Discipline in Early Childhood

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Behavior is a Common Concern
- 25-50% of presenting problems in pediatric practice are behavioral
- 90% of mothers of 2, 3 and 4 year olds have “some” concern
- 20% of mothers of 4 year olds have “significant” concern
- parents and child appreciate assistance
- management usually effective, rapid
- May prevent more serious problems

Child Behavior
- Has meaning in the family
- Is maintained by family dynamics
- Management chosen should depend on the context
- Behavioral Family Interventions are most effective

Definition of Discipline
- Discipline refers to systems of teaching, learning, and nurturing for child rearing.
- These systems include procedures which:
  - encourage appropriate behavior
  - deter misbehavior
- Their ultimate goals are for the child to achieve:
  - competence
  - self control
  - self direction
  - caring

Child Factors and Discipline
More problems with
- Difficult temperament
- Developmental disabilities
- Mental health problems
Fewer problems with
- Higher IQ
- Better language skills
Parent Factors and Discipline
- Lack of social support
- Marital discord
- Multiple life stressors esp poverty
- Low educational level or low IQ
- Mental health problems esp:
  - depression
  - antisocial personality disorder
  - substance abuse
- Teenage parenting status
- Family history of antisocial, teen pa, abuse
- Own history of poor discipline

Interdependent Components of Effective Discipline
- Reinforce + beh. consequences - beh.
- positive pa-child rel

Promoting the Parent-child Relationship
- Positive emotional tone-play, warmth, affection
- Satisfaction with parenting role, marriage
- High parental involvement eg monitoring
- Consistency/Rhythmicity
- Flexibility
- Positive models
- Attention

Attending to the Child
- Infancy
  - reading cues
  - responding contingently
  - filling needs promptly and gently
- Preschool
  - brief attention immediately
  - attention to non-bids
- School age
  - making oneself available regularly
  - learning about child’s interests
  - attending child’s events

Brief Attention Immediately
- Watch for child’s first bid for attention
- Make eye contact, touch the child, smile
- Comment on the child’s activities for 1-2 seconds

Special Time
- Should be:
  - Given daily
  - Labeled
  - Child’s choice of activity, adult choice of time
  - Interactive activity
  - Consistent, short length eg 10-15 min
  - Without interruptions
  - Ended on time
Echoing

- "I hear you saying_________(specifically)"
- "You seem to feel_________"
- Match body posture, tone, speed
- Don’t add anything of your own!

Lightening Up/Jollying/Distracting

- People benefit from assistance modifying mood/response
- Children need to learn the use of humor
- Allows saving face
- Avoids unnecessary confrontations
- Can convey liking
- Provides practice in state regulation
- Teaches an alternative strategy for upset

Positive Reinforcement for Desired Behaviors

- A consequence that increases the behavior; may not look pleasant!
- 7 factors make positive reinforcement effective:
  1) Contingent
  2) Deprivation of this prior
  3) Immediate
  4) Amount: need larger at first but avoid satiety
  5) Schedule of reinforcement
  6) Quality ie highly valued by child
  7) Novel

Schedules of Reinforcement

- Ratio: recurs after a fixed number. Need when there are distinct start/end
- Interval: recurs after fixed time. Need when beh. is continuous or long
- Continuous: Need to start a new beh.
- Intermittent: Use after beh. established

Positive Reinforcement for Desired Behaviors-2

- Consistent usage, mod. strength, calm delivery
- Clear, simple, specific and reason
- Avoiding embedded criticism in the praise, attending to negative behavior
- Types: nonverbal, verbal, tangible

Positive Reinforcement for Desired Behaviors-3

- Differential reinforcement is best: teaches the desired beh., reinforces incompatible beh. But there need to be: consistency; lack of + reinf. for undesired beh.; multiple users across settings
- "Shaping" with + reinf for successive approximations may be needed for starting a new beh. Modeling is often needed initially; esp. useful for young or language impaired.
“Catch them being good”

Attention, praise, comments, touches, or rewards given selectively during desirable behavior increase its occurrence.

“Label the act but not the child”

- Keep it short, simple, specific
- Say it or write it
- Have praise > correction
- Use praise for not doing undesirable
- Comment frequently, eg every 5 min
- Use second sentence to elaborate
- Avoid generalizations
- Avoid comparisons

Use Small Rewards

Takes less to maintain effect
More likely to be given consistently
Move towards self assessment/praise
Fading of rewards increase the spontaneity, generalization of the beh. Can fade by:
- delaying prompts,
- decreasing freq. of prompts, or
- decreasing reinforcement
- decreasing freq. or amount; or
- increasing interval

Marks

- Make a mark on child’s hand for appropriate behaviors
- Use marks for brief period up to all day
- Aim for 6-10 marks per hour
- Reward number of marks
- Use time out for aggression or serious problems
- Give bonus numbers for outstanding behavior
- Phase out when behavior has improved and parent is practiced at other acknowledgement

Token Economy

eg points, stars, chips

- Outline with parent and child together
- Set points for rewards and costs for behaviors
- Charge for things taken for granted eg TV, computer time
- Bonus points for initiating chores, bravery, etc.
- Track total that can be used for rewards or use minimum in bank to have a level of privilege

Consequences
Setting Limits

- Makes children feel secure, protected, noticed
- Adults may not limit because they:
  - are too busy to decide on limits
  - feel it is a hardship on their special child
  - are reacting to limits put on them
  - are reacting to other parent’s limits
  - can’t tolerate anger evoked by setting limits
- Limit setting also needs to be: reasonable, flexible (especially proactively), done with a sense of humor!

Principles of Limit Setting

1. One request then move.
2. Have all caregivers be consistent, if possible. Avoid open conflict over differences of opinion.
3. Be flexible to meet the needs of a "special occasion", before child demands it.

Basic compliance training

1) Increase attention to positive (e.g., Marks)
2) Teach how to give effective commands
3) Reward compliance
   - Marks/tokens for compliance-> reward
   - "Compliance hour" to practice
4) Consequences for noncompliance
   - Time out for noncompliance
5) Practice in public

Give Effective Commands

- Reduce distractions e.g., TV
- Get attention & maintain focus on child
- “I want you to pick up the book now”
- “Act don’t yak”
- One request then move
- 1,2,3 Magic
- Whoever starts finishes dealing with it

Act Don’t Yak

Talking is reinforcing
Immediate consequences teach better; continued lecture delays consequence
Lectures may convey hostility
Delay may result in anger and accelerating consequences

Enforcing Commands

Orient->“Do” request-> reward
If fails-> request plus gesture-> social reward only
If fails-> graduated guidance (partial or full contact on body, no talking)->praise
Then-> “shadow” - hand 1 inch away
Then-> fade away support of gestures, prompts
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"One request then move"
- Watch for a natural pause in child's activity
- Get attention
- Give instruction in short, simple language
- If no response in 10 seconds:
  - for young child - grasp child while you +/- child completes task
  - for older child - "tower", repeat request in same way.
    May use hierarchy of consequences for refusal.
- Praise any cooperation
- Alternatively- 1,2,3 Magic (goes to Time Out)

1,2,3 Magic (Phelan)
- That's 1... (15 sec), that's 2... (15 sec), that's 3 you're are in time out
- If reaches 3-> time out or other consequence
- Puts child on notice without force
- Gives chance to save face
- Avoids angry/put down talk
- After time out return to request
- Better for school aged than younger child

Consequences for Undesirable Behaviors
- Planned Ignoring (extinction)
  Consistent withholding of + reinforcer for nondangerous, nondestructive beh. that was previously reinforced, eg whining
  Sparks testing (post extinction burst); takes time to work then rapid decline but if reinforce during extinction beh becomes more resistant to change than before!
- Negative reinforcement
  Aversive stimulus is avoided. May increase a beh eg parent gives in to stop the whining
- Punishment

Punishment
- "Penalty imposed or positive withdrawn contingent on a beh resulting in decrease in the beh." What is punishing varies by individual.
  - Verbal disapproval (with consequences) - but gives attention
  - Nonverbal disapproval eg glaring
  - Time out (contingent withdrawal)
  - Points, marks, tokens, job consequences
  - Contingent aversive stimulation eg spanking
- If used, should be in combination with pos. reinforcer for differential consequences. Should fade punishment when beh. improves.

Problems with Any Punishment
- Not instructive
- May produce counter coercive behavior, conflictual relationship: may get back at parent
- May cause damage eg abuse

Problems of Physical Punishment
- Impulsive, poorly modulated, inconsistent
- May lead to abuse, injury
- Disrespectful to child, lowers self esteem
- Increases aggression, sibling rivalry
- Decreases resilience to stress
- Not educational
- Replaces other forms of management
- Not useful at older ages, long term
- Produces fear and anger, inhibits other behavior
- Associated with later depression, alcoholism
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When he gets bigger I’ll stop-

- Painful methods make less painful ones less effective
- Parents who did not believe in hitting 12 year olds hit their own 16 year olds
- Rates of hitting stay high
  - 25% 1-6 months
  - 50% 6-12 months
  - 90% 3 years
  - 60% 10-12
  - 40% 14
  - 25% 17

Natural consequences

- Occur naturally, often immediately
- Tend to be most effective
- Caregivers need to protect from
  - Damage
  - Social disgrace
  - Child’s impulses

Logical consequences

Should be:
- Meaningfully related
- Dosed appropriately—shorter is better
- Given with emotional congruence
- Prompt—can ponder major
- Private, respectful
- Expecting recovery
- Decided along with older children

Use the Least that Works

Can be used whenever needed
More likely to follow through
Less likely to provoke other parent to intervene
More opportunities to work back into favor
Internalize responsibility more
Move towards self assessment
Avoids child feeling parent is mean

Time Out

“Contingent withdrawal”
Exclusionary time out

Definition: Time away from reinforcement and attention usually accompanied by disapproval, loss of freedom, and loss of interesting things to do for a defined time period.

Principles for young children:
- Only for 2-3 behaviors at one time
  (dangerous/destructive, low rate, maintained by attention)
- Practice before first use
- Only one warning, none for aggression
- Brief statement of offense then no talking
- Promptly place in uninteresting place
- Brief, 1 min/year of age. Release after 15 sec quiet. Use timer
- If leaves: restrain, playpen, barrier, spank
- No discussion or lectures
Time Out-2

- Return to scene and praise first positive or neutral behavior after Time Out
- After understanding, restart timer if noisy, acts up, or leaves
- If calm, may discuss behavior, alternatives
- Effective from MA 9 months - 12 yrs, best 2-6

Pitfalls of Time Out

- Used excessively
- Used without instruction
- People continue to interact
- Child appears to enjoy it
- Child too strong to restrain
- Location frightens/reinforces
- Lectures/lack of clean slate
- No alternative positive reinforcement ie “time in”

Nonexclusionary Time Out

- Response cost or behavioral penalty: withdraw positive reinf. or give penalty for neg. beh. eg friend sent home
- Stars, points, tokens lost
- Contingent observation: “sit out and watch others who have positive behavior”
- “Time in” symbols: signal that there is an opportunity for reinforcement is taken away eg lose your badge, token bag

Chore Cards

- If a consequence is needed, hand child a 3 x 5 card with chore that should take about 10 minutes written on it
- Child is not allowed to play, eat, make calls, use electronics until chore is done to adult satisfaction
- Praise success

Self Assessment

- Transfer responsibility to the child
- Point out impact of actions- + and -
- Acknowledge process, progress
- Ask child how s/he thought it they did
- Use smaller to no adult reaction

Collaborative Problem Solving

“Baskets” - (Ross Greene, PhD)

- A = Emergency -> Just Do it
- B = Learning -> Negotiate and expect improvement over time
- C = Optional -> Just Drop it
Triple P-Positive Parenting Program

**Level 1** - universal parent information - community level
- **Level 2** - in primary care, 15 min. visit
  - targets mild problems
  - brief 1 or 2-session
  - anticipatory developmental guidance
  - parenting tip sheets and videotapes
- **Level 3** - primary care, 4 sessions, 15 min/session
  - targets children with mild to mod
  - active skills practice for parents.
- **Level 4**: Mental health referral

**Pre-visit QUESTIONNAIRES**

- INFANT & YOUNG CHILD
  - Ages & Stages Questionnaire®
  - Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT™ & Follow-up™)
  - Infant Development Inventory (IDI)
  - CHADIS 0-3
- SCHOOL AGE
  - Pediatric Symptom Checklist (17+ items)
  - Vanderbilt Follow-up, Parent Informant
  - CHADIS – DSM
  - CHADIS Cardiac History
- ADOLESCENT
  - Ages & Stages Questionnaire - Youth
  - Pediatric Symptom Checklist for Adolescents
  - Vanderbilt Follow-up, Parent Informant
  - CHADIS – DSM
  - CHADIS Cardiac History
  - Adolescent Depression Scale
- TEACHER DATA
  - Vanderbilt Follow-up Revised
  - Teacher Informant
  - School Services & Interventions
  - Medications & side effects

**CHADIS decision support:**
- Parent takes *previsit* online questionnaires (behavior, development, health, family factors)
- Clinician reviews questionnaire results, can consult linked textbook
- Clinician may exchange findings with school or mental health provider online
- Clinician finds relevant resources, handouts from links & prints for family

**Bill 96110**

**eChapters**

**Negative/Antisocial Behaviors**

**Definitions**
- Antisocial Personality Disorder and Older Adult: A Manual for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Antisocial Personality Disorder
- Antisocial Personality Disorder and Older Adult: A Manual for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Antisocial Personality Disorder
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**Variations**
- Antisocial Personality Disorder and Older Adult: A Manual for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Antisocial Personality Disorder
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**B. Parent Issues**
- Unwilling to do the work
- Don’t want to deprive special child
- Can’t tolerate the emotion
- Interfere with each other
- Covertly expect/enjoy
- Problem has meaning to family
Meaning of problem to parent

- Ask parents who the child "takes after" to elicit a description of temperament and parental projections.
- Assess temperament; consider using questionnaire.
- Ask "How is it for you?" to determine despair, mood disorders, family discord.
- What do you think things will be like in 10 years?

Relationship discord- effect on child

- Raises tension
- Child may act up to distract from angry interactions
- Interferes with routines and discipline
- Prejudice felt against child’s “other half”
- Child may feel guilty
- Models strife for future relationships
- May involve violence

Addressing Relationship Discord

- Bring it up as relevant to child & adult well being
- Ask “How bad does it get?”
- Ask “What have you decided about the relationship?”
- Suggest avoiding overt unresolved conflict in front of the children. May provide an explanation to child together.
- Agree not to speak negatively of other parent to child.
- Whoever starts finishes
- Debrief in private
- Trade one thing to change
- Have regular time limited meetings using "I" messages
- Express appreciation for little bits of progress

Overly harsh discipline

- Excessively harsh punishment
- Constantly "being yelled at" for even minor behavior (Nattering)
- No attention/reinforcement for good behavior
- Corporal punishment
- Pay back to their apparently “mean” parent.
- Low self esteem from harsh punishment can also elicit aggression.

Recommendations, Overly harsh discipline

- Interpret pleasure in breaking rules as “learning” not criminality but that explanation and consequences are still needed.
- Teach to explain rules calmly, require a consequence, and increase monitoring.
- Educate in smaller consequences along with reasons.

Recommendations, Overly harsh discipline

- Respond to aggression promptly, calmly and not excessively eg time out, remove an object
- Assure adequate positive attention.
- Remember that misbehaviors are usually repeated.
- “Baskets” ie emergencies; negotiable/teachable; ignorable. Have child and parents keep diary of examples.
- Use noncorporal punishment
### Overly lax discipline-factors
- Too busy/guilty for absence
- Vulnerable child syndrome
- History of abuse/harsh parenting
- Mood disorder in parent
- Substance use by parent(s)
- Marital discord

### Family Meetings
- Make it formal
- Make it regular
- Make sure each person is heard without judgment or interruption
- Discuss family activities as well as problems
- Express appreciation for each other
- Use problem solving strategy if necessary
- Write down conclusions
- Have it be fun!

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