The Teaching Pyramid: Evidence-based Practices for Supporting Children’s Social Development and Addressing Challenging Behavior

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Promoting Children’s Social and Emotional Development and Addressing Challenging Behavior

1-10% Children with Persistent Challenges
Focused Interventions

5-15% Children at-Risk Intervention and Support

All Children Universal Interventions

Center for Evidence Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior
www.challengingbehavior.org
Promoting Social and Emotional Competence within Early Education and Care Environments

- Intensive Individualized Interventions
- Positive Behavior Support
- Social Skills Curricula
- High quality early education

Building Positive Relationships with Children and Families

- All Children
- Children At-Risk
- Children with persistent challenges

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Universal Level

- High quality early childhood environments are related to positive outcomes in children’s social emotional development and reductions in challenging behavior

- Supportive, responsive relationships are a key component to promoting children’s social emotional development

- Providing training and support to parents can impact both social development and problem behavior

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Center Research Activities

KIDS Study – Longitudinal study of children’s development examining the developmental course of challenging behavior and the ecological, familial, and intervention influences that may affect challenging behavior

Development of a brief assessment of Parent Infant interaction that will assist home visitors in assessing the status and measure intervention outcomes (University of Kansas, Judith Carta)
Secondary Level

A systematic approach to teaching social skills and promoting children’s emotional development can have both preventive and remedial effects.

There are data to support the use of specific social skills curricula.

Effective approaches to teaching social skills involve multiple teaching strategies including direct teaching of the skill, opportunities for practice and feedback, and support for the skill in context.

Social skills programs that include a parent training and education component are most effective.

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Center Research Activities

- Application of social skills instruction (Dinosaur School) to children with autism (University of Colorado – Denver, Phil Strain)

- Assessment of the feeling word vocabularies of young children and its relationship to problem behavior (University of Colorado – Denver, Phil Strain)
Tertiary Level

Assessment based interventions developed through a process of Positive Behavior Supports have been shown to be effective

- Across a variety of populations
- Only evidence-based comprehensive approach for intervening with children with challenging behavior

Key Elements of Approach

- Team based
- Family involvement
- Based on knowledge of the function of the child’s behavior
- Strength based
- Development and implementation of a behavior support plan across environments

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Center Research Activities

- Comparison study of preschoolers with ADHD examining comprehensive assessment-based intervention to standard treatment (Lehigh University, Lee Kern)

- Effects of a parent training group for families who have multiple risk factors (University of Kansas, Pyramid Parent Training, Wayne Sailor & Ursula Markey)

- Applications to children in the Part C (birth to three) system (University of South Florida, Lise Fox & Glen Dunlap)
PBS Application in a Community Preschool
About Bradford

- 2 years, 7 months
- Part C services of speech/language therapy
- Diagnoses of Expressive/Receptive Language Delay, Behavioral Disorder
- Lives with parents, one brother (age 3 1/2 years)
- Strengths - social, likes music, good fine motor skills, strong family support system
- Problem Behaviors - Aggression, Noncompliance, Property Destruction, Self-Injurious Behavior, Elopement
- Significant risk of Preschool Expulsion
Behavior in Target Routine
(Unstructured Activities)
Unstructured Activities
Structured Activities
Outside Activities
Process of Positive Behavior Support

Step 1: Identify Goals

Step 2: Gather Information/ Functional Assessment

Step 3: Develop Hypotheses

Step 4: Design Behavior Support Plan

Step 5: Implement intervention
Hypotheses

Bradford engaged in challenging behavior:

1. in an attempt to escape from activities that were unpredictable or had unclear expectations

2. In an attempt to escape from activities that were nonpreferred (difficult, boring)

3. In an attempt to escape from activities associated with high levels of noise or people

4. In an attempt to gain peer or teacher attention
Prevention Strategies

- Visual cues/photo schedule/stop signs
- Social stories for routines
- First/Then boards
- Choice chart
- Preferred items
- Manipulatives
- Modified materials
- Remove distractions
- Add quiet area in room
- Add breaks
- Peer buddy
Replacement Skills

- Teach how to verbally initiate/terminate interactions
- Teach how to initiate appropriate physical affection
- Teach how to appropriately ask for “break” or “help”
- Teach how to respond to loud or overstimulating situations
- Teach how to make and express choice
Teacher Responses

- Clear instructions
- Redirect and ignore
- Specific praise
- Provide choice
- Provide consistent verbal “All done”, countdowns
- Promote active participation with modeling
- Encourage verbal communication
- Monitor and anticipate difficult play activities
  provide option to leave area
Unstructured Activity Intervention
Structured Activities Intervention
Outdoor Activities Intervention
Replacement Skills

**Verbal Examples:**
- “I want to share”
- “Go away”
- “I need help”
- “I want a break”
- “All done”
- “I want a hug/ kiss”

**Nonverbal Examples:**
- Gesture with toy to share
- Gesture for hug/ kiss
- Gesture with STOP sign to end or break
- Point to picture to leave area
Replacement Skills

Mean Frequency of Replacement Skills During Unstructured Activities

Freeplay

Mean Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
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Circle

Mean Frequency

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<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>Intervention</td>
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Organized Play

Mean Frequency

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>Intervention</td>
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Centers

Mean Frequency

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<th>Mean Frequency</th>
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Art

Mean Frequency

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean Frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>Intervention</td>
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Playground

Mean Frequency

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>4</td>
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Challenging Behavior

Mean Frequency of Aggression During Unstructured Activities

Freeplay

Mean Frequency

Baseline: 24
Intervention: 3

Mean Frequency of Aggression During Structured Activities

Circle

Mean Frequency

Baseline: 8
Intervention: 1

Organized Play

Mean Frequency

Baseline: 7
Intervention: 0.5

Mean Frequency of Aggression During Outside Activities

Centers

Mean Frequency

Baseline: 19
Intervention: 2

Art

Mean Frequency

Baseline: 2
Intervention: 0

Playground

Mean Frequency

Baseline: 5
Intervention: 2
Social Initiations

Mean Frequency of Social Initiations During Unstructured Activities

Freeplay

Mean Frequency of Social Initiations During Structured Activities

Circle

Mean Frequency of Social Initiations During Outdoor Activities

Organized Play

Centers

Art

Playground