

Behavioral Management Techniques

What is behavior management!

Behavior management is a style of parent/child interaction that focuses on a positive and pleasant approach. This approach will assist you in establishing interactions that will promote desirable behavior.

The methods presented are not something to be used occasionally. For them to be fully effective, you must apply them consistently across all areas of your child's life at all times. Eventually, even though implementation can be difficult at first, these techniques will become second nature to you.

Even if you've tried some of the techniques in the past, it is important to try them again — you may have been less consistent with implementation last time you tried. These techniques may take awhile to become effective, but keep in mind, the longer the behavior has been evident, the longer it will take to change it.

Behaviors also can change over time. New ones appear in the place of old. Those skills you learned in the past might be more applicable to what you find concerning you today. It is your job to focus on the behavior you'd like to increase or decrease — the more you learn about behavior management techniques, the more tools you'll gather to help shape and promote the behavior you'd like to see more often.

- ♦ BEHAVIOR IS:

- Any action that can be seen or heard.

- Is observable.

- Is measurable.

- ♦ BEHAVIOR IS NOT:

- Your reaction to the situation.

- Your interpretation of the situation.

- Your expansion of the situation.

- ♦ An effective method of examining behavior is to use the ABC mode:

- A = Antecedent.

- The event occurring before a behavior. This event prompts that behavior.*

- B= Behavior.

- Response to the events, which can be seen or heard.*

C = Consequence.

The event(s) that follow(s) the behavior. This affects whether the behavior will occur again.

♦ Consequence:

- (1) When the behavior is followed by a pleasant consequence, it is more likely to reoccur.
- (2) When the behavior is followed by an unpleasant consequence, it is less likely to reoccur.

This isn't to say we are going to punish our children when the behavior occurs. The most effective method of decreasing the likelihood of reoccurrence of inappropriate behavior is to IGNORE.

Having said that, never ignore self-injurious or violent behavior!!!! This is a time to call in the professionals. If your child experiences a sudden, drastic, troubling change in behavior or personality, immediately arrange for a full physical check-up and a dental check-up. After ruling out physical issues, you can consult your behaviorist, SLP, OT, etc. A good tool to help determine potential cause of behavior is the Durand Motivational Assessment Scale.

A child who is tantruming may be seeking attention. If you respond to the tantrum (whether it's to scold or even to comfort, i.e., "It's okay, there, there."), the behavior is being rewarded by your reaction (even a negative reaction). Wait for the tantrum to stop and then reinforce (reward) the quiet behavior verbally or with a small toy or treat. If the tantrum goes on for a long time, reinforce when the child takes a breath. Quickly say, "I like how quiet you are being," during this time.

Eventually, the child will learn that s/he will gain your attention through more appropriate behavior, which is a pleasant consequence. Always label the behavior you are praising. "Good girl" is vague; "I like how you picked up your jacket" is specific. Never pause before giving reinforcement (whether it be verbal or otherwise). Let's say John picked up his jacket after you've asked him to, and you take the time to finish reading that paragraph in your book. John starts to whine, and then you give him a mini M&M. John has learned that whining got him the treat and picking up the jacket is forgotten. The same system applies to discrete trials in an IBI program. Have reinforcers handy and reinforce immediately after the target behavior occurs.

When you are starting out, choose one behavior, which you would like to increase or decrease, and work on that.

- ♦ Choose reinforcers that are meaningful to the child, change them often. Give these rewards in tiny amounts.
- ♦ Be animated and enthusiastic. Show your child how happy you are with him/her!

When starting out, you will reward the child every time the target behavior occurs but quickly fade reinforcers by offering less and less.

- ♦ Always pair edible, social or toy reinforcers with verbal praise.
- ♦ Eventually, you will be giving only verbal praise, and your child will learn your pleasure is a reinforcer!

The difference between reinforcement and bribery is that reinforcement comes after a task is completed, whereas bribery is offered before. That is not to say that you can't show your child the reinforcer he is working for during trials. In this case, it would be a visual cue. If you offered a treat before even making a request, you would be using bribery.

REINFORCEMENT:

Social:

Giving positive attention by:

- ✓ leaning toward and/or looking at your child
- ✓ smiling
- ✓ making a comment; asking a question
- ✓ conversation with your child
- ✓ joining in an activity

Non-social:

- ✓ activities, i.e., movies, zoo, going to the park
- ✓ tangible, i.e., toys, puzzles, books
- ✓ food, i.e., treats, drinks (*keep in mind that the treat might not be what you consider a treat; some kids like pickles, olives, small tastes of ketchup, etc.*)

Always pair non-social rewards with social! When your child starts to accomplish that target behavior, "throw a party", get excited, break out the Cheesies and give plenty of hugs and tickles all at once.

Be sure the request you are making is very clear and concise. Do not cloud the request with superfluous wording, and do not make more than one request at the same time.

You can increase desirable behavior by modeling. This is a process whereby an individual learns a skill through observation and imitation.

Set your child up for success. If s/he is having a difficult day, be sure to end on a positive note. You can do this by requesting a skill the child has already mastered and then delivering some nice verbal praise. We call these mastered skills "high probs", because there is a high probability your child will get them right, thereby giving you a chance to reinforce the behavior, without giving in to demands for escape, tantruming, etc.

Tips For Parents:

BE FIRM, CONSISTENT AND KIND — remember the power of praise and reward. Use a positive attitude and not a punitive one in dealing with your child. Establish clear ground rules when the

child is young keep those rules with appropriate amendments. As the child matures and improves in judgment, give him more leeway. There is no "Operating Manual" for rearing your child, but one rule to heed: NEVER, NEVER put the child down. Do not degrade the child. Maintain self-esteem at all cost.

LISTEN — listen actively to your child. This sets a good example and helps the child feel important and valued. Remember, if you do not want your child to tune you out, do not tune out your child.

DO NOT HAGGLE OR NEGOTIATE OVER SMALL THINGS — make a clear decision. Right or wrong, it is better than haggling. Decision-making is a chore for youngsters with ADD. Encourage him to make a decision, but be patient with him as he tries to think it through. If he makes a decision, accept it! If he hesitates and shows indecision, only then make the decision for him. Build mutual respect as each learns to make choices and understand the consequences.

GIVE CHILD CHORES — keep the chore appropriate and keep clear guidelines as to who will do what and when. Select one or two chores and be prepared that it will also take your time. Goodwill and many calm reminders may be necessary to get those chores done. Parents who share duties and chores with their child help to build self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.

HELP YOUR CHILD REMEMBER — many children are distractible and forgetful. Keep a short list of tasks. A list is impersonal, and your child will gain satisfaction as he checks off those tasks he completes. Use picture cues, a prominently placed calendar or environmental reminders (i.e., after supper, feed the dog; when sister brings the dishes, you load the dishwasher). These techniques are memory boosters.

BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE ABSENT MINDEDNESS OF MOST CHILDREN WITH ADD — often children do not process multiple requests quickly or accurately. Before making a request, it helps if parents first make sure they have their child's attention. Watch to see where your child lays the kitchen shear, the saw, the hammer, etc. Check later to see if the item has been put away. If not, give a calm reminder to put it in its proper place. Most importantly, allow the child only that which he can manage. Too many toys, tools, clothing, shoes, etc., are distracting and cannot be managed comfortably. Provide things only as they are needed, and teach that everything has a time and place for its return.

STRETCH THE ATTENTION SPAN — rewarding non-hyperactive behavior is the key to preparing children for school. The child can be shown pictures in a book and be rewarded. Games of increasing difficulty can be taught. As an example, start with building blocks and progress to dominoes, card games, dice games, etc. Matching pictures is an excellent way to build a child's memory and concentration skills.

AVOID A POWER STRUGGLE OVER REPEATED DIRECTIONS — give a command one to three times, as needed, but say it each time as though it was the first. Speak clearly and slowly, use a gentle touch, make good eye contact and keep an encouraging expression. After you have stated your wish in a simple, clear command, ask your child to repeat what was said. As soon as the child does what was asked, simply say, "Thank you, I appreciate your doing what I asked." One of the most potent motivations is a verbal response, indicating your pride and acceptance of the child's efforts.

HELP YOUR CHILD ORGANIZE — many youngsters are erratic in their approach to problem solving and present themselves as being very disorganized. They may have great difficulty relating an event in its proper sequence. Keep a calm, structured and predictable home existence. Be firm and consistent about routine chores and schedules for meals, homework, bedtime, etc. Routines and schedules help your child accept order and become more predictable. Minimize distractions and provide a place, a time and the tools for a task's completion. Help him know where to begin, when to end and how to express who, what, when and where. Again, a calm, uncritical manner should be the rule.

DIFFICULTY WAITING — because of the child's impulsivity, fear of forgetting and/or being forgotten, he will speak and act out of turn. Give him a turn!! Some interruptions may be allowed. If you have permitted some lack of good manners and provided warnings and cues to help him realize he did interrupt, he may be disciplined by excluding him from the activity.

PREVENT PROBLEMS WHENEVER POSSIBLE — keep in mind that most children do not intend to be defiant. They probably mean to do the right thing. It is best to try to prevent problems rather than dealing with them after they occur. Recognize that it may be more beneficial for your child to stay home with a babysitter than to stay in a crowded daycare facility or attend an exciting wedding reception. The idea is to avoid situations that could be embarrassing until he learns a measure of self-control. These stimulating situations may be gradually introduced.

AVOID FATIGUE — when children are tired, their self-control breaks down. Rest, relaxation and regular routine are particularly needed for this group of children.

PROVIDE OUTLETS FOR THE RELEASE OF EXCESS ENERGY — Because their energy should not be bottled up, these children need daily constructive and creative activities that may include running, biking, swimming, sports, etc., a fenced yard helps. In bad weather, provide a recreation room where they can do as they please without criticism for their noise or activity level. Children are often creative. You may want to provide them with things like craft supplies.

ACCEPT YOUR CHILD'S LIMITATIONS, RECOGNIZE STRENGTHS AND HELP OTHERS DO THE SAME — undue criticism or attempts to change the energetic youngster into a "model" child may cause more harm than good. Since many behaviors are not intentional, do not expect to completely eliminate them — just try to teach reasonable control. Nothing is more helpful for the child than having a tolerant low-key family who respects the child and allows the child to respect himself.

IN MANY CASES, PARENTS SHOULD NOT TUTOR THEIR OWN CHILD — it is helpful for a youngster to have a family member read to him or discuss some ideas. An attempt to teach phonics or math is usually unsuccessful. The child profits more from showing what he has already mastered, than from the strained relationship that may result from parental tutoring. Provide a study area and a study person whenever possible.

PRAISE OR PUNISHMENT MUST BE IMMEDIATE — the longer the interval between the child's behavior and the time he gets feedback, the more opportunity there is for him to skip to another event and fail to make the feedback relevant. The cardinal rule is to focus on the behavior and not the child or the child's self-esteem. Since these children cannot handle many rules, the family needs a few clear consistent ones. Punishment should be short in duration. An occasional slap on

the behind may be part of normal child rearing, but beyond that, it becomes ineffective and often creates more problems, especially for the child. These children need adult models, exhibiting control and calmness, in order to decrease their own aggressive behavior. Avoid situations that may encourage inappropriate behaviors.

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS SHOULD BE REWARDED BUT NOT BOUGHT — reward appropriate behavior with such things as special time or privileges with parents or another favorite person. If he gets up 15 minutes late, then he should be required to go to bed 15 minutes early that night. The more tangible rewards, such as money, toys and candy, can be used as a starting place to get the child's attention, and then they should be replaced rather quickly by social and personal rewards.

BE OBSERVANT, KEEP IN MIND WHAT WORKS, USE IT OVER AND OVER — avoid negative comments. Do not assume that the child understands what you want. Make an effort to explain clearly what is expected, so the child can comply. "Put the clothes in the dryer, and then you can watch TV, or the TV will be turned off." Define what a "clean room" is or what "be good in the store" means. The child can direct himself toward appropriate behavior if someone helps him understand what is expected.

PERIODICALLY GET AWAY FROM IT ALL — parents must take time away from their child often enough to recharge. Coping with some of these children for 24 hours a day can be very stressful. Families must get through the difficult times without being torn apart. It is important to protect the basic relationships in your family. Learn to maintain a balanced point of view. Separate the essential issues from the non-essential ones. Be as calm as possible, do not overreact, keep your eye on the future, and, most importantly, get every ounce of energy from your sense of humor.

What are some challenging behaviors and possible interventions?

BEHAVIOR	INTERVENTION
Seek independence and freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage independence ✓ Trust until proven not trustworthy ✓ Be observant of activities & friends ✓ Consider compromise ✓ Set up win-win situations ✓ Offer an attractive alternative
Disobey/Conflict with adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State rules clearly ✓ Involve in developing rules ✓ Write down rules/post them
Act younger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adjust expectations ✓ Ask child's help in solving problems ✓ Teach desired behavior ✓ Impose consequence if necessary

BEHAVIOR	INTERVENTION
Forgetful/Don't do chores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make a written list ✓ Use post-it notes ✓ Help get started/show how to do ✓ Ask child's help
Acts impulsively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Anticipate problems ✓ Avoid tempting teenager ✓ Consider medication
Difficulty paying attention/doesn't seem to listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make eye contact/use touch ✓ Keep instructions brief and simple ✓ Avoid preaching ✓ Write instructions down ✓ Accept child's listening style
Disorganizes/loses things/messy room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put name on possessions ✓ Purchase less expensive things ✓ Assist in being organized ✓ Serve as a coach ✓ List steps for clean room ✓ Help clean room/garage ✓ Close door to messy room
Lack of awareness of time/they're late	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use wrist watch alarm ✓ Rent or buy a beeper ✓ Teach awareness of time
Difficulty planning ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teach planning ✓ Teach time management
Difficult to discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use positive reinforcement ✓ Use logical consequences ✓ Reward or punish immediately ✓ Be consistent ✓ Create new consequences/rewards ✓ Use behavioral charts ✓ Use rewards/may include money ✓ Refer to "Golden Rules" ✓ Avoid power struggles ✓ Redirect interest ✓ Give second and third chances

BEHAVIOR	INTERVENTION
Low frustration tolerance/irritable/ emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Listen/be supportive ✓ Use active listening ✓ Teach problem-solving skills ✓ Teach anger control
Difficulty participating in sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Play large muscles sports ✓ Play an active position ✓ Consider medication
Doesn't accept responsibility for actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deal with problem behavior
Argue/talk back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ignore minor infractions ✓ Walk away from conflict ✓ Give space and time to cool off ✓ Impose a consequence ✓ Adjust medication
Dishonest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you know answer, don't ask ✓ Eliminate some punishment ✓ Develop plan to deal with problem ✓ Impose consequence
Difficulty with family events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep outings simple ✓ Keep outings brief ✓ Look for creative solutions ✓ Medication may help
Restless/easily bored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Get involved in activities and sports ✓ Plan interesting family outings ✓ Encourage hobbies & interests ✓ Make special plans for holidays
Seek material possessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allow to earn money ✓ Plan for holidays or birthdays ✓ Purchase fewer, less expensive ✓ Express gratitude
Self-centered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remind of special occasions ✓ Invite to shop with you ✓ Encourage to do things for others
Break things or have accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Handle accidents philosophically ✓ Treat as would an adult ✓ Discuss physical strength ✓ Put expensive possessions away

BEHAVIOR	INTERVENTION
Daring—have accidents—climb the unclimbable—do harrowing stunts—breaks bones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage safe activities ✓ Monitor level of danger ✓ Provide supervision ✓ Negotiate compromise ✓ Ask others for help
ADD/impulsive/without hyperactivity/lethargy/apathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage physical activity ✓ Consult physician ✓ Check for depression/meds if needed.
Sleep disturbances/can't fall asleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establish reasonable bedtime ✓ Prompt to get ready for bed ✓ Establish bedtime routine ✓ Don't start projects after set time ✓ Consider compromise during crisis ✓ Encourage exercise ✓ Consider medication/conference with doctor
Can't wake up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Buy alarm clock ✓ Connect lights and TV to timer ✓ Try positive incentives ✓ Consider compromise during crisis ✓ Encourage exercise ✓ Consider medication as last resort ✓ Look for other causes
Difficult morning routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allow enough time ✓ Get things ready the night before ✓ Give meds immediately ✓ Use logical consequences: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. walk to school 2. leave on time or dress in car 3. give a 10-minute warning 4. take away driving privilege
Slow processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make adaptations ✓ Have suggestions for schools
Attention seeker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Give opportunities for center stage ✓ Participate in activities; recognition ✓ Discuss inappropriate attention ✓ Ignore some behaviors

BEHAVIOR	INTERVENTION
Intrusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Set boundaries ✓ Identify space belonging to parents & siblings ✓ Impose consequences ✓ Teach to wait
Difficulty relating to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Invite his friends on outings ✓ Provide tips on relating to friends ✓ Wait for teachable moment ✓ Coach his team

Conclusion:

This series has highlighted several issues that are important in effectively managing children's behavior. These include the following:

1. warm, responsive parenting that incorporates children's views and needs
2. clear communication appropriate for a child's developmental level
3. carefully planned consequences that are applied consistently

Utilizing these principles, along with the concrete suggestions provided in these articles, can improve the effectiveness of an adult's behavior-management techniques and thus improve the quality of caregiver/child interactions.

Behavior Management Techniques

2 Hours Credit

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

1. Behavior is your reaction to a particular situation? True False
2. In the ABC Model, the "C" stands for: _____
3. What are three positive reinforcements you utilize in your foster home?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
4. Define what "intervention" means:

5. It is appropriate for me to spank my foster child(ren), because my parents used this behavior management technique, and it worked well for me? True False
6. What are some possible interventions for a child who is being dishonest?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. What might be the most effective way of decreasing the likelihood of an inappropriate behavior reoccurring?

8. What is the difference between reinforcement and bribery?