words "I hate the behavior, but I believe in your ability to change for the better."

Interventions

- **Create opportunities for success** : Arrange opportunities for the child/student to do well. Set him/her up for success, and then recognize the good choice (or some approximation of it).
 - How? (behavior modification)

- **Reminisce**
 - If a potentially frustrating event for the student is about to occur, you can remind the student about times when s/he made a good choice. State your belief in his/her ability to make a good choice in this particular situation that is about to happen.
 - Why?

Interventions

- **Avoid using positive labels**
 - Examples are -- "You're so smart", "You're a good boy."
 - Why?
 - because those ideas will be rejected when seen as being incorrect.
 - So what do we do in place of labels?
 - How do we break down the old image and build a new one?
 - Disprove the image and build a new one with non-disputable evidence and point out factual evidence of good choice making.
 - "Thanks for holding the door for us. That was a kind gesture on your part."
 - "Your patience with Ivan really helped him to understand the material. Thanks."
 - "You showed a lot of restraint & self control in that situation. Be proud of yourself."
 - "Wow. You got it! Tell me how you figured it out."

Interventions

- **Prepare the student for your positive feedback**
 - "I have something nice I'd like to tell you. Would you like to hear it?" or "I'd like to give you a compliment."
 - Even if they don't want to hear it, s/he is wondering what you were going to say
- **Make a quick retreat**
 - Provide praise in written form or make a very quick verbal commentary and walk away.
 - by doing this, there is minimal/no chance for the child to give you an automatic nasty retort.

Interventions

- **Recognize the "wounded animal"**
 - They don't trust and are trying to prevent deeper hurt.
 - This child is afraid, but showing you other behaviors to disguise that fear.
 - If we could just place ourselves in their shoes...we would look funny and our feet would hurt...but let your empathy for others who are hurt win out over caustic reactions.
- **Avoid coercive "Do it now!" directions.**
 - Use requests and the word "Please" before politely stated directions.
- **Avoid toxic penalties.**
 - Don't view them as the enemy and getting "tough"
 - How does this work for you? Do you learn? Do you do it?

References

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- Scoresby, L & Prince, A, (1997). *Understanding Child Development: A practical Guide*. Knowledge Gain Publications Inc.
- Semrud-Clikeman, M, PhD, LP, ABPdN (2015). The importance of matching instruction to a child's maturity level. University of Minnesota Medical School.