



Understanding Child Behavior

Pyramid Resources for Infant-Toddler
Social-Emotional Development
Juniper Gardens Children's Project
University of Kansas

Adapted from:
The Center on the Social and Emotional
Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)
Vanderbilt University



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PRISM Training Module Series

Introduction & Understanding
Social-Emotional Development

Focusing on Relationships

Responsive Routines,
Schedules, & Environments

Understanding Child Behavior

Teaching About Feelings

Supporting Active Engagement

Promoting Positive Peer Interactions

Challenging Behavior

PRISM Training Modules*: Understanding Child Behavior

Working with infants and toddlers is rewarding, but it can also sometimes be challenging. In Understanding Child Behavior, participants will learn how to use observation to better understand child behavior. We will look at the many influences affecting behavior and use this knowledge to examine our own beliefs. We will practice reframing our thoughts to better respond to challenging situations.

Learner Objectives

Understand and describe that all young children's behavior is a way of communicating and has meaning

Use a variety of strategies, including observation and self-reflection, to increase capacity to support social-emotional development of infants, toddlers, and their families

Agenda

- I. Setting the Stage: Review - 10 minutes
- II. Observation - 15 minutes
- III. Learning from Families - 15 minutes
- IV. Cues of Young Children - 15 minutes
- V. Behavior & Challenges - 15 minutes
- VI. Examining our Reactions - 30 minutes
- VII. Responding to Challenges - 30 minutes
- VIII. Wrap-up & Reflection - 5 minutes

*For references and more information about the PRISM Training Modules, please visit prism.ku.edu/trainings

My Notes:



Training Preparation

- ☐ Print PRISM Behavior - All Handouts, 1 copy per participant, two-sided, or print each handout listed below individually
- ☐ Review videos
- ☐ Prepare and print certificates of completion
- ☐ Activity: Examining our Reactions - Review questions so you have examples of your own to share
- ☐ Activity: Noticing and Challenging our Thoughts - Prepare to share some of your thoughts that can be challenged, past or present

Handouts

- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 1 PowerPoint
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 2 Agenda
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 3 Understand & Respond to Behavior
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 4 Temperament Continuum
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 5 Temperament Article
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 6 Communicating with Parents
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 7 Examining our Emotional Reactions to Behavior
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 8 Reframing Behavior
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 9 Practice Implementation Checklist
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - 10 Training Feedback

Videos

- ☐ PRISM Behavior - Challenging Situation
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - Noticing & Challenging Thoughts P1
- ☐ PRISM Behavior - Noticing & Challenging Thoughts P2

Materials Needed:

Technology

- ☐ PowerPoint File
- ☐ Video Files
- ☐ Computer
- ☐ Projector

Printables

- ☐ Handouts
- ☐ Certificates of Completion
- ☐ Sign-in Sheet

Supplies

- ☐ Name tags
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Snacks and drinks
- ☐ Chart paper/white board and markers
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Table fidgets/manipulatives

Other Items

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



Slide 1: Understanding Behavior

Welcome to the next session in the PRISM Training Series, where we are going to learn about how we can better understand and respond to behavior. These trainings are meant to be used hand-in-hand with the practice-based coaching model. We'll give you an overview at these trainings, but you'll get into more specifics with your coach.

I am *(name)* and *(give some personal background history relevant to training)*. Here with me are *(introduce rest of team)*.

Let's get some logistics out of the way before we begin

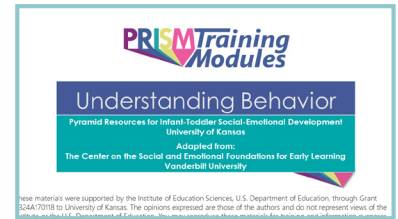
Breaks:

Lunch/Snack:

Parking:

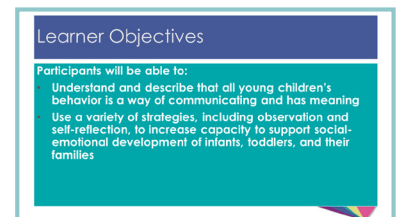
Restrooms:

Last, you should have a set of materials that includes handouts, slide notes, and other useful information. We'll reference some of these throughout the training, so keep them handy. If you don't have the materials you need, please let us know.



Slide 2: Learner Objectives

Today we're going to talk about an area you deal with everyday – child behavior. When we say "behavior" we mean anything you can observe as children act and respond within their environment. We'll start with an overview of what helps you to make sense of what you are seeing and hearing and appropriately understand and respond to behaviors. We'll talk about behavior as communication, factors that influence behavior, and we'll do some thinking about factors that influence our own perceptions of behavior. Finally, we'll talk about tools to observe and respond to behavior.



Slide 3: Training Agenda

You can find our training agenda for today on **Handout 2**.

While the learning objectives represent what we hope you receive from the training, the agenda represents how we are going to get there.

At the end of the training, we will ask you to complete a questionnaire about the training. We look forward to receiving this input, as it will improve the training for others.



Slide 4: Our Learning Environment

We'll be spending a lot of time together throughout this training and future trainings. It's helpful to decide together what sorts of agreements are important to the group. Think about what makes a positive learning environment for you. What are those things?

Pause for responses.



Slide 5: Possible Shared Agreements

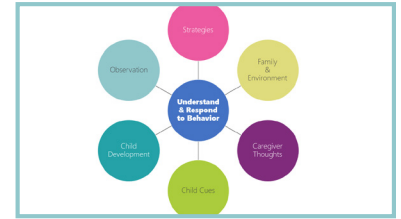
With that in mind, what are some agreements we can make about how our learning environment should look? You can use the agreements on the slide as a jumping point.

Pause for responses, then summarize agreements.





Slide 6: Topics We Will Discuss


It might help you to have **Handout 3** readily available throughout today's training. It shows the different topics we will talk about that feed into understanding and responding to behavior.





There are many different factors that come into play when we are thinking about child behavior. We will discuss many of these, so let's step back and talk about how broad these factors can be. As we think about behavior, it is always important that we consider:


 Child development, what is typical in infants and toddlers, and how changes in development can affect behaviors. We covered that in the first part of this training, and we'll keep coming back to child development and age-appropriate expectations throughout our trainings.

 We also need to know how to observe and gather information about behaviors.

 This involves gathering information from a child's family and home experiences.

 We also need to be aware of and understand how to interpret a child's gestural and facial cues and understand how the child communicates.

 Understanding and responding to behavior requires us to be aware of our own thoughts and expectations, and even unconscious or implicit biases about behavior, so we'll spend some time talking about how we perceive behavior. We will also be reflecting on behaviors for which we might have stronger reactions.

 All of this will give us the background we need to successfully use effective strategies to respond to behaviors, and we'll wrap things up by talking about some specific strategies that can be used in the classroom to prevent and address challenging behaviors.



Slide 7: Understanding Behavior - Observation

Let's start with a critical component that is needed in order to make sense of behavior – careful observation.

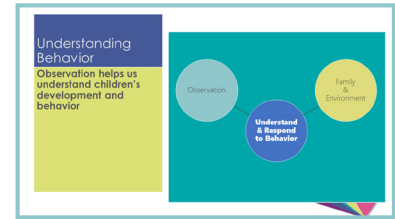
How is it we know when things make sense and feel comfortable to a child? How do we understand individual children's needs and behavior? How do we know when a child is struggling? How do we make sense of the behavior we see and hear, and figure out how to respond?

Careful observation can help caregivers understand each child's level of social-emotional development, as well as help measure and describe progress, engage with families, and individualize curriculum to best fit each child's needs.

Observation of young children's social-emotional development takes time and even though caregivers observe and care for the same children daily, details can be missed.

- For example, one caregiver described an infant in her care as "fussy all the time." However, when she was able to step back and spend time observing this infant at different times throughout the day, she realized that he was not really fussy "all the time." He actually seemed quite content after his bottles. This observation led the parent and caregiver to try feeding the baby more frequently. This baby needed more frequent feedings than most. A closer observation of the infant's behavior led to more responsive care for this baby.

Observation is a natural part of what caregivers can do each and every day as they care for and interact with young children.





Slide 8: Observation

Early Head Start has some great tips for observation that will help you form relationships and promote social-emotional development with those in your classroom.

- Record what you see and hear by writing down young children's actions and their reactions to the environment. For example, note if a young child pulls or clings to your leg when you greet another family or if a child sits with her back to the group, examining a toy bus.
- Be objective and record only the facts (what is actually happening without opinions).
- Use all of your senses.
- Note your own responses and how you are feeling.
- Observe on different days, different times of day, and in different settings - complete as many observations as possible over time.

Watching a child once gives you a snapshot. To get a complete picture, you need to watch again and again as each time you watch, you may learn something new. Try to observe all children across different activities and areas of your setting. Children behave differently in different places and with different caregivers.

It is also important to check in with yourself about how you are perceiving behavior. What expectations or biases might you have about individual children or their behaviors? Ask yourself if your perceptions might be influenced by certain child characteristics, such as race, disability, or gender.

Understanding Behavior: Observation

Record what you see and hear

Be objective – just the facts

Use all of your senses (see, hear, touch, feel, smell)

Note your own responses and how you are feeling

Observe different days, different times of day, different places and activities

Look
Outside
the Box

Slide 9: Observation

Let's practice observing now. In this case, we only have one sense to rely on – our sight.

What are some observations you can make, just looking at this picture? Remember, be objective and share only facts.

Drawing conclusions is a natural thing to do. We need to be aware of this when we observe, and try to start by being objective, and just noting the facts, without immediately interpreting what we see.

This awareness is important because our own personal experiences and unconscious biases can have an impact on how we see children. As we become more aware of how we think and feel, we are better able to understand and appreciate what we learn from our observations. It is important in our observations of young children to be very aware of not only how we see things, but how we interpret what we see.



Presenter Notes:

Two children are outside playing with shaving cream. It is sunny outside or the sun is shining.

One child has an arm up. The other child is looking at and touching the shaving cream.

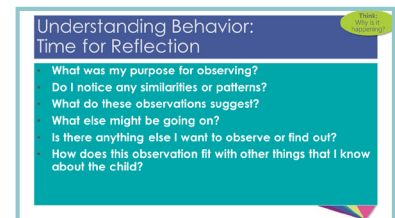
Slide 10: Time for Reflection

Once you take time to document your observations, it is helpful to pause and reflect on what you observed and make meaning of the information you have. Each of us has our own values, beliefs, and emotions that can impact our interpretation of what we see and hear.

Here are some sample reflection questions you can be thinking about...

- What was my purpose for observing?
- Do I notice any similarities or patterns?
- What do these observations suggest?
- What else might be going on?
- Is there anything else I want to observe or find out?
- How does this observation fit with other things that I know about the child?
- Am I interpreting my observations and using practices in an unbiased and equitable way across all children?

When reflecting on young children's behavior, it is important to include perspectives and observations from all the adults who care for a child. Each adult sees a vital aspect of the child's world.





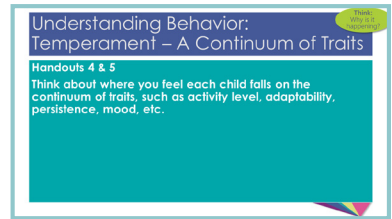
Slide 11: Temperament - A Continuum of Traits

When learning about children, we are watching for specific patterns of behavior. By carefully observing over time, you can anticipate how children might behave or react in certain situations, and be responsive.

These consistent behaviors or reactions can tell us something about where a child falls on a continuum of traits, such as high vs low activity level. But, we should always remember that even though we can find patterns in how children behave, these patterns can change, and they are complex – they may not always show up in the same way in every scenario, or remain consistent over time.

To leave you thinking more about observation and children's patterns of traits and patterns of responding, **Handout 4**, gives you some traits to think about with regard to individual children.

- Think about a couple of children from your classroom as you fill out this handout for each of them.
- Think about patterns you see over time, and how you might tailor your interactions to particular children.
- You can come back to this handout later in coaching sessions if there is more to talk about.
- And, if you're interested in more information about traits and temperament, you can check out **Handout 5**, which is an article about temperament, a resource for staff and parents.





Slide 12: Learning from Families

Observation can tell us a lot about a child's behavior, and the situations in which it happens, but in many cases, it can be helpful to also have input from families on their perspectives and observations. Families have knowledge about their children from their day-to-day interactions, and can observe their children in different situations and settings.

Caregivers can actively seek collaboration with families by asking and encouraging questions about their children's play, and the way in which children interact and behave at home or out in the community.

Asking families to share their perspectives and observations can help caregivers enhance their understanding of a child and family, as well as determine additional ways to provide responsive care. You may find that families are experiencing challenges. Opening the door to having conversations with families may provide opportunities to support social-emotional development in new ways.

Sometimes asking questions can feel a bit awkward or create instances where people feel judged and in some cases, families may respond defensively.

Beginning questions with "I wonder" is a great way to ask questions in an open-minded and accepting way (Parlakian, 2001). Posing such questions allows all the adults to think about the child's social-emotional development and offers them an opportunity to include additional information in their answers.

- For example, "I wonder if she might be ready for potty training" or "I wonder if she's getting ready to grow out of the pacifier?"

You can find more tips for communicating with family on **Handout 6** in your packet.



Slide 13: Cues of Young Children

We just finished discussing how observation is one of the most powerful strategies for learning about infants and toddlers. When we observe infants and toddlers we see they often use a variety of ways to communicate with those around them. This might include gestures, sounds, movements, and facial expressions. That's why we are now going to spend some time focusing on behavioral cues of young children, and how these cues function to communicate with caregivers.



Slide 14: Cues of Young Children Engagement & Disengagement

Young children let us know of their needs and wants through cues, or behavior. Since families know their children best, it is usually helpful to communicate with parents and other caregivers about their children's cues and behaviors and what they notice at home. This gives teachers a nice head start in getting to know the cues of infants and toddlers.

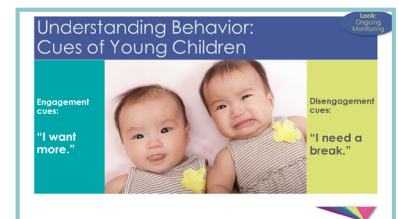
Cues can tell us a child is ready to interact – such as when an infant looks at you with an alert facial expression. We'll refer to these as "engagement cues."

Cues can also tell us when a child needs a break from interaction, such as when an infant turns her head or looks away. We'll call those "disengagement cues."

Can you share some examples of cues from both infants and toddlers that tell us when they are engaged or disengaged?

How do you tell an infant is done playing with a toy? What about a toddler?

How do you know when an infant is tired? What about toddlers?



Presenter Notes:

Be sure to prompt participants to think about infants and toddlers, as well as the cues that might be observed when children have communication delays or disabilities, or are dual language learners.

Ex: walking; look away; fuss; rub eyes; not interested

Slide 15: Cues of Young Children Engagement and Disengagement Cues

All of the examples you've given, plus those you see on the slide, are cues of engagement or disengagement. By knowing these cues, you can help children feel understood and secure, and you can teach them how to self-regulate before they become distressed.

Understanding Behavior: Cues of Young Children	
Engagement Cues	Disengagement Cues
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Eyes widenTurn eyes, body, or head toward speakerAlert faceSteady breathingHand-to-mouth activityHand clasped togetherGrasping finger or objectSmooth movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Crying or fussingGagging, spittingFrowningHiccupping, yawning, sneezingJittery or jerky movementsFalling asleepBack archingTurning awayStiff or limp posture

Slide 16: How would you respond?

Let's put this into practice with some photos. Now, since these are only photographs, we'll have to rely on visual cues, but in the classroom, you'll also have the benefit of hearing auditory cues and seeing gestural cues. For each picture, we'll identify some cues we are seeing, as well as how you might respond to the cues. Observe the cues they are giving, think about what you know about cues of young children, and based on that, share how you would respond to the child in the photograph. We each have different approaches to caregiving, so let's hear from everyone so we can all get more ideas for how to be responsive caregivers.



Picture 1: One child is holding onto another child's hand. One child's hand appears to be in another child's mouth. The children's faces appear neutral. A caregiver might show the children a different way to interact with each other.

Picture 2: Two children are in a cube. The child whose face can be seen is looking toward the other child and smiling. A caregiver might comment on how the children are enjoying playing together. A caregiver could say, "Playing with Bo makes James feels happy."

Picture 3: The child on the left is holding the middle child's hand and smiling. The child in the middle is looking with a serious face toward the child on the right, who has his hand on her shoulder. The child on the right is looking into the distance. Since the child in the middle is looking serious and the child on the right has his attention elsewhere, a caregiver might make the child on the right aware that he is touching the girl's shoulder.

Slide 17: Development & Challenges

Together, we have discussed social-emotional development and why it is important.

We also highlighted the importance of observation, and how this can help us understand children's development and behavior.

Each of these concepts will help us understand a young child's strengths and possible areas of need. Now, we're going to take a closer look at what we mean when we talk about "challenging behavior" and how a child's developmental skills influences behaviors.

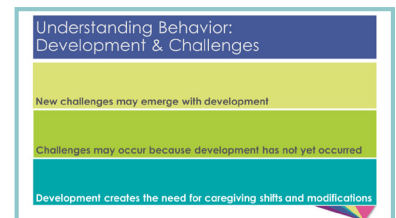


Slide 18: Development & Challenges

Often very young children have not yet developed a wide variety of skills to communicate their needs and wants, and some of the behaviors young children use to communicate might be described by some as "challenging behaviors." For instance, we sometimes see crying, fussing, tantrums, or even biting in infant-toddler care, and we can usually agree that the purpose of these behaviors are to communicate a need or a want. We can also probably agree that these behaviors might be considered typical at this age.

When we use the words "challenging behavior," we are referring to the range of challenges that caregivers may experience in caring for infants and toddlers. Sometimes these behaviors might be more accurately described as "challenging situations" than "challenging behavior" -- they are behaviors that might be considered typical for infants and toddlers, but are challenging nonetheless.

We will keep talking about how we can appropriately and effectively respond to an infant or toddler's challenging behavior that may be intense, frequent, and lasting in duration in future sessions, but today we will focus on addressing the day-to-day challenges that occur in infant-toddler classrooms as children develop new social-emotional skills.



Slide 19: Development & Challenges

Keeping in mind what you've learned about reading cues and behaviors and the developmental continuum, let's break up into small groups and talk about the following scenarios. Identify what the infants or toddlers may be trying to communicate with their behavioral cues. After a few minutes, we'll come back together to discuss.

Give 10 minutes for groups to talk, then come back together.

Let's look at the first scenario.

"A 3-month-old screams and cries for long periods ..."
What ideas did your group have about what the baby might be communicating?

What about the 17-month-old that hits another child? What is this behavior communicating?

What were your group's thoughts about the 2-year-old who says 'no' frequently? What is this behavior communicating?

Did anyone have a group that talked about interpretations of a child's behavior that were very different from each other?



Presenter Notes:

Perhaps he has colic, maybe he needs soothing or to be held, maybe he doesn't know the caregiver or feel secure, perhaps he is uncomfortable or in pain, perhaps he is hungry, cold or wet, maybe it is a new environment and he is scared.

She may want a toy the other child has; she may be curious about what the child will do in response; she may want to play; perhaps the other child is in her space; she may not know what else to do to get her needs met.

Perhaps he has heard "no" frequently and is experimenting with language; he may be trying to have some power, and exert his independence; she may be trying to understand what "no" means; she may not want to do something, or had a bad experience with this activity in the past.

Slide 20: Challenging Situation Video

The video clip of a challenging situation comes from the CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early program. The site includes information about child development and resources to share with parents. As you watch, observe closely the sequence of events, and afterward, we'll talk about what you observed.

 **Play PRISM Behavior - Challenging Situation (11 secs)**

What does the age of this baby tell you about what she is going through?

What might this baby be trying to communicate?

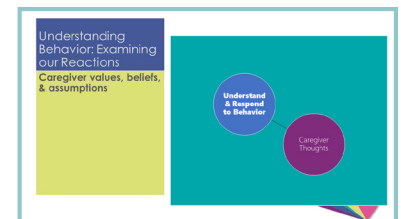


Presenter Notes:

Child may be fearful of a stranger, experiencing some separation anxiety, worried mom is leaving, wants to stay with her caregiver, feeling anxious, feeling nervous

Slide 21: Examining Our Reactions

Caring for infants and toddlers can be difficult. When infants and toddlers engage in challenging behavior it can be very hard and emotional work to see beyond the behavior itself. Exploring our own perceptions, beliefs, biases, and feelings about behavior is critical to supporting young children. How we think and feel about children's behavior greatly impacts how we will respond to it.



Slide 22: Examining Our Reactions

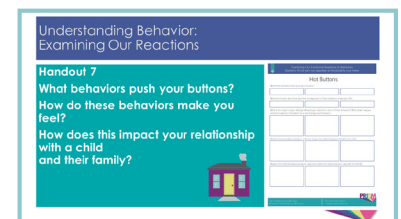
Go ahead and take out **Handout 7** – Examining our Emotional Reactions to Behavior.

We all have behaviors that really bother us or “push our buttons.” We might call those “hot button” behaviors. The purpose of this activity is to help us identify some of our own hot buttons. For now, just fill out the top row with your own “hot button behaviors.” There are no right or wrong answers, but do try to focus on behaviors that are specific to infants and toddlers, since that is the focus of this training.

Give time for trainees to fill out top row.

What are some behaviors that push your buttons?

Write on chart paper.



Presenter Notes:

Offer your own ‘hot button’ behaviors. Are there certain behaviors that push your hot buttons? Biting, spitting, running away? Share those with the group as a way to indicate that all of us can have hot button behaviors.

Slide 22 cont.

Now think of infants and toddlers who you have cared for and who have displayed these types of behaviors. Go ahead and complete the second row of circles by listing feeling words that describe how you felt when you were working with infants or toddlers who engaged in that behavior. Or, you can write how you felt when people were sharing their list of behaviors that “pushed their buttons.”

Let’s share your ideas or words you wrote on row two. Remember there are no right or wrong answers here.

Write on chart paper.

Now, write responses to the third question in the third row on your paper: What is the impact of your feelings? How do you respond to each of these behaviors? Write down how you act/react towards a child when he/she displays each behavior.

There’s a strong connection between feelings and behaviors, since often the way we feel leads to how we behave. This can sometimes make it difficult to maintain positive, warm interactions with all children and families we work with. For example, if a Hot Button behavior causes you to feel defensive or angry, how do you behave?

Write on chart paper.

Write responses to the fourth question in the fourth row on your paper: How do these behaviors and your response impact the relationship you have with the child?

When we feel defensive or angry, we might use a frustrated or stern voice, we might be more directive (verbally/physically) or we might use sarcasm to make ourselves feel better. Over time, these feelings might result in avoiding interactions with that child or finding yourself feeling negatively about that child across the day. How might your feelings and reactions be impacting the relationship you have with the child?

Write on chart paper.

Finally, for the last question how do the child’s behaviors and your response impact the relationship you have with the family? Write your responses to the fifth question in the fifth row.

Write on chart paper.

Slide 22 cont.

Hopefully this activity has illuminated how important our thoughts and reactions about our own behaviors are to our ongoing relationships with a child, our colleagues, and the families we work with. The good news is that there are strategies to help us acknowledge and reframe our thinking about our own thoughts and reactions.



Slide 23: Examining Our Feelings

Our own “feelings” can be an emotional signal to tell us to:

- Think deeply about your own actions, beliefs, expectations, and emotional state. Identify your feelings.
- These feelings can be an emotional cue to pause and reassess the situation.
- Take a deep breath, or several. Think about your facial expression, your words, the pace, tone, and volume of your voice. These “feelings” cues can help us think of a different or more positive way to proceed. On the other hand, we may need to step aside for more reflection or consideration, even if only for a moment or two.
- Recognize that other adults are there to aid in your support of the social-emotional well-being of the children and their successful interactions of the group. There is no shame in recruiting assistance or the input of others. This could be lead to some joint problem solving about challenging situations.
- It is easy to miss things “in the moment,” especially if the behavior evokes strong reactions and responses. Creating brief times to watch a child more intently enables us to learn more about their interests, patterns of responding, and interactions.
- Our feelings influence our interactions with the child and can affect the relationship with the family as well.
- Sometimes feelings let us know we need to think about or interpret behavior in a different way. This is called “reframing,” or thinking about behaviors and why they are occurring in a more positive or objective way.

Understanding Behavior: Examining our Reactions

Pay attention to your own behavior, thoughts, and feelings
Use thoughts and feelings as a signal
Take extra effort to remain calm or take a break
Ask for help
Take time for additional observations
How do these feelings impact your relationship with the child? the family?




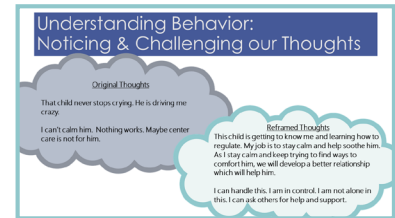
Slide 24: Noticing & Challenging our Thoughts

If we notice and challenge our thoughts and reframe them with a more objective lens, we are better able to address the reason behind the behavior. These slides will help us practice reframing our thoughts with a new perspective.

Let's take a look at some examples.

Ever had a thought like these? Most of us have! Let's look at how we can replace these with new, more objective thoughts.

 Instead of feeling unable to help a child, we can tell ourselves, "I can handle this. I am in control. I am not alone in this. I can ask others for help and support. I can be a model for how to stay calm in a stressful situation."



Presenter Notes:

It may help to share some of your thoughts that need challenging.

Slide 25: Noticing & Challenging our Thoughts

Let's look at a couple more thoughts.

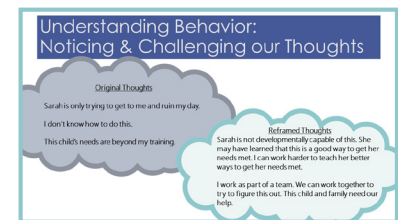
"Sarah is only trying to get to me and ruin my day."

"I don't know how to do this. This child's needs are beyond my training."

 We can replace these thoughts with new thoughts, like:

"Sarah is not developmentally capable of this. She may have learned that this is a good way to get her needs met. I can work harder to teach her better ways to get her needs met."

"I work as part of a team. We can work together to try to figure this out. This child and family need our help."



Slide 26: Reframing Behavior

Take out the handout you just filled out – **Handout 7** – because we are now going to practice reframing with your hot button behaviors.

You'll also need **Handout 8** to do this activity. There are two examples of hot button behaviors and associated thoughts listed. The first example shows a reframed thought. The second does not. You'll complete that in a moment.

In the last box on **Handout 8** that says "Original," go ahead and write down a behavior from **Handout 7** that pushes your buttons.

Give time to complete

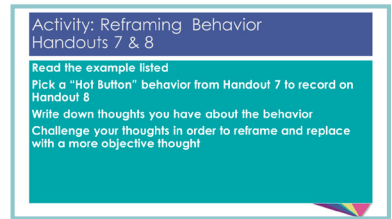
Think about the original, or initial, thoughts and feelings you have about that behavior and list them by the behavior you wrote down.

Give time to complete

In the next few minutes, practice challenging and reframing thoughts, first with the example of an original behavior and thought, and then challenge your thoughts and feelings about the hot button behavior you picked. Replace the original information with a more objective thought, or restate the problem to make it more manageable.

Give time to complete.

Let's come back together and share what you've written.

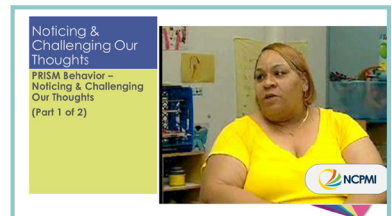


Slide 27: Caregivers Noticing & Challenging their Thoughts

You are definitely not alone in encountering behaviors that push your hot buttons or result in thoughts and feelings that can be challenging. We are going to watch two videos of caregivers. In this first one, you will see their initial reactions to young children's behaviors.

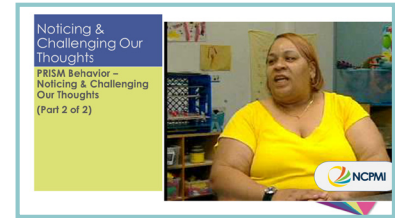



Play PRISM Behavior - Noticing & Challenging Thoughts P1 (1 min 18 sec)



Slide 28: Caregivers Noticing & Challenging their Thoughts

In this next video, you'll see the same caregivers using strategies to notice and challenge their thoughts, as well as change their own behaviors.



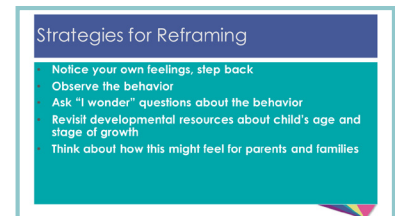
 **Play PRISM Behavior - Noticing & Challenging Thoughts P2 (47 secs)**

What are some of the strategies these caregivers used to change their own behavior? (redirecting selves)

What kind of support might these staff have had or would staff need to be able to share their thoughts openly and shift/change their thinking?

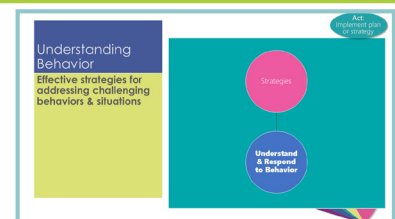
Slide 29: Strategies for Reframing

There are many strategies to reframe, but you might find some work better for you than others. Deep breaths, focusing on what you can do, and finding someone else to talk to are just a few ideas. Be aware of what you find helpful, and as you look at these strategies, think about what has worked for you in the past, and new things you might want to try in the future.



Slide 30: Responding to Challenging Behavior

Now that we've explored different components influencing behavior, let's look at some strategies for addressing everyday behaviors that can create challenges in the classroom. We'll talk about the strategies briefly today, but during coaching sessions you will have the opportunity to focus more specifically on children or situations in your classroom.





Slide 31: Responding to Classroom Challenges

Classroom challenges include situations that may or may not include challenging behaviors. Some strategies include:

- By responding at the first signs of distress, you show the children you are there for them, and that you see and hear them. The earlier you respond and acknowledge the distress, the more likely you will be able to prevent the situation from escalating. You'll also be more able to use the situation to teach a coping skill if they are not overly upset.
- When you respond with increased intensity, you can also escalate the intensity of what the children are feeling. By staying calm and supportive you are modeling self-regulation and how to successfully approach challenges, while also showing the children you are an adult on which they can depend.
- Take the opportunity to help children recognize and deal with emotions. You can do this by giving the children words for how they are feeling, providing visuals to help them identify their emotions, and modeling and teaching strategies for calming, such as using breathing techniques.

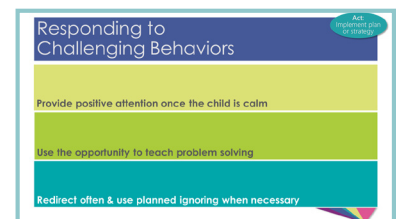


Slide 32: Responding to Challenging Behaviors

Now let's focus on how to use the next three strategies to address challenging behavior such as tantruming or taking toys from another child. These are typical behaviors for young children, and we can use these as learning opportunities.

First, we want to focus on the behaviors we want to see, so when a child changes gears from a challenging behavior, give positive attention to the child.

- For example, a child is screaming because he doesn't want to stop playing with blocks and come to circle time. When the child calms down and joins you at the circle, you can give that child specific positive attention such as, "I'm so glad you joined us for circle time. You are sitting with your friends so nicely."



Slide 32 cont.

Second, you can also use challenging behaviors and situations as an opportunity to teach problem solving.

- If two children are fighting over a toy, what are some ways you can use that situation to teach problem solving in your classroom?
- Let's take a common challenging situation with an infant - a baby crying and rubbing her eyes. You know the baby's routine, and taking into account what you've observed, you decide the baby is probably tired. How would you lay the foundation for problem solving with this infant?

By modeling, talking through your own problem solving, and offering helpful suggestions for older toddlers, you can give children the tools they need to problem solve on their own as they get older.

Third, you can use redirection.

- Let's take the case of the children fighting over the same toy as an example. You might both problem solve and redirect by showing the child another toy they can play with, since that toy is not available. Try to pick either a similar toy, or a toy you know the child will be excited about. Then, give some positive attention when the child begins to engage and play with the new toy.

There may be a time of the day when challenging behavior is more likely to occur, such as morning drop off time. Some children may find the transition easier if you provide an activity to redirect them from thinking about their parents leaving. By knowing the needs of an individual child, you will be able to anticipate some distress and pick strategies that tend to work better for specific children.

At this point, you may be thinking, "I use these strategies and I still have children who are taking a long time to calm down or who just keep doing that challenging behavior over and over again." This does not mean you are doing something wrong, or that there is something wrong with the child you are trying to help. Some children take longer to learn these skills, or need more supports or a more specific intervention. Your coach can help you determine next steps, or help you formulate a plan for specific situations or specific children, if needed.

Presenter Notes:

Modeling sharing; asking older toddlers to give the toy to their friend when they are done; providing a duplicate material

Giving the infant a soothing object, such as a blanket or pacifier; talking through your actions as you offer a solution "You are so sleepy. Let's turn off the lights so you can relax."

Slide 33: Self Reflection

Now that we've covered some practices related to challenging situations and behavior expectations, let's do some more self reflection. Take out your Practice Implementation Checklists found in **Handout 9** - Behavioral Expectations and Distress & Challenging Behaviors. There is a front and a back this time, since you will be reflecting on practices related to responding to distress and communicating about age-appropriate behavioral expectations.

Star items that are a strength for you, and check any boxes that apply. You might find you check multiple boxes in one area, but may not check any in another.

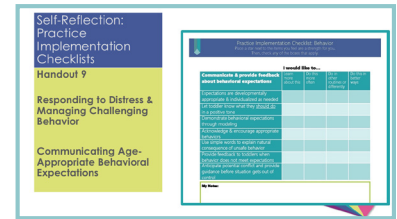
We'll take a few minutes for you to fill it out, and then we'll come back together and discuss.

Can anyone share some practices you already use on a regular basis?

What about practice you use sometimes, but you'd like to use more often or in a new way?

Are there any practices you aren't using but would like to learn to implement?

Leave time for group to respond. Remind participants that the Checklists can be used during coaching, action planning, or as a self-reflection tool after this session.





Slide 34: Major Messages to Take Home

Today we talked about the importance of careful observation and knowing the cues of young children, including engagement and disengagement cues.

We also talked about the importance of recognizing and challenging our own thoughts, expectations, and biases and how doing so can help us understand and respond to behaviors and cues.

Finally, we went over some strategies to use class-wide when encountering challenging situations or behaviors.

The focus of this training has been to learn about:

- Behavior as communication and factors that influence behavior
- Factors that influence our own perceptions of behavior
- Tools used to observe and respond to behavior

Remember, although we went through a lot of information today, you and your coach will work together to apply what you are learning in this and upcoming trainings to best suit the needs of you and your classroom.

Thank you for being here, and we look forward to our next training, which will cover...

Major Messages to Take Home

Caregivers who reflect on their own well-being, skills, and perspectives will be better equipped to contribute to the positive social-emotional development of infants and toddlers and to support families rearing infants and toddlers.

Caregivers who use a variety of strategies, including observation, will be better able to form close relationships with infants, toddlers, and their families.

Presenter Notes:

Adjust wording to fit timing of next training.

