Richfield PS scan 8b. Case #68882

What Consequences Do and Don't

Rewards, Punishments and Ignoring

DO:
Teach basic lessons & provide external motivation

DON'T:
Teach complex thinking skills, build relationships, help kids stay regulated

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Side Effects of Rewards and Punishments

- Do we want to teach these kids that we don't think they are trying hard enough?
- They may actually be trying harder than anyone else to behave themselves well but lack the skills to do
- Increases fixed mindset and decreases growth mindset

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Why Traditional Discipline Doesn't Work with our Most Challenging Kids:

Conventional wisdom is wrong!
Challenging kids lack *skill* not will

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Unconventional Wisdom: It's a Learning Disability

- Research in neurosciences has shown these kids are delayed in the development of crucial skills or have significant difficulty applying these skills when they are most needed

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Unconventional Wisdom: It's a Learning Disability

Which skills do these kids lack?

- flexibility/adaptability
- frustration tolerance
- problem-solving

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Logical Intervention

Treat challenging behavior like you would any other learning disability:

- Assess which skills are lagging
- Use a different approach to teach those skills in increments the kid can handle

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Definition of Challenging Behavior

- Lagging skills alone do not cause challenging behavior
- Rather, challenging behavior -- including explosions, implosions and everything else in between -- occurs when someone is presented with a problem or situation they lack the skills to handle well
- It takes two to tango: the pairing of *lagging skills* and a *problem to solve* that requires those skills

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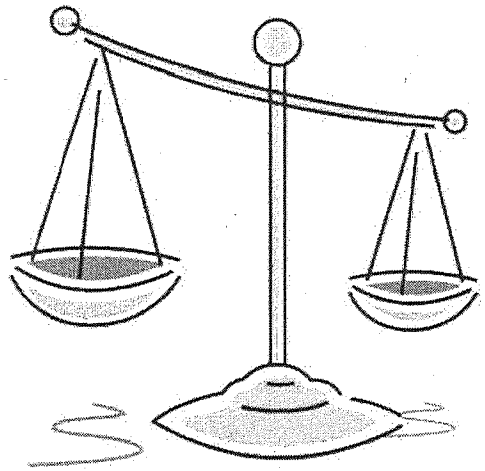
Equation of Challenging Behavior

Skills ≥ Problem = **Adaptive Behavior**

Skills < Problem = **Challenging Behavior**



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Phases of Approach

1. Assessment: identify the specific *problems to be solved* and *lagging thinking skills* precipitating the challenging behavior
2. Planning: Know your options for responding to these problems and what each option accomplishes
3. Intervention: Solve problems while building skills, confidence and relationships

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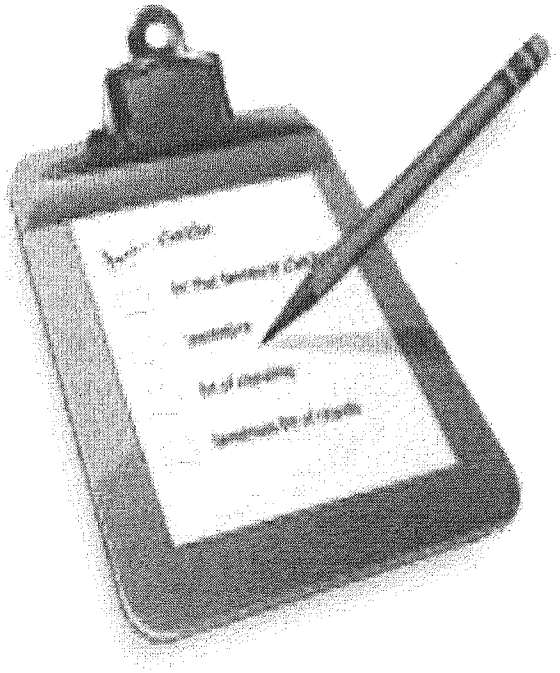
ASSESSMENT



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Collaborative Problem Solving Assessment and Planning Tool (CPS-APT)

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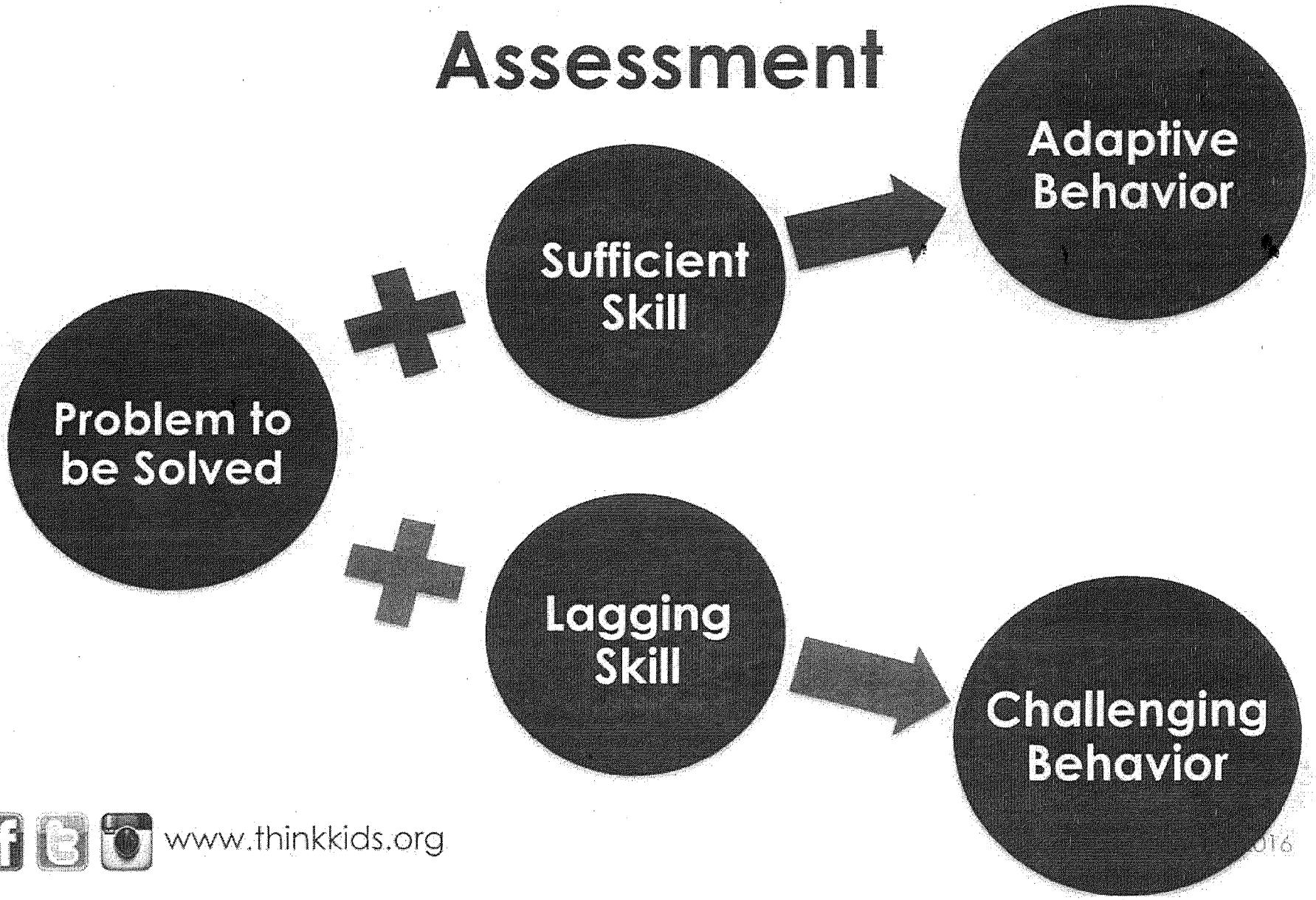
Assessment


Problem to be Solved
+
Sufficient Skill
Adaptive Behavior
+
Lagging Skill
Challenging Behavior

Assessment

Goal of assessment is to create 3 lists:

1. **Challenging behaviors**
   - The behavior you want to change
2. **Problems to be solved**
   - The situations in which the child is challenging
3. **Lagging skills**
   - Reasons why the child is challenging

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Assessment

What's the difference between a *problem to be solved, a lagging skill and a challenging behavior?*

- A challenging behavior is the child's response to a problem they don't have the skills to handle more adaptively
- A problem to be solved is the situation the child has difficulty handling (e.g., *homework, getting down to work after lunch etc.*)
- A lagging skill is the reason *why* the child has difficulty handling the situation (e.g., *difficulty handling transitions, difficulty doing things in a logical sequence etc.*)

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Case Study: Marcus

Read silently.

Assessment

List #1: Challenging Behaviors

- Allows you to empathize with the adult contending with the challenging behavior
- Gives you a sense of the severity and risk involved
- Allows you to "park" the behaviors somewhere so you can focus assessment elsewhere!

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Partner Work

Thinking of Marcus, complete the "Challenging Behaviors" section.

Assessment

List #2: Problems to be solved

- Allows proactive planning and prioritizing
- This is also where you will start problem solving so be as specific as possible!
- The more specific the problem, the easier it will be to:
  - Solve it!
  - Use the situations as clues to identify lagging skills

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Assessment

Challenging behavior does not occur out of the blue.

- First goal of assessment is a *situational analysis*: identify the situations in which the child tends to have the most difficulty
- Also known as: precipitants, antecedents, contexts, demands, unmet expectations, setting events, triggers, issues

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Partner Work

Thinking of Marcus, complete the "Problems to be Solved" section.

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Assessment

List #3: Lagging Skills

- These are just guesses as to what the child struggles with
- Work backwards from the list of triggers and unmet expectations to identify potential lagging skills
- Don't obsess
- Use this list to promote a more compassionate, understanding stance

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Assessing Thinking Skills

Explaining is not excusing!

Research on Lagging Skills

Challenging behavior is linked with deficits in the following areas of neurocognitive skill:

- Language and communication skills
- Attention and working memory skills
- Emotion and self-regulation skills
- Cognitive flexibility skills
- Social thinking skills

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Why Focus on Skills?

- So adults understand that, like a learning disability, a child's challenging behavior is not intentional, goal-oriented, manipulative, or attention-seeking

- So you know what you are working on and why (and understand why something other than rewards and punishments is needed)

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Partner Work

Thinking of Marcus, complete the "Lagging Skills" section.

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Practice!

1. **Read through *Case Study: Sincere***
2. Make a list of challenging behaviors
3. **Make a list of problems to be solved**
4. **Make a list of lagging skills**

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Phases of Approach

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RULES
1. Walk
2. Use Nice Hands
3. Listen
4. Inside Voices
5. Clean-up

Expectations

- **It is always important to establish structure and clear and realistic expectations!**
- **CPS does NOT mean anything goes!**

Expectations consistently met → No problem

Expectations not consistently met → Problem

When you have a problem, the first step is knowing what your options are and what each option accomplishes (or doesn't!)

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Goals of Intervention

1. Pursue high priority expectations
2. Reduce challenging behavior
3. Solve chronic problems durably
4. Build skills, confidence (ie, *intrinsic* motivation)
5. Create (or restore) a helping relationship

Three Plans

(Your Options for responding to Triggers/Unmet Expectations)

Plan A: Impose adult will

Plan B: Solve the problem collaboratively

Plan C: Drop it (for now, at least)

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Goals Achieved by Three Plans

GOALS	PLAN A	PLAN C	PLAN B
Try to get your expectation met			
Reduce challenging behavior			
Build skills, confidence			
Solve problems			
Build relationship			

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Goals Achieved by the Three Plans

Complete chart.

✔ = **Yes**

✖ = **No**

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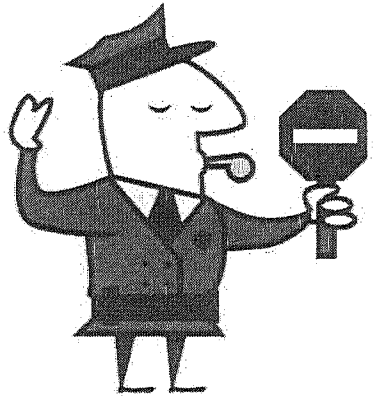
Three Plans

Plan A: Impose adult will



- **What goals ARE being pursued:**
  - ***Pursuing expectations***

- **What goals are NOT being pursued:**
  - ***Reducing challenging behavior***
  - ***Solving problems durably***
  - ***Building skills, confidence***
  - ***Creating (or restore) a helping relationship***

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Three Plans

Plan C: Drop it (for now, at least)

Being strategic – not *giving in*

- **What goals ARE being pursued:**
  - ***Reducing challenging behavior***

- **What goals are NOT being pursued:**
  - ***Pursuing expectations***
  - ***Solving problems durably***
  - ***Building skills, confidence***
  - ***Creating (or restore) a helping relationship***

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Three Plans

Plan B: Work towards solving the problem in a mutually satisfactory and realistic manner

- **What goals ARE being pursued:**
  - ***Pursuing expectations***
  - ***Reducing challenging behavior***
  - ***Solving problems durably***
  - ***Building skills, confidence***
  - ***Creating (or restore) a helping relationship***

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Goals Achieved by the Three Plans

GOALS	PLAN A	PLAN C	PLAN B
Try to get your expectation met	✔	✖	✔
Reduce challenging behavior	✖	✔	✔
Build skills, confidence	✖	✖	✔
Solve problems	✖	✖	✔
Build relationship	✖	?	✔

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The Biggest Misconception

- CPS does NOT mean anything goes!
- Structure and clear expectations are always important
- Asking a child to do something (clearly and even emphatically) is NOT Plan A!
- Asking a child to do something is simply setting an expectation - which is not the same as trying to impose your will (Plan A) when someone doesn't meet your expectations
- The Plans are not needed until you have an UNMET expectation

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Important Reminder:

- Any problem that can be handled using Plan A can also be handled using Plan B.
- However, is there a time when you must use Plan A despite the downsides? Of course! But …

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What about safety issues?

The more severe or unsafe the behavior, the more important it is to solve the problem and build the skills causing the behavior in the first place.

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Phases of Approach

1. **Assessment:** identify the specific *problems to be solved* and *lagging thinking skills* precipitating the challenging behavior
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Reminder!

Challenging behaviors are highly predictable.

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Plan B Timing

EMERGENCY B

Takes place in the midst of challenging behavior occurring (yet again): crisis management/de-escalation

PROACTIVE B

Takes place well before challenging behavior recurs: (crisis prevention)

A prepared adult and a calm child are more likely to understand and solve problems

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Plan B Flash Card

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Plan B Ingredients

1. **EMPATHIZE:** Clarify child concern
2. **SHARE** adult concern
3. **COLLABORATE:** Brainstorm, assess and choose solution

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"If I had an hour to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions."

- Albert Einstein

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Plan B Ingredients

1. EMPATHIZE: Clarify child concern
2. SHARE adult concern
3. COLLABORATE: Brainstorm, assess and choose solution

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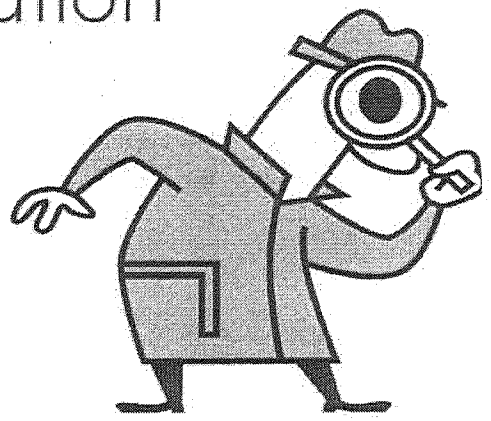
Empathize: Clarify Child Concern

THE GOAL: Gather information to understand the kid's ***specific concern or perspective*** about the trigger or expectation



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Empathize: Clarify Child Concern

THE SCRIPT: Start with a ***neutral*** observation like …

- **"I've noticed that…"**
- **"It seems like…"**
- **"It looks as if …"**

Followed by an inquiry:

- ***"What's up?"***

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Empathize: Clarify Child Concern

TIPS for starting off on the right foot:

DO:

- State the *trigger or expectation*
- Stick with the facts or externalize the problem

DO NOT:

- Start with the challenging behavior
- Blame or assume

But its not all about the words: body language, tone etc matter!

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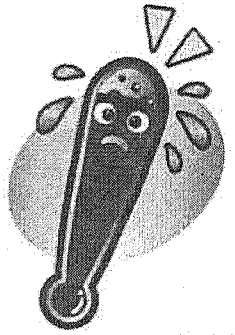
Empathize: Clarify Child Concern

THE TOOLS: Detective work to clarify concerns requires probing and drilling down using a combination of 4 tools:

- clarifying questions
- educated guessing
- reflective listening*
- reassurance*

* Regulating tools



THE FEELING: EMPATHIC, patient, open-minded listening

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Empathize: Clarify Child Concern

How do you know when you are READY TO MOVE ON?

- Do you have a clear understanding of the child's concern or perspective?
- Have you learned something new?
- Are you wanting to suggest a solution?
- Is the child calm (regulated) and accessible (because the next ingredient isn't calming!)?

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Video

Plan B Empathy Step

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jR9pVbJ024&t=89s

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