# Supporting Those Who Support Others

Administrators and Challenging Behavior

# 1) Supporting Your Program
Setting expectations through program policies

# Supporting Your Program

# Developing a Behavior Policy

The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop **expectations and procedures** for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

What is your program's *philosophy* around discipline?

- These are the **beliefs and goals** that underlie and support how and why you run your program the way you do

Do you have a behavior or discipline *policy*?

- Your policy contains the **guiding principles/values** that are designed to help translate your program goals into practice/action

What is your program's behavior management *approach*?

- These are the actual **practices** that staff use to teach, prevent and respond to behaviors that are challenging

# Your Program's Philosophy

Additional questions to think about:

- What is the child's role in their learning and behavior?
  - Active or passive?

- What is the teacher's role in a child's learning and behavior?
  - The family's role?

- What kind of program do you want to create?
  - How does this connect to your beliefs about young children and learning?

The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop expectations and procedures for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

## What is your program's philosophy around discipline?

What are your attitudes and beliefs around children who have behaviors that are challenging to you or your staff?

What goals do you have for your program? Your staff? The children?

What is it that you believe about child development and how children at certain ages are supposed to act/behave/learn?
- Example statements:
  - We believe that each child is an individual with specific strengths, interests, skills, abilities and experiences.
  - We believe that children learn through play.
  - We believe the early childhood environment should take into consideration the social skills, communication skills, physical abilities or challenges, and learning styles of the children.

How do you plan to teach, guide and support the social and emotional skills of the children in your program?

Do you feel negative forms of discipline have a place in your program?

# Your Program's Philosophy

Keep in mind:

- The kind of program you want to create

- The goals you have for your program, staff, and children?

- Child development and appropriateness

- Punishment vs. guidance

The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop expectations and procedures for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

What is your program's philosophy around discipline?

Take some time to think about what and how you feel about behavior and discipline. Write down your thoughts here:

# Your Program's Policy

Additional questions to think about:

- Does your policy include information about expulsion and suspension?
  - Are children sent home or asked to leave your program because of their behavior?

- Are there procedures in place for how information will be explained to the parents?

- Do you have a process for making a referral if an assessment for special education services is necessary?

The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop expectations and procedures for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

Do you have a behavior or discipline policy?

Behavior policies should focus on:
- Evidence-based and developmentally appropriate practices
- Developing a learning environment that is predictable, engaging and relationship based
- Describing expectations that are clear and consistent
- Promoting prosocial behavior and reducing challenging behavior
- Building authentic, strengths-based relationships with families
- Professional development opportunities that support and strengthen your program's goals and practices

Do you have a process or set of procedures for supporting children who have behaviors that are challenging?
- How and when will the procedures be implemented?
- Are they meant to be proactive or reactive?
- Are they used consistently by all adults in your program?

# Your Program's Policy

Keep in mind:

- A policy is meant to clarify your program's philosophy

- They are statements of intent

- They represent your program's values and principles
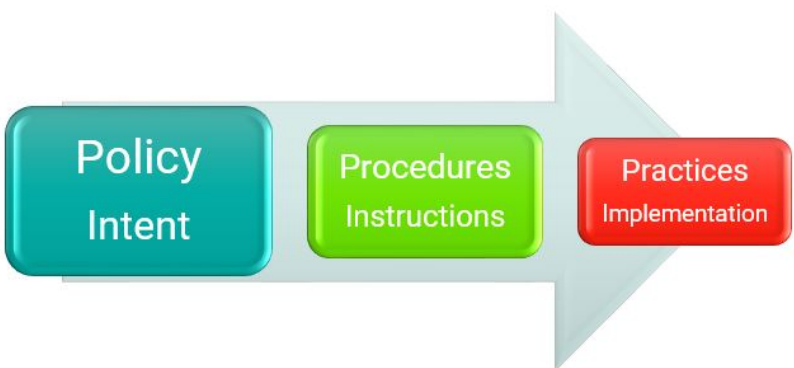


The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop expectations and procedures for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

Do you have a behavior or discipline policy?

Use the space below to write down your ideas. Think about how your ideas could be developed into a behavior policy.

# Your Program's Practices

Evidence based and developmentally appropriate practices:

- Active Listening

- Modifying the environment

- Redirection

- Reinforcing and noticing

- Tell children what you want them to do, not what they shouldn't do

- Setting limits

- Enforcing natural consequences

- Negotiation

- Facilitating problem solving

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The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop expectations and procedures for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

What is your program's behavior management approach?

What areas of focus do your teachers concentrate on?
- Teaching social and emotional skills?
- Building positive relationships?
- Improving problem-solving skills?
- Developing self-control?

- Have your staff been trained on the practices you want them to use when addressing a challenging behavior?
  - Has the training been paired with some form of coaching?
  - Are the practices both evidence based and developmentally appropriate?

Examples:
- https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/wp-content/uploads/pdf_case_studies/ics_ec_behavior_mgmt.pdf
- https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/statement-on-positive-behavior-guidance.pdf

# Your Program's Practices

Keep in mind:

- Active Listening

- Modifying the environment

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- Reinforcing and noticing

- Tell children what you want them to do, not what they shouldn't do

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- Negotiation

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The best way to support the teachers, staff, and families in your program is to develop expectations and procedures for how your program will respond to challenging behaviors.

What is your program's behavior management approach?

Write down the practices you want your program to use and how you will make sure that everyone is trained on using them appropriately and effectively.

# Book Recommendations
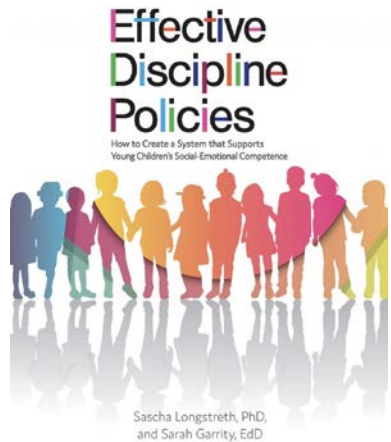


- Effective Discipline Policies

- Gryphon House Publishing

- Authors
  - Sascha Longstreth
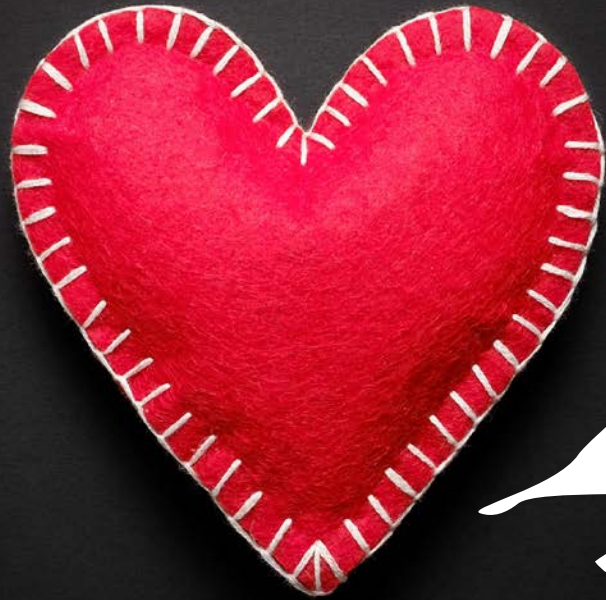  - Sarah Garrity
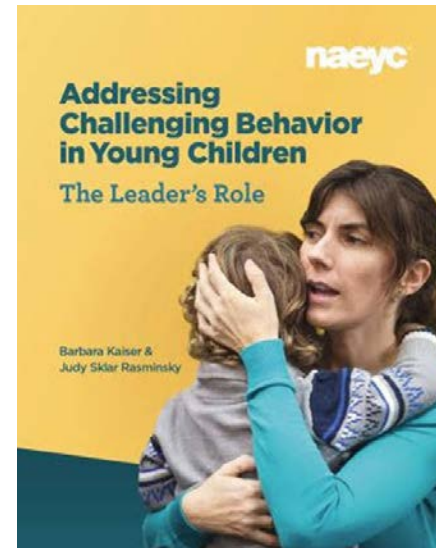


- Addressing Challenging Behavior in Young Children - The Leader's Role

- NAEYC publication

- Authors
  - Barbara Kaiser
  - Judy Sklar Rasminsky

# Supporting Your Program - Things you can do

- Provide physical (classroom assistance), emotional (active listening, a safe space, etc.) and informational (training, resources, etc.) support to your staff

- Provide Professional Development opportunities that include coaching

- Listen to and understand your staff's reality – what are they telling you about the situation

- Recognize the staff's personal and professional knowledge and skills

- Model appropriate ways to respond to and support children and their behavior

- Promote teamwork and support each other during difficult/stressful situations

# 2) Supporting Teachers
Seeing things differently

# Supporting Teachers
# - Seeing differently

- Perspective
  - A particular attitude toward or way of seeing something; a point of view

- Perspective Taking
  - The ability to look beyond your own point of view so that you can consider how someone else may think or feel about something

Remember….

Your personal experiences, upbringing, culture, place where you live, etc. all **impact how you see and react** to the world around you

**We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are.**

ANAIS NIN

MINIMALISTQUOTES.COM

# Supporting Teachers
## - Gaining a new perspective

If your feeling unregulated (e.g., didn't sleep well, stressed out, feeling sick, etc.), it's difficult not to let that impact how we perceive or react to a situation.

| Unregulated Perspective | Regulated Perspective |
|---|---|
| The child is doing this on purpose or because they don't like me. | It might seem like it, but it's not about you. They may be having their own difficult day. How can you be there to help them solve the problem? |
| That parent is so difficult! I dread having to meet with them. | It may be a difficult situation, but it's important that we refrain from seeing the parent or child as difficult. |
| There is no end in sight. I'll be dealing with this all year! | Try to see things from an outsider's point of view. Maybe ask another teacher to observe the situation. |
| It's like they don't have time for their child and when we do meet, they hardly pay attention. | We never know what is going on in someone else's life and therefore we shouldn't assume as though we do. |

# Supporting Teachers
## - Responding differently

| Reactive Responses (they know, but won't do it) | Proactive Responses (they don't know, what can I do) |
|---|---|
| You assume the child is purposely misbehaving – they know the right behavior and are deliberately being uncooperative | You identify the function or purpose behind the behavior, as well as the context for the behavior (ABC's) |
| You consider the child and their behavior as separate from their environment | You identify the expected or acceptable behaviors that you want the child to use |
| You assume the child will behave appropriately the next time – they've learned their lesson | You modify the environment (context for the behavior) to support the expected behaviors |
| You provide aversive consequences (e.g., withhold outside time, remove from activity, etc.) | You teach the appropriate behaviors and provide positive reinforcement |

Any challenging behavior that continues over time is working for the child
(e.g., they get attention or an object, they escape a task, etc.)

Any intervention that does NOT produce a change, is NOT working for the child or the teacher.

# Supporting Teachers - Things you can do

- Be a positive role model and assist when necessary

- Help staff to recognize the strengths of the children in their care

- Build a program that promotes a philosophy of mutual accountability and trust

- Empower your staff to think creatively

- Ask your staff what they need to be successful and provide them with the tools to effectively respond to problems and difficult situations

- Be available to listen to and support the way a teacher is feeling (e.g., fear, anxiety, anger)

# 3) Supporting Children
## Tips and Strategies

# Supporting Children
# - Negative or Aversive Strategies

First and foremost – These are <span style="color:red">NOT</span> recommended strategies

Negative or aversive strategies:

- Are painful, both physically and mentally, and demeaning to the child
  - Examples include spanking, hitting, yelling, criticizing, dragging by the arm, humiliating, etc.

- If an adult in your program is using this type of strategy, you must <u>immediately</u> remove them from the classroom in order to educate and guide them in learning and using positive strategies that are appropriate for the child's age

- Tend to be a response to the way **YOU'RE** feeling at that moment

- Put a significant strain on the child/adult relationship
  - It breaks the bond of trust, respect and safety

Research shows that these strategies actually increase a child's aggressive behavior by providing them with an undesirable model

# Supporting Children - Positive Strategies

Positive Strategies:

- Focus on supporting and/or reinforcing appropriate behaviors

- Are designed around the **purpose/reason** for the behavior (The function behind the behavior)

- Are **individualized** to each child's needs, interests, abilities, etc.

  - Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)
    - https://www.naeyc.org/resources/developmentally-appropriate-practice

  - Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
    - https://udlguidelines.cast.org/

## A positive strategy will always:

- Respect the child and their strengths

- Recognize the work the child has done and is continuing to do

- See the child's full potential
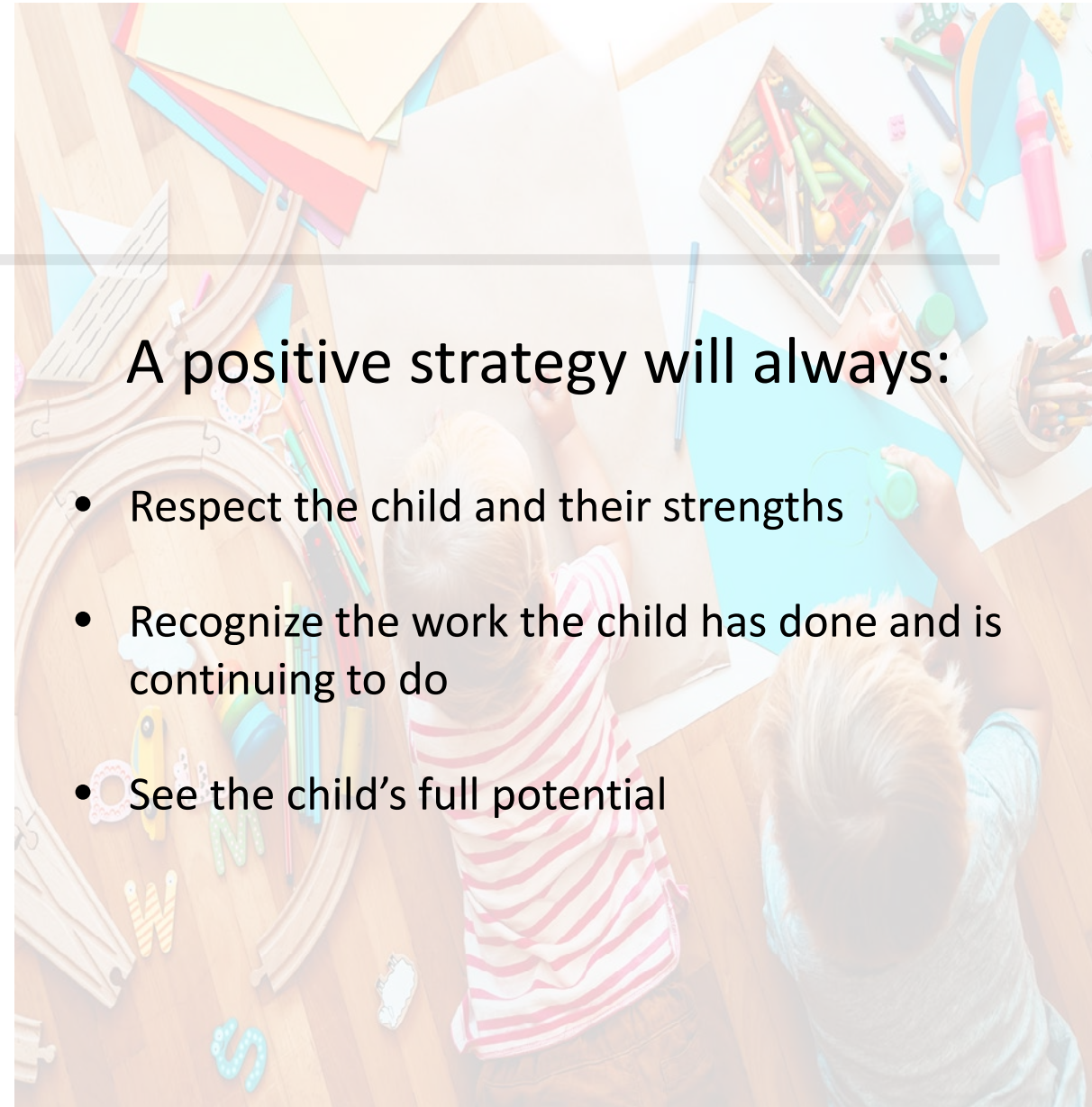
# Supporting Children - What's the function?

## Example

## Tantrum vs Meltdown

- Think about each word and how you would describe/define it
  - What does it look like?
  - Why/when does it happen?
  - What is the function?

- Are these things the same or different?
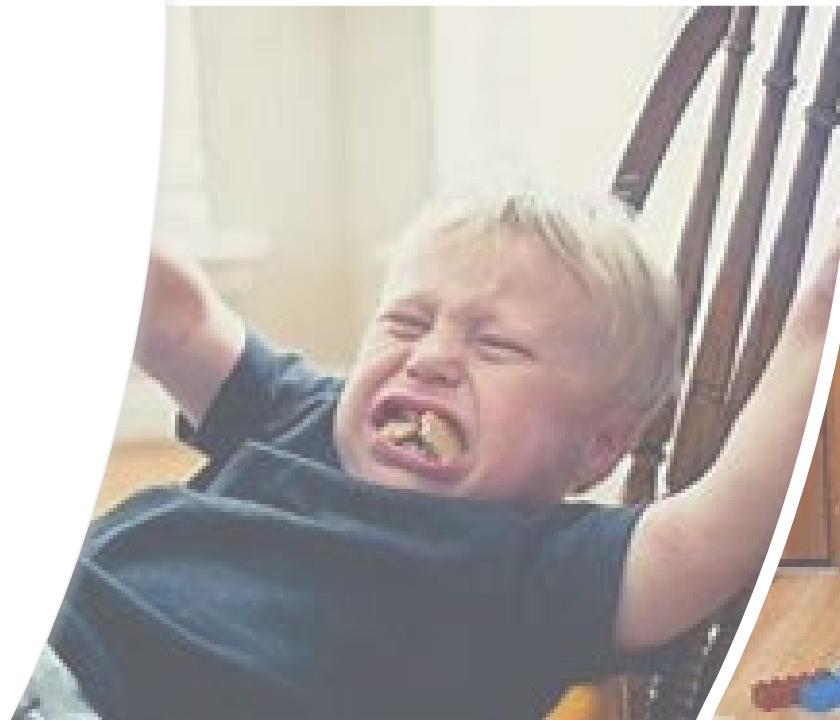
# Examples

- Tantrum - Child wants a toy from the store and you say that they can't have it. The child responds by yelling, crying and throwing themselves onto the floor.

  - Tantrums are typically outbursts when a child wants something, but don't get it

- Meltdown – There is an event at school in the afternoon and to accommodate the change the teacher decides to skip story time. The child responds by getting mad, yelling, crying, and throwing themselves onto the floor. They are inconsolable.

  - Meltdowns are typically a person's reaction to a feeling of dysregulation (e.g., being overwhelmed, over stimulated, etc.)

# Supporting Children
# - What's the function?

**Tantrum**

* "Want" directed

* Purposeful/driven by a goal

* Need/want audience

* Aware of your presence

* Use protective/safety factors

* Resolves if goal is accomplished

**Age: 1 to 5 years**

**Meltdown**

* A reactive mechanism, usually to being overstressed, overwhelmed, or dysregulated

* Not goal dependent

* Continues without attention

* Safety may be compromised

* May require assistance to gain control

**Age: Through adulthood**

These two things may look the same ..... but would your response be the same?

# Supporting Children
# - The Meaning Behind Behavior

## Main Takeaway:

Knowing the reason (or function) behind a child's behavior or action will help you develop the most effective strategy or response

# Strategies/Supports for…
## - Children who are dysregulated

**Sensory diet**

A set of sensory strategies put in place to help a child regulate their body and minimize their stress/anxiety

**Movement/Proprioception** – swinging, rocking, jumping, running, spinning, etc.

**Touch/Deep Pressure** – fidgets, bear hugs, back scratches, weighted blanket, heavy work activities, exercise ball, etc.

**Listening/Auditory** – listen to music, humming, white noise, quiet place, wearing headphones, etc.

**Looking/Vision** – look at mobiles, colored lights, wear sunglasses, picture book, etc.

**Smell/Taste/Oral** – chew gum, using appropriate chewy's, essential oils, eat sweet or sour foods, crunchy or chewy snacks, blow bubbles, scented lotion, etc.
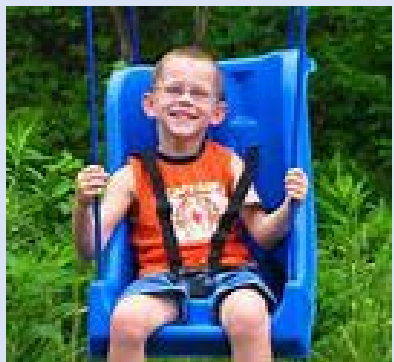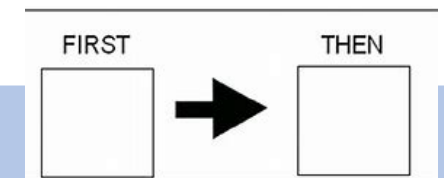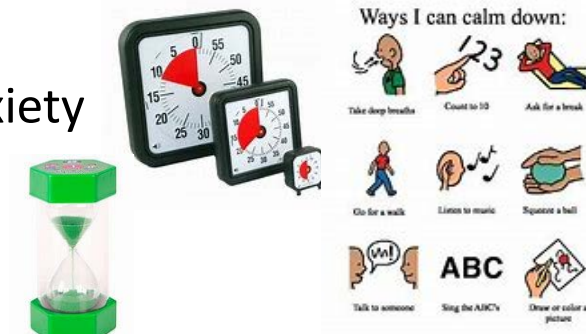
# Strategies/Supports for...
## - Children experiencing strong emotions

- Validate the child's concerns or emotions – their reaction may not make sense to you, but that doesn't mean it isn't real for them
  - Introduce Emotional Literacy*
    - "I can see that you're angry that our schedule has changed." (label their emotions)
    - "Jason, if you're feeling sad, you can say, "sad" or "I'm crying" (connect words to the emotion)
    - You're yelling and throwing things, or I see a face that is all scrunched up (connect actions to emotions)
- Proactive Strategies
  - Help the child understand what's going to happen next to help relieve their anxiety
    - Visual timers or reminders - We have 3 minutes until we clean up or when the sand runs out, it's time for circle
  - First/Then
    - Let them point to a picture of something that will help them calm down (e.g., a fidget, quiet space, etc.)  (First Story – Then Fidget)

# Strategies/Supports for…
## - Children experiencing strong emotions

### Teach self-regulation and de-escalation strategies
- The Incredible 5-Point Scale
- The Alert Program – How does your engine run?
- Tucker Turtle
- Deep breathing, counting to 10
- Provide choices

### Teach social skills
- Create social/scripted stories to explain expectations and build skills and awareness
- Act out scenarios or model appropriate behavior
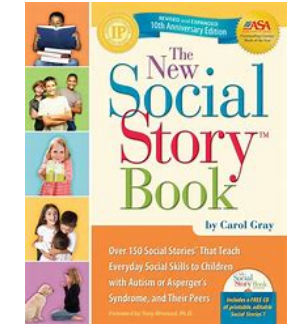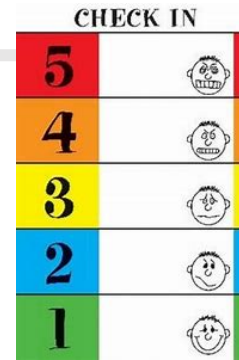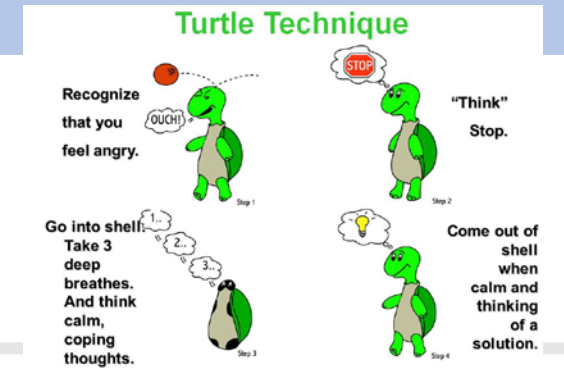
# Strategies/Supports for...
# - Children having difficulty with new skills

Pre-teach skills

- You can't expect a child to do something they may not know how to do
  - E.g., Following a new routine, playing appropriately with peers or toys, trying new things, taking turns, etc.

- Different ways to assist with skill development:
  - Break the skill into smaller, more achievable parts (e.g., task analysis, scaffolding, etc.)
  - Differentiated Instruction
    - Tailoring instruction to meet individual needs
  - Use prompting strategies (e.g., modeling, visuals, etc.)
  - Use the child's strengths and interests to motivate learning
  - Allow for flexibility or choice, but within certain parameters
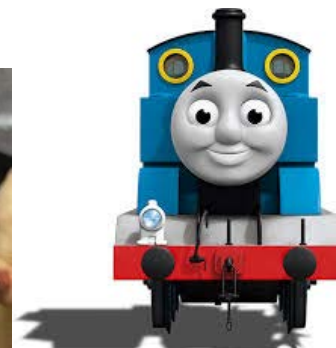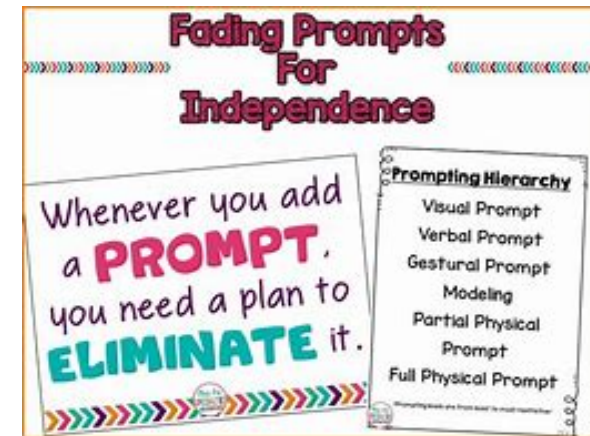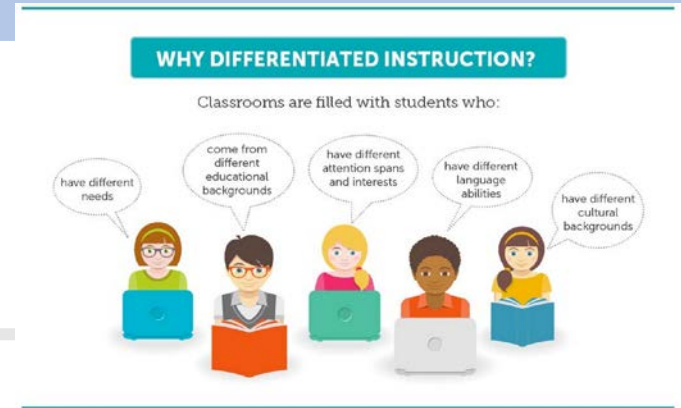
# Strategies/Supports for…
# - Children having difficulty communicating



If behaviors stem from difficulty communicating…
then figuring out how to meet this need is critical

- When thinking about introducing a communication approach:
  - Use what you know about the child (e.g., their abilities, interests, etc.) to develop a functional and effective way for them to communicate
  - Use what works - Visual supports, sign language, gestures, approximations, assistive devices, etc. (combinations are ok – whole language approach)
  - Make it generalizable across a variety of settings (e.g., child care, home, community, playground, etc.)

- Proactive Strategy – Visual schedules/supports
  - Help organize the child's day (or individual activities) into smaller, more manageable steps or chunks of time
  - Help to reinforce expectations you have for the child within activities or routines (e.g., we keep our hands to ourselves, etc.)
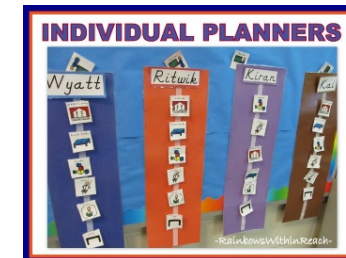
# Strategies/Supports for...
## - Children using **inappropriate** behavior



Break Time Choices

Can I _____?

- Teach a More Appropriate Replacement Skill
  - Replacement skills need to serve the **same function** as the challenging behavior
    - Instead of hitting to get out of a difficult task, the child learns to request a break
  - Replacement skills need to get the reinforcement to the child reliably and effectively
    - Usable by anyone (no need to be complicated)
    - Functional and reinforceable across settings
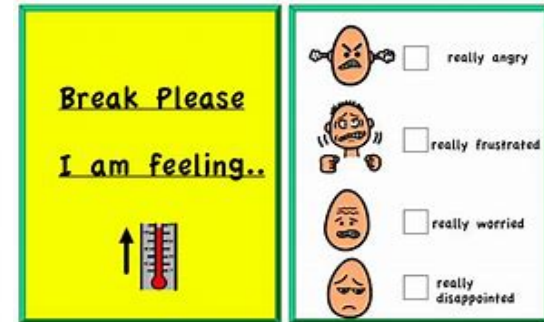  - Replacement skills need to be quick and easy to access
    - The way a child would request a break needs to be available immediately
    - If it's easier to hit than to find the break card or a communication device, then that's what the child will do

# Strategies/Supports for…
## - Children using **appropriate** behavior

It's important that we recognize and acknowledge the good stuff kids do!

Positive Reinforcement

*Encouraging statements point out specific facts*

"I noticed how you kept your body in control when you didn't get to use your favorite green crayon. I bet your body feels good?"
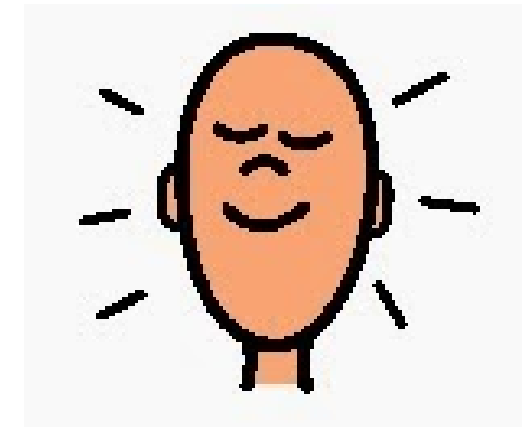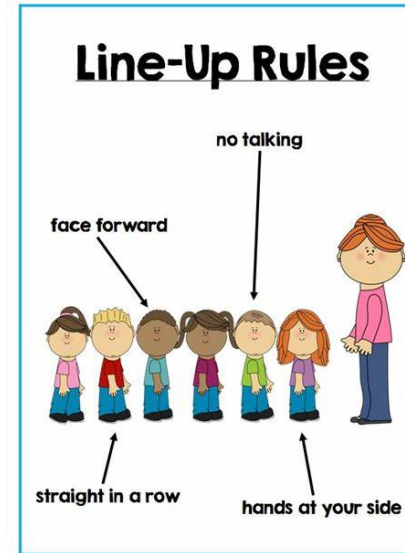
*but don't evaluate them.*

"I really like your picture. Great job!"

**Proactive strategy**

Reinforce clearly established expectations

- We're going to clean-up in one minute.  What do we do when it's time to clean-up? (e.g., stop playing, put toys/materials away, etc.)

- What can you do to make sure you are safe when it's time to line up for outside time?

# Strategies/Supports for…
# - Children using **appropriate** behavior

Intrinsic vs Extrinsic motivation

- Intrinsic (internal) motivation – doing something to please themselves
- Extrinsic (external) motivation – doing something to please others

Encouragement vs Praise

- Encouragement – Non-judgmental, point out facts, reinforcing language
  - E.g., "You really worked hard putting those toys away." "I bet you're proud that you finished that puzzle."
- Praise – Focuses on what the adult thinks or feels
  - E.g., "I love your block tower!" "You did a great job!"

# Strategies/supports for...
## - Children using **appropriate** behavior

## Reward Strategies:

If you use one, be specific about why the child is receiving the reward

- Think positive reinforcement

## Examples:

- Child completes a task they dislike, and they get to choose a special activity (e.g., sensory break, favorite toy, etc.)
  - I know it's hard to let someone else use your favorite truck, but it made Jon really happy to play with it. For being such a good friend, I think you should choose a special activity from your choice board.

- Token Economy
  - Child earns tokens by completing certain tasks and is able to choose something they really enjoy doing when they have 10 tokens
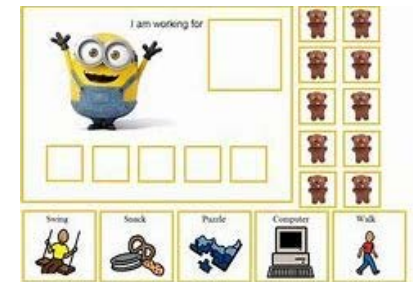


Important – When the child learns the skill and can do it independently and consistently, you need to fade and/or remove the prompt/reward.

# The Wrap Up

## 1
### Supporting Your Program

- Philosophy>Policies>Practices
- Professional Development
  - Evidence based practices
  - Developmentally appropriate

## 2
### Supporting Teachers

- Our experiences, upbringing, culture, etc. impact how we see things
- Reactive vs. Proactive
- See a child's strengths

## 3
### Supporting Children

- Positive strategies teach and support
- Negative strategies hurt and harm
- Search for the meaning behind the behavior – The Why

# Resource Page

**Directors Supporting Teachers**

- https://www.childcareexchange.com/library/5013698.pdf

- https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/pubs/chapter-1-from-survive-to-thrive.pdf

**Visual Supports**

- http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/modules/module3b/handout2.pdf (challenging behavior)

- https://www.ctdinstitute.org/sites/default/files/file_attachments/TnT-News-VisualSupports-Oct12.pdf  (toddlers)

- https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/presentations-and-webinars/Take_a_look_visual_supports_for_learning.pdf

**Site for creating visuals**

- https://connectability.ca/visuals-engine/

**Replacement Behaviors**

- http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwb11.pdf

# Resource Page

**Social Stories**

- https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/article/social-stories

- http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/scriptedstories/tips.html

- https://vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/tipsheets/socialstoriestips.pdf


**Emotional Intelligence and self-regulation**

- https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2017/teaching-emotional-intelligence

- https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/effective-practice-guides/emotional-behavioral-self-regulation-know

- https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health/article/fostering-emotional-literacy-young-children-labeling-emotions


**Task Analysis – Breaking a Task into Smaller, More Manageable Steps**

- https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/fdscontent/uscompanion/us/static/companion.websites/9780199358779/pdf/Website_Task_Analysis.pdf

- https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/sites/autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/files/TaskAnalyis_Steps_0.pdf

# Resource Page

**Challenging Behaviors**

- https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/SocialEmotionalSkills_solution-kit_cue-cards.pdf

- https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/using-pyramid-model-prevent-respond-challenging-behavior

- https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/behavior-has-meaning

- https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/infant-toddler-behaviors-can-challenge-adults

- https://cdn.vanderbilt.edu/vu-web/lab-wpcontent/sites/96/2020/02/07211731/Hot-Buttons.pdf

- https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/summer2021/discipline-guidance

**Sensory**

- http://blog.brookespublishing.com/10-modifications-for-learners-with-sensory-issues/

- https://www.inclusivechildcare.org/sites/default/files/courses/swf/Sensory%20Intervention%20Strategies%20and%20Environmental%20Adaptations.pdf

**Evidence Based Practices (Modules for supporting children with Autism)**

- https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices