Managing Challenging Behavior

Rebecca McFarland, Franklin County
Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Teaching Guide

Learner Objectives

- Participants will be able to describe the relationship between environmental variables, children's challenging behaviors and social emotional development.
- Participants will be able to identify strategies that can be used to (1) design environments, schedules, and routines; (2) structure transitions; and (3) help children learn rules and routines.
- Participants will be able to use descriptive acknowledgment and encouragement to support children's positive social behaviors.
- Participants will evaluate their work with children related to the structure and design of their environment. They will generate strategies for addressing areas where they need to make changes or improvements.

Suggested Agenda

I. Introduction and Logistics

II. Strategies to Prevent Challenging Behavior

III. Designing the Physical Environment

IV. Schedules, Routines and Transitions

V. Planning Activities that Promote Engagement; Large and Small Group Time

VI. Giving Directions

VII. Teaching Children Classroom Rules

VIII. Ongoing Monitoring and Positive Attention

IX. Using Positive Feedback and Encouragement
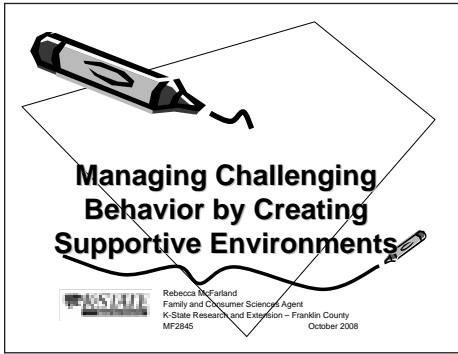
X. Pulling It All Together: Summary and Action Plan

Materials Needed

- Agenda
- PowerPoint
- Facilitator's guide
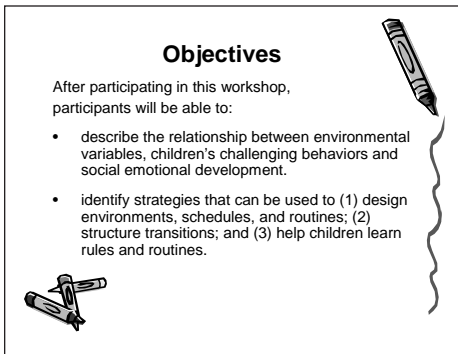- Chart paper or white board and markers

Handouts

- MF2845, Participants' PowerPoint slides
- MF2843 *Inventory of Practices for Promoting Children's Social Emotional Competence*, pages 1-7 and 15-20 – includes the action plan referred to throughout this training guide.
- List of starters for positive feedback comments (p. 18)
- Certificate of Completion (p. 19)
- Session evaluation form (p. 20)

**Managing Challenging
Behavior by Creating
Supportive Environments**

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K-State Research and Extension – Franklin County
MF2845   October 2008

Objectives

After participating in this workshop,
participants will be able to:

- describe the relationship between environmental
  variables, children's challenging behaviors and
  social emotional development.

- identify strategies that can be used to (1) design
  environments, schedules, and routines; (2)
  structure transitions; and (3) help children learn
  rules and routines.

I. Introduction and Logistics

During this time, you will want to accomplish the following things.

1. Begin with an introduction of all speakers, a brief overview of who you are, where you are from, and information about your background that is relevant to this training event. (Show **Slide 1**.)

2. Have the participants introduce themselves to each other and provide you with a brief overview of who they are. Have each table of participants introduce themselves to each other and then report back to the whole group what roles the participants at their table represent (for example, teachers, assistants, therapists, administrators, family members, trainers). Or, choose another introductory strategy depending on the size of the group and the time available.

3. Review the learner objectives (**Slide 2**).

4. Distribute all handouts including PowerPoint slides, resources, and the Inventory of Practices.

5. Take care of logistical issues (such as breaks, bathrooms, etc).

6. Encourage participants to ask questions throughout or to post them in a specially marked place.

> **"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."**
> Benjamin Franklin
>
> The single best way to address challenging behavior in young children is to take steps to decrease the likelihood that it will occur.

> **Strategies to Reduce Challenging Behavior**
>
> 1. Well-designed physical environments
> 2. Scheduling
> 3. Implementing rules, rituals and routines

> **Well-Designed Physical Environments**
>
> 1. Promote engagement.
> 2. Reduce the likelihood that challenging behavior will occur.

> **Well-Designed Physical Environments: Traffic Patterns**
>
> 1. Minimize large open spaces in which children can run.
> 2. Minimize obstacles and other hazards.
> 3. Consider the needs of children with physical or sensory disabilities or delays.

II. Strategies to Prevent Challenging Behavior

A. Before beginning this section, ask participants to identify the skills (*Inventory of Practices* No. 4 through No. 11, pp. 4–7) and indicators that may or may not be present in their early childhood setting. During the session they will have the opportunity to identify what strategies they will use to help them implement the new practices (Action Plan).

B. (**Slide 3**) The single best way to address challenging behavior in young children is to take steps to decrease the likelihood that it will occur. Strategies to reduce challenging behavior include (**Slide 4**):

1. Well-designed environments that support children's appropriate behaviors and make it less likely that children will need to engage in challenging behavior.

2. Scheduling activities that promote child engagement and success.

3. Giving directions that increase the likelihood that children will follow them.

III. Designing the Physical Environment

This section covers many topics. While they are all important, you will need to determine how much time to spend on each topic based on the needs and skills of your audience.

A. When we consider the design of the physical environment, we are trying to do two things: promote engagement and decrease the likelihood that challenging behavior will occur (**Slide 5**).

  • We will talk about two sets of strategies related to the physical design of the environment: traffic patterns and designing learning centers.

B. Show **Slide 6**. Review the following major issues about traffic patterns:

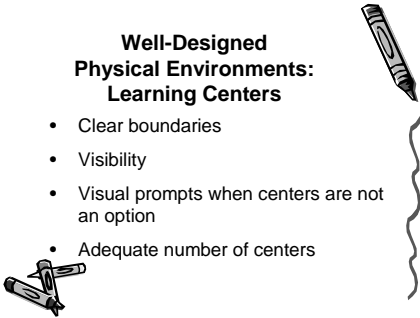1. Minimize large open spaces in which children can run, etc.

2. Minimize obstacles.

3

**Well-Designed
Physical Environments:
Learning Centers**
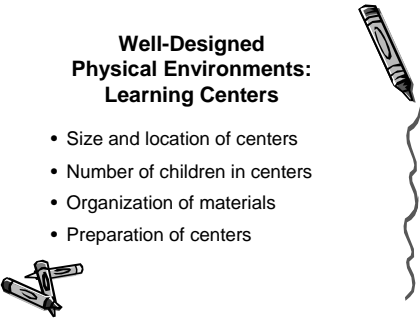- Clear boundaries
- Visibility
- Visual prompts when centers are not an option
- Adequate number of centers

**Well-Designed
Physical Environments:
Learning Centers**
- Size and location of centers
- Number of children in centers
- Organization of materials
- Preparation of centers

3. Consider environmental arrangement as it applies to children with physical or sensory (for example, blindness) disabilities or delays.
   - Show **Slide 7** of how footprints and "fence" help organize the physical environment.

C. Then talk about how a lot of strategies related to learning centers will increase the likelihood of children being engaged and decrease the likelihood of challenging behaviors occurring. Talk about two aspects of planning learning centers — the physical design and the actual content of the materials and activities that occur in each center.
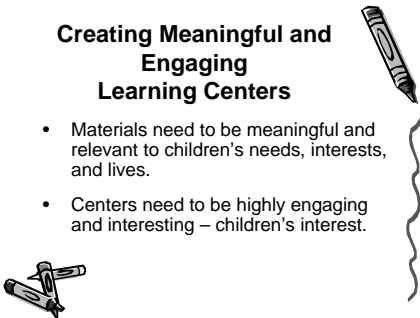
D. Show **Slides 8 and 9**. Review the following major issues about the physical design of learning centers:

1. Have clear boundaries so that children know where the center begins/ends, and so that children are not crowded together.

2. Make sure that all children are visible to adults and that adults are visible to children.

3. When learning centers are closed for some reason, indicate that the centers are closed by using visual prompts such as sheets or blankets, circles with a slash through them, etc.

4. Have enough centers for the number of children in your care and enough materials within the centers so that children are engaged and not continually arguing over materials.

5. Consider the size of centers and the location of centers. For example, it is best to avoid having a center that is likely to have a high level of activity in it (for example, block center, dramatic play) located close to a center where the teacher wants quieter activities (for example, listening centers, computer, etc.) to occur.

6. Use developmentally appropriate and creative ways to limit the number of children in centers if this is necessary (for example, laminated cards containing children's names that can be moved into pockets at the center as opposed to a sign saying "2 children only").

7. Organize materials and keep them in appropriate places, taking into consideration children's development of independence skills.

8. Have centers organized and ready to go when children arrive.

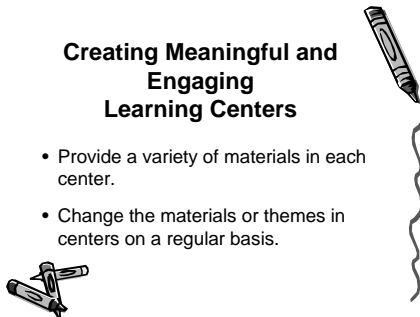**Creating Meaningful and Engaging Learning Centers**

- Materials need to be meaningful and relevant to children's needs, interests, and lives.
- Centers need to be highly engaging and interesting – children's interest.

Creating Meaningful and Engaging Learning Centers

- Provide a variety of materials in each center.
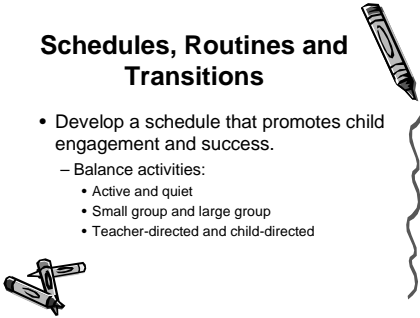- Change the materials or themes in centers on a regular basis.

E. Show **Slide 10**: Creating Meaningful and Engaging Learning Areas. Learning centers need to be meaningful, engaging, and interesting to children.

1. Materials within centers need to be meaningful and relevant to children's needs, interests, and lives (for example,within the dramatic play area, materials that are culturally appropriate should be available; the pictures on puzzles and in the classroom library should reflect the diversity within your community, etc.). There should be culturally meaningful activities and materials (for example, within the typical water table, you can alternate materials that have a similar consistency such as beans, rice, pasta, and potatoes). Also, consider using labels in languages around the classroom.

2. Centers need to be highly engaging and interesting to children. Build on children's interests by including materials and activities that children enjoy or express an interest in. If children all tend to stay in one or two centers, that would suggest that the other centers are not engaging or interesting to children.

3. (**Slide 11**) Provide a variety of materials in each center. For example, related books can be put in every center (for example, books on animals can be placed in the reading center; magazines can be placed in the dramatic play area that is designed as a veterinarian's office; a book about the post office can be placed in the writing center). Writing utensils and paper also can be in a variety of centers (for example, in the dramatic play area, the writing center, or near the computers). Be creative.

4. Change the materials or themes in centers on a regular basis. The post office set up in the dramatic play area might be interesting and engaging at the beginning of the year but will be old and uninteresting if it is still there in the spring. Listen to what children are talking about. Create centers that build on their interests. Rotate materials within a center so that the same materials are not out all year. Let children help you choose the materials.

F. Action Planning. Allow time for participants to complete their Action Plan Form for *Designs the Physical Environment (No. 4)*.
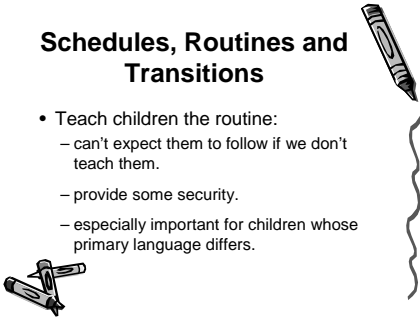
Schedules, Routines and Transitions

- Develop a schedule that promotes child engagement and success.
  - Balance activities:
    - Active and quiet
    - Small group and large group
    - Teacher-directed and child-directed

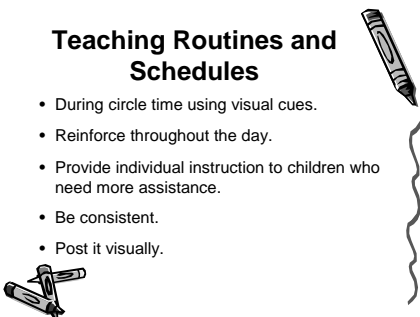**Schedules, Routines and Transitions**

- Teach children the routine:
  - can't expect them to follow if we don't teach them.
  - provide some security.
  - especially important for children whose primary language differs.
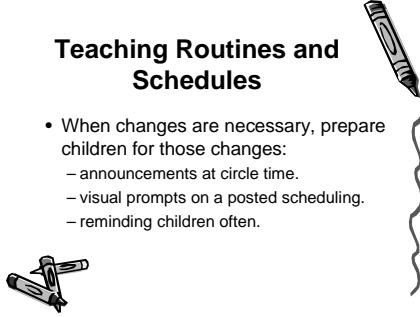
Teaching Routines and Schedules

- During circle time using visual cues.
- Reinforce throughout the day.
- Provide individual instruction to children who need more assistance.
- Be consistent.
- Post it visually.

Teaching Routines and Schedules

- When changes are necessary, prepare children for those changes:
  - announcements at circle time.
  - visual prompts on a posted scheduling.
  - reminding children often.

IV. Schedules, Routines and Transitions

A. **Slide 12**. Talk about how schedules should be designed to promote child engagement. As we have talked about earlier, when children are engaged with a material, a peer, or an adult, they are less likely to be engaged in challenging behavior. Some of the things that will keep them engaged are:

1. Balancing the activities so there is a mix of small group and large group activities and a mix of teacher-directed and child-directed activities.

2. **Slide 13**. Teaching children the routine: We can't expect children to follow the routine if we don't teach it to them. Schedules and routines provide some security and a sense of what comes next; children are able to anticipate what will happen, and thus feel more secure. This is especially important for children whose primary language differs from that spoken in the classroom.

B. **Slide 14**. Talk about different ways you can teach children to follow routines or schedules.

1. Teach it during circle using visual cues that all children understand.

2. Reinforce children as they go through the schedule of the day.

3. Provide individual instruction to children who need more assistance, and use individualized picture cues.

4. Be consistent with your schedule and routines. Children will be more likely to learn to follow a schedule if it is implemented consistently.

5. Post your schedule visually, and refer to it frequently throughout the day so children learn what will happen next.

6. (**Slide 15**) When changes are necessary, prepare children for those changes. You can prepare children by making announcements at opening circle, using visual prompts on a posted schedule indicating a change (for example, a stop sign on top of an activity that is not going to happen as planned), and reminding children about the changes as often as possible.
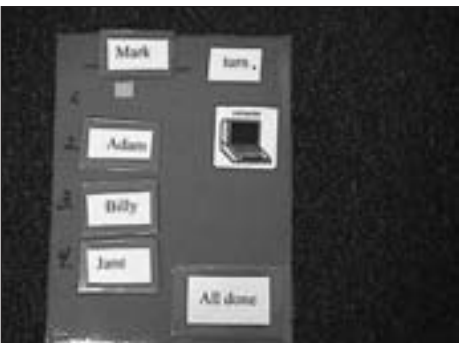
Transitions

- Minimize the number of transitions.
- Minimal amount of time in transition.
- Give a warning.
- Minimize transitions in which every child has to do the same thing at the same time.
- Teach children expectations.

- For some children with disabilities or delays (for example, autism), changes in the schedule or routine can be a trigger for challenging behaviors.
- Show **Slides 16-19** of various types of schedules (for example, object, photograph, individual, activity)

C. Show **Slide 20**. Another issue that is closely related to schedules and routines is transition. Challenging behaviors often occur during transitions, especially when all children are expected to do the same thing at the same time and then end up waiting with nothing to do. We know from research that children often spend a significant proportion of their preschool day making transitions between activities. So, our goal should be to:

1. Minimize the number of transitions that children have during the day.

2. Plan transitions so that there is a minimal amount of time spent in transition and that children are highly engaged during the transition.

3. Give children a warning before a transition occurs.

4. Minimize those transitions during which every child has to do the same thing at the same time (Does every child have to go to the bathroom at the same time? Could snack be part of center time?). Structure the transition so that children have something to do while they are waiting (for example, finger plays, songs, guessing games). Provide some children with chores, and give children helping roles during transitions (for example, handing out the paper towels, holding the door, helping a friend).

5. Teach children about the expectations for transitions. This instruction can occur during a group time and should be reinforced throughout the day.
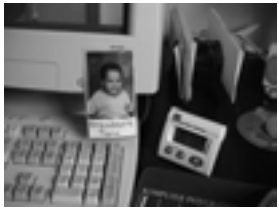
Transitions

- Individualize the instruction and cues:
  – Important to provide visual cues and reminders for young children, particularly…
    • Children with special needs.
    • Children for whom English is second language.

Transition with Visual and Timer

Transition with Visual Choice

Transition with Center Necklaces

6. (**Slide 21**) Individualize the instruction and cues provided to children. Some children will make the transition with a minimal amount of support, while others may need a picture schedule, verbal prompt, adult assistance, or some other type of cue.

7. It is important to provide visual cues and reminders for young children – especially young children with special needs and children for whom English is their second language. Visual cues and reminders are useful to help children learn the routines of the classroom, to help them learn the expectations or "classroom rules," to help children anticipate making transitions between activities, and to assist children in knowing what to do during these transitions.

D. As adults, we use visual cues constantly. For example, (1) we look at our watches or the clock to see when a boring meeting will end or when it is time for lunch; (2) when we go into a new building, we look at signs to find places we need to go such as the elevator, restroom, or location of a conference room; and (3) when we go to vote, we look at the visual directions provided to see how to use the voting machine.

E. Show **Slides 22-24**. Show multiple examples of visual reminders for transitions (for example, preparing Brendan using a timer; transitions with visuals, choices, and necklaces).
   • You can also bring examples of actual posters, signs, etc., that teachers use in their classrooms.
   • Ask participants for suggestions of visual supports or reminders that they have used in their own setting.

F. Action Planning. Allow time for participants to complete their Action Plan Form for *Develops Schedules and Routines (No. 5)*.

**Promote Engagement:
Large Group Activities**

• Consider the length.

• Have a purpose and be clear.

• Vary activities from day to day.

• Teach new concepts.

V. Planning Activities that Promote Engagement: Large and Small Group Time

As we talked about above, one of the keys to preventing challenging behavior is to ensure that children are engaged with activities, peers, or adults. Adults should also plan activities in ways that will promote engagement. There are two keys to this: (1) use both small and large group activities, and (2) ensure that activities are designed and adapted so that all children can participate in a meaningful way.

A. Large Group Activities. One of the common problems that teachers have is challenging behavior during large group activities. It is difficult to keep all children interested throughout circle time. Give participants some suggestions about how they can increase the likelihood that all children will be engaged (**Slide 25**). This can be talked about in two parts.

1. Planning the activity

   a. Consider the length of time needed for circle time relative to the children's ages and abilities and to the types of activities that will occur during the large group time.

   b. Have a purpose and be clear about what it is you want children to learn during this time.

   c. Don't do exactly the same thing every day. For example, you can teach concepts during large group in a variety of ways (examples include puppets, role play, stories, songs, visual aids, discussion). Vary these activities from day to day. You might also do repeated reading of the same story for several days but use puppets on the first day, a flannel board on the second day, and have children role play the story on the third day.

   d. Don't just do circle to do circle, but use it as a time to teach new concepts. This is an especially good time to teach social skills and to support children's emotional development.

**Large Group Activities:
Implementing the Activity**

• Provide opportunities for all children to be actively involved.

• Assign jobs.

• Vary your speech and intonation.

• Have children help lead activities.

• Pay attention to appropriate behavior.

2. Implementing the activity (**Slide 26**)

   a. Make sure all children have opportunities to be involved (for example, everyone holds a character from the story, children do things with partners).

   b. Assign jobs for children who have a particularly difficult time during circle (such as book holder or page turner).

   c. Vary the way you talk and the intonation of your voice.

   d. Have children help lead activities.

   e. Pay attention to children's appropriate behavior, as well as the function of their behavior; remember that if they are wiggling and wandering away, the activity is probably not interesting to them.

Small Group Activities

- Small group activities offer:
  - Individualized attention.
  - Skill building.
- Planning and implementing:
  - Be clear about purpose or goal.
  - Use peers as models.
  - Ensure all children participate.
  - Provide feedback.

Schedule/Routine/ Transition Activity

- Divide into groups(3-4) of people who currently work together.
- Write down a schedule from one of the participant's classroom.
- Consider the things we have just talked about. What changes could you make in what you are currently doing that might increase engagement and prevent challenging behavior?
- Share your major changes with others at your table and brainstorm possible solutions.

B. Show **Slide 27**. Small Group Activities. Discuss the importance of using small group activities both in terms of giving more individualized time to children and as an opportunity for skill building. Then talk about how to implement small group activities effectively.

1. Talk about being clear about the purpose and outcomes of the activity. What is it you want children to learn, and are you structuring the activity so that it meets the needs of all the children involved? Although small group activities are often more teacher directed, they do not have to be didactic. They can involve games, stories, discussion, projects, etc.

2. Small groups also provide a great opportunity to use peers as models. One peer can model a skill or behavior you are trying to teach another child.

3. It is important to ensure that all children participate in a way that is meaningful and relevant to their goals and needs.

4. Provide descriptive feedback related to appropriate behavior to children throughout the activity.

C. Show **Slide 28**: Schedule/Routines/Transition Activity.

1. Have each table write on a piece of chart paper a schedule for a preschool classroom (a schedule from one of the participant's classrooms or program).

2. Then have all participants discuss what changes might need to be made in the schedule to either increase engagement or prevent challenging behaviors of allchildren. Have them also think about specific adaptations that might be needed for the children with the most challenging behavior.

3. Encourage them to consider the following questions: (1) Are there too many large group activities? (2) Is there a balance of large and small group activities? (3) Are there too many transitions? (4) Could some transitions be eliminated or shortened? (5) Could there be fewer whole group transitions? (6) Is the length of activities appropriate (neither too long nor too short)?

4. Brainstorm ideas for change. If time permits, have a few people share their ideas for change with the large group.

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D. Action Planning. Allow time for participants to complete their Action Plan Form for *Ensures Smooth Transitions (No. 6)* and *Designs Activities to Promote Engagement (No. 7)*.
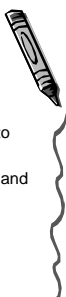
VI. Giving Directions

A. Research has shown that preschool children have high rates of not following teacher directions. While this might be because of the child's characteristics, it might also be because of the way teachers give directions. Directions that are stated negatively ("why haven't you put up the toys") or directions that are stated as questions ("can you help me put up the toys?") may confuse children or make them less likely to follow the direction. Here are some strategies that can be used to increase the likelihood that children will follow teacher directions (**Slide 29**).

Giving Directions

- Make sure you have the child's attention.
- Minimize the number of directions.
- Individualize the way directions are given.
- Give clear direct, specific directions.

1. **Make sure you have the child's attention before you give the direction.** Many times, the child may not even hear the direction or realize the direction is being given to him. The teacher can begin a direction to the whole class by saying, "I need everyone to listen" or the teacher can begin a direction to an individual child by tapping him on the shoulder or saying his name.

2. **Minimize the number of directions given to children.** Research shows that teachers give a very high number of directions to children, many of which they do not follow through with. It is important to give only directions that you want the child to comply with, give directions in a positive way that tells the child specifically what to do, and give the child time to respond before giving another direction. Also, it is important to follow through if the child does not follow the direction.

3. **Individualize the way directions are given.** Some children may respond well to verbal direction, while others may need physical prompts or pictorial prompts to follow the direction.

4. **Give clear directions.** Tell the child exactly what you want her to do. Avoid vague directions, such as "be careful" or "settle down." These directions could be substituted with "hold on to the railing" or "sit quietly."

Giving Directions

- Give directions that are positive.
- Give children the opportunity to respond to the direction.
- When appropriate, give the child choices and options for following directions.
- Follow through with positive acknowledgement of children's behavior.

5. Show **Slide 30**. **Give directions that are positive.** Maintain a positive tone when you give directions.

6. **Give children the opportunity to respond to a direction.** Avoid giving multiple directions at one time without giving the child a chance to respond and without acknowledging the child for responding.

7. **When appropriate, give the child choices and options for following directions.** Sometimes it is important that children follow a direction in a specific way; but other times, it is OK to give the child some options. For example, during a transition time, the teacher might say "you need to sit quietly; you may either get a book or you may draw a picture."

8. **Follow through with positive acknowledgment of children's behavior.** It is important that children understand when they are following directions.

B. Action Planning. Allow time for participants to complete their Action Plan Form for *Giving Directions (No. 8)*.
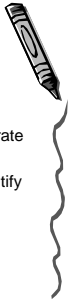
VII. Teaching Children Classroom Rules

A. Show **Slide 31**. Emphasize that preschool settings need to have a few simple rules.

1. Ask participants why having rules is important.

2. Describe how there are general guidelines about rules, and ask participants to share what they think these guidelines are (for example, stated positively, fewer than five, developmentally appropriate, posted visually, clear and concise).

3. Ask participants why it is a good idea to have children involved in developing rules (for example, they will understand them better, provides ownership, builds a learning opportunity, etc.).

B. Show **Slide 32.** Present some ways to have children involved in developing the rules. For example:

1. Children can be involved in generating classroom rules (it will be important that teachers have had some time to reinforce at high rates those behaviors they would like to see so that children have an idea of what the classroom expectations are).

General Guidelines about Rules

- Have a few simple classroom rules.
- Involve the children in developing the rules.
- Post the rules visually.
- Teach the rules.
- Reinforce the rules.

Involving Children in Developing the Rules

- Allow children to help generate the rules.
- Name the rule and have a child demonstrate it.
- Name the rule and have the children identify visual.
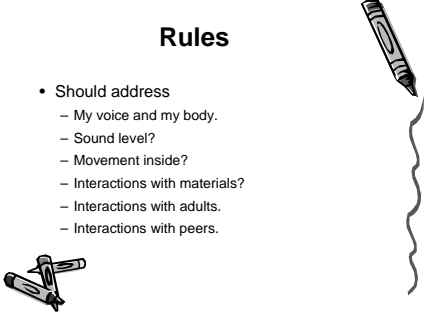- Engage children in preparing the visual prompts, such as posters or cards.
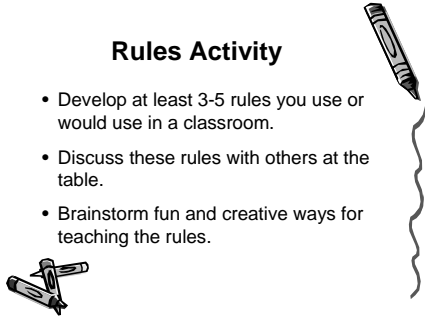
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Rules

- Should address
  - My voice and my body.
  - Sound level?
  - Movement inside?
  - Interactions with materials?
  - Interactions with adults.
  - Interactions with peers.

Rules Activity

- Develop at least 3-5 rules you use or would use in a classroom.
- Discuss these rules with others at the table.
- Brainstorm fun and creative ways for teaching the rules.

Fun Ways to Reinforce Rules

- Rules Bingo
- Big Book of School Rules
- Home Rules – what are your rules at home?
- Play Rules Charades

2. Children can help decide what visuals to put on posters around the room to help remind themselves of classroom rules.

3. Children can decorate a rules poster.

C. Show **Slide 33**. Discuss what general behaviors or topics rules should address (for example, sound level; movement; interactions with adults, children, and materials).

1. Talk about how you can't expect children to follow the rules without teaching them.

2. Explain how rules can be taught during circle time and reinforced in ongoing contexts.

3. As you are teaching rules, you can connect them to children's ongoing behavior.

D. Show **Slide 34**: Rules Activity.

1. Have small groups work to develop a list of three to five rules for their setting.

2. If they have rules already, have them list them and check them against the criteria.

3. Ask participants to brainstorm some fun ways they can remind and reinforce the rules in the setting. List these on flip chart paper.

4. Present additional ideas to reinforce classroom rules (**Slide 35**).
   a. **Rules Bingo:** Put symbols of rules on bingo cards and have children play bingo.
   b. **Big Book of School Rules:** Using large pieces of paper, children can help make pictures and pages about each rule, laminate the pages, and turn the pages into a big book.
   c. **Home Rules:** Children draw a picture of their home and take it home with them with some blank circles. Children and parents write their home rules on the circles, tape them to the picture of their home, and send it back to school.
   d. **Rules Charades:** Have a child model a rule, and have the other children guess what rule they are modeling.

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**Ongoing Monitoring and
Positive Attention**

- Specifically acknowledge (or state) children's positive behavior when they are engaging in appropriate behavior.
- Monitor own behavior:
  – more time using positive descriptive language.
  – less time giving directions or correcting inappropriate behavior.

VIII. Ongoing Monitoring and Positive Attention

A. Show **Slide 36**. This slide presents the idea of "catching children being good." There are two important issues here.

1. Give children attention (for example, verbal, nonverbal) when they are engaging in appropriate behaviors. Too often, we leave children alone when they are playing quietly or when things are going along smoothly in our early childhood settings. Provide feedback for the effort, thinking, and problem solving (for example, What a great idea! Brilliant thinking in figuring that out!) versus emphasizing quality of work (for example, You did a dynamite job in coloring that entire picture!). Balance positive feedback and encouragement with engaging children in authentic conversations. You do not want to engage in a monologue of continual feedback.

2. Adults need to monitor their own behavior to make sure they are spending more time using positive, descriptive language and less time giving directions or correcting inappropriate behavior.

IX. Using Positive Feedback and Encouragement

A. Show **Slide 37**. Describe the four major principles of using positive feedback and encouragement. Positive feedback and encouragement should be:

1. **Contingent on appropriate behavior.** For example, when Tanner hangs his coat in his cubby, the teacher can acknowledge it by saying "Tanner thank you so much for hanging up your coat all by yourself."

2. **Descriptive.** Rather than just saying "good job" or "thanks," you provide a brief description of the behavior that you just observed. This feedback helps children know exactly what the behavior is that you would like to see repeated. For example, you might say, "Thanks for hanging up your coat all by yourself, Tanner."

3. **Conveyed with enthusiasm.** Tone of voice, facial expressions, being down on a child's level, and the timeliness of when the positive feedback is delivered are all variables that affect the spirit in which positive feedback is accepted.
   a. Many children inherently like feedback from adults, and as we know, they will typically do many things to gain adults' attention (yes, the good and even the not-so-good behaviors!).

**Using Positive Feedback
and Encouragement**

- Contingent on appropriate behavior
- Descriptive
- Conveyed with enthusiasm
- Contingent on effort

b. Our enthusiasm when we deliver feedback conveys to young children that we are paying attention to them, that their behavior matters to us, and that we celebrate their accomplishments.

c. Think of the number of times you have heard a young child say, "Teacher, I did it!!!" It makes us smile just remembering the enthusiasm of young children when they have mastered a new skill or tried something that they have never done before.

4. **Contingent on effort.** Children need to be encouraged for their efforts as well as their successes. For example, Maggie, a child with special needs in your classroom, who really struggles with self-help skills, would be encouraged to try and put her shoes on, even if it means just getting her toes inside the shoes.

B. Show **Slide 38**. Talk about how there are different ways to give encouragement and feedback beyond the simple "good job." Encourage participants to think about other ways to verbally give feedback and ways to give nonverbal feedback and encouragement.

1. Refer to the handout on page 18 titled "Some Starters for Giving Positive Feedback and Encouragement." As they read through the suggestions, participants should mark a few that they particularly like and plan on using when they return to their early childhood settings. They can also come up with other ideas.

2. Giving nonverbal feedback/acknowledgment or signs of appreciation is an important strategy that we often overlook. Providing children with "warm fuzzies" might include hugs, high fives, winks, and thumbs up. Have participants think of nonverbal ways that they typically provide feedback to young children. Have the group generate a list of these nonverbal behaviors and compile them on chart paper.

C. We do need to remember that types of positive feedback and encouragement should be individualized for each child. For example, some children may not feel comfortable being encouraged in front of a group, while others may really like to be encouraged in front of a group of peers. We have to look at the individual preferences of children. There also may be cultural variations on what is typical and/or acceptable. Share an example, noting the individual differences of children.

D. Encourage other adults and peers to use positive feedback and encouragement. Point out to participants that this idea is a real key to increasing children's appropriate behaviors. The impact of positive

Using Positive Feedback and Encouragement

- Use nonverbal forms of positive feedback and encouragement.
- Individualize use of positive feedback and encouragement.
- Encourage other adults and peers to use positive feedback and encouragement .

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**Increasing Positive
Behaviors Activity**

- List 3-5 behaviors you would like to see increase in your setting.
- What changes might you make in your use of positive feedback and encouragement in order to increase the behaviors you just identified.

feedback and encouragement can be increased by ensuring that children are encouraged from multiple sources (such as parents, other teachers, and peers). Encouragement from more than one person is more likely to have a positive impact on children's behavior.

E. Show **Slide 39**. With a partner, have participants list three to five behaviors that they would like to see more of in their classrooms (partners do not have to end up with the same list but rather through discussion develop their own lists of behaviors to target). Consider behaviors that are likely to take the place of challenging behaviors. This list becomes the behaviors participants should encourage at high rates when they return to their early childhood settings. Have participants refer to their Action Plan and add these behaviors that they hope to target.

X. Pulling It All Together: Summary and Completion of Action Plan

A. Summary (**Slide 40**)

Summary

- The single best way to address challenging behavior in young children is to ***take steps to decrease the likelihood that it will occur***.
- Focus on the strategies we discussed:
  – Look closely at the physical environment;
  – Consider the schedules/routines/transitions/rules within your setting; and
  – The use (forms and frequency) of positive feedback/encouragement.

1. The single best way to address challenging behavior in young children is to take steps to make sure that they never occur.

2. Focus on prevention and teaching appropriate skills (strategies we have discussed during this session such as looking closely at the physical environment, considering the schedules/routines/transitions/rules within your setting, and forms and frequency of positive feedback/encouragement used).

B. Action Planning Activity (**Slide 41**). Have participants complete their Action Plan Form for *Engages in Ongoing Monitoring and Positive Attention (No. 10)* and *Uses Positive Feedback and Encouragement (No. 11)*, filling in the grid with ideas of changes they want to make in their early childhood settings as a result of today's session, as well as methods for evaluating their progress in making these changes. Ask if anyone is willing to share some ideas that they hope to implement "back home." Encourage a few participants to share ideas gleaned from today's session.

Action Planning

- Finish filling in the grid with ideas of what changes you want to make in your early childhood setting as a result of today's session, as well as methods for evaluating your progress in making these changes.
- Consider the resources or supports you might need to make these changes.

C. Answer any final questions.
    1. Thank participants for their input and attention.

    2. Have participants complete the evaluation and return it to you.

References

Fox, L., Dunlap, G., Hemmeter, M. L., & Strain, P. S. (2003). The teaching pyramid, a model for supporting social competence and preventing challenging behavior in young children [Electronic version]. *Young Child*, National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Hemmeter, M.L., Joseph, G., Ostrosky, M., & Santos, R. M. (2006). *Promoting Children's Success: Building Supportive Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments.* The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning Web site:
http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/modules.html

Resources:

Fox, L., Dunlap, G., Hemmeter, M. L., & Strain, P. S. (2003). *The teaching pyramid, a model for supporting social competence and preventing challenging behavior in young children* [Electronic version]. Young Child, National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Hemmeter, M.L., Joseph, G., Ostrosky, M., & Santos, R. M. (2006). *Promoting Children's Success: Building Supportive Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments.* The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning Web site:
http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/modules.html

Some Starters for Giving Positive Feedback and Encouragement for Effort, Thinking, and Problem Solving

- "You did a dynamite job of solving that problem…"
- "You have really learned how to…"
- "You must feel proud of yourself for…"
- "Excellent idea for…"
- "You've done a wonderful job at…"
- "See how _____ has improved in…"
- "You have worked so hard…"
- "Look how well s/he did at…"
- "That's a resourceful way of…"
- "WOW!! What a fabulous job you've done of…"
- "That's a cool way to …"
- "I'm so appreciative that you…"
- "You put a lot of work in to make that picture the way you wanted…"
- "You've really grown up because you…"
- "You are a real problem solver for…"
- "Brilliant thinking for…"
- "Give me an EXTRA HUGE high five for…"
- "Tell me what you like best about your creation."
- "Class, I have an announcement! Let's all give a hip, hip hooray to _____ for _____"
- "I really appreciate the way all of you have your eye on the story and are listening so carefully so you don't miss any part of the story."

Your favorites here…

This certifies that _____ has successfully completed two clock hours of KDHE approved early childhood learning activities.

Course IDNo. 2008-000150-001

Title of Learning Activity: Managing Challenging Behaviors by Creating Supportive Environments

Kansas/Missouri Core Competency: Interactions with Children, Providing Individual Guidance

Skill Level: 3

_____

Date

_____

Instructor Name, Title and Agency

_____

Location of Activity

Evaluation Form

Directions: Please take a moment to provide feedback on the training you received. Check the box that corresponds to your opinion for each statement or check N/A if not applicable. Please add any additional comments that you may have at the bottom of the page. When the survey is completed, leave it with your trainer. Thank you for your participation.

Location: _____   **Date:** _____

Program Affiliation (check one):
❏ Child Care Home   ❏ Child Care Center   ❏ Preschool   ❏ Other _____

Position (check one):
❏ Director   ❏ Teacher   ❏ Teacher Assistant   ❏ Other _____

Please put an "X" in the box that best describes your opinion as a result of attending this training	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
I have increased my comfort and confidence in working with children with challenging behaviors.					
I learned several strategies that can be used to design classroom environments, schedules, and routines.					
I increased my understanding for supporting children's ability to learn rules and routines.					
I understand how to use positive feedback and encouragement effectively to support children's positive social behaviors.					

Please respond to the following questions regarding this training:

The best features of this training session were . . . . .

Suggestions for improvement . . . . . .

Other comments and reactions I wish to offer . . . . .