PITC ACTIVITIES

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THE PROGRAM FOR INFANT/TODDLER CAREGIVERS

Think of a Child

Module: I
Topic: Understanding Children's Behavior
Type: Reflection/Journaling
Group Size: Individuals or Small Groups
Time: 20 - 30 minutes

Purpose:

For participants to apply the information on underlying causes of behavior to the children in their care in order to provide more responsive, individualized, effective child guidance.

What you will need:

Participant Materials	Trainer Materials	Equipment
The following handouts: :: Understanding a Child's Behavior		

Directions:

1. This is an information application activity and, therefore, should be preceded by information on understanding and responding to underlying causes of behavior.
2. Identify a child and describe the child's challenging behavior. Select one behavior at a time. This part could be done as an arrival activity or could be done at the beginning of this activity.
3. Consider each of the following possible causes one at a time. For each cause that seems to apply to the child's behavior written above, describe what it is that leads you to believe that is a cause. For example, if you think developmental stage contributes to the behavior, explain what it is that causes you to think so.
4. Identify possible strategies for supporting the child and/or teaching appropriate behavior.
5. Consider providing the handouts listed below as support for this activity.

Variations:

:: This activity could be done individually, by a primary and secondary caregiver working with the same child, or in classroom groups.

:: Handouts that are attached and might be helpful references for this activity:

- Things to Consider - for looking at individual differences and developmental stages
- Temperament and Behavior - for looking at individual differences
- Attitudes and Actions - for looking at possible strategies

Links to Head Start Program Performance Standards:

Includes but not limited to:

:: 1304.21(a)(1)(i) Observe and recognize individual differences

:: 1304.21(a)(3)(1)(C)-(D) Limits and expectations

Activity Developed by:

Activity and handouts created by Cheri Longaker, PITC Certified Trainer, from a variety of materials as credited on each document.

Source Material:

Shea, M. M. (1994) *Including All of Us: Caring for Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Settings: A Manual for Child Care Providers Module 3*. The Mainstreaming Project, Graduate School of Public Health, San Diego State University, Maternal and Child Health grant #MJC-067052.

Lally, J.R. (Executive Producer/Content Developer/Writer), Mangione P.L. (Content Developer/Writer), & Signer, S. (Content Developer/Writer). (1990). *Flexible, fearful, or feisty: The different temperaments of infants and toddlers* [Videotape]. United States: The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (Developed collaboratively by the California Department of Education and WestEd).

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UNDERSTANDING A CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

Child _____/Age____ Date _____

Behavior:

Cause (Describe indicators)	**Strategies Tried**	**Additional ideas/strategies to teach/guide appropriate behavior**
Developmental Stage		
Individual Differences		
The Environment		
Doesn't know-Ready to learn		
Unmet Need		

From PITC handout, *Toward a Better Understanding of Children's Behavior*
Adapted by K. Johnston and L. Thompson from Janes Hymes' Understanding Your Child

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THINGS TO CONSIDER

WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL CHILD?

active	approaching	cautious	cooperative	dependable
honest	independent	industrious	loyal	obedient
persistent	quiet	predictable	playful	assertive
confident	curious	sensitive	sense of humor	spirited
		takes risks		

Janet Poole, Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers, WestEd

What to Expect . . .*

Much of the behavior of young children that is annoying to adults is normal and is part of the child's learning process and growth. Adults can save themselves much worry and trouble if they know what to expect from children at different stages of development.

Of course, none of the 555 children in the study did any of these things all of the time. But all of the children did some of these things some of the time. Large percentages did some of them almost daily.

Most 2, 3 and 4 year olds:

- *Pay no attention to what they are asked to do*
- *Say "no;" refuse to do what is expected or asked*
- *Are poky, waste time eating, dressing, etc.*
- *Leave tasks undone, start but don't finish*
- *Wriggle; don't sit still*
- *Laugh, squeal, jump around*
- *Grab toys, shove, hit, attack others*
- *Refuse to share things with other children*
- *Ask" unnecessary" questions*
- *Cry, sulk easily*
- *Pick nose, play with fingers*
- *Stay close to adults*
- *Seek attention by showing off, look for praise*
- *Go to adults with criticism of others*
- *Boss others*
- *Stay awake at nap time; don't want to rest*
- *Refuse food*
- *Speak indistinctly*
- *Are hard to reason with*

Of course, none of the 555 children in the study did any of these things all of the time. But all of the children did some of these things some of the time. Large percentages did some of them almost daily.

*From *"Including All of Us" Caring for Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Settings: Module III Handout*

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TEMPERAMENT AND BEHAVIOR

Temperament is the **how** of behavior or behavioral style**.**

Ability is the **what** of behavior or content

Motivation is the **why** or reason behind the behavior**.**

from The Emotional Life of the Toddler, Alicia Lieberman

Temperament is thought to be a set of relatively stable tendencies to react in certain ways.

These tendencies can be **magnified,** downplayed, or ***changed in quality*** depending on the nature of one's encounters in the environment.

Supporting the Three Types of Temperaments

Temperament Type	Helpful Techniques	Things to Remember
Flexible: - Regular rhythms - Positive mood - Adaptability - Low intensity - Low sensitivity	+Check in regularly +Set aside special time	>Can be "invisible" >Can be taken advantage of
Fearful - Adapts slowly - Withdraws - Not highly active - Express emotions mildly	+Allow to observe from sidelines +Draw child in slowly +Allow independence to unfold.	Frequently: >Labeled insecure >Ridiculed for natural tendencies >Parents may feel social pressure
Feisty - Active/Tends to approach - Intense reactions - Distractible - Sensitive - Irregular rhythms - Moody - Often field independent	+Use redirection +Be flexible +Prepare the child for change +Make the most of quiet moments +Provide for vigorous play	>Problems eating, sleeping, etc. >Need secure base even more >Don't take behavior personally >Use sense of humor >Be available >Clear guidelines >Use support with, and time out from, child >Parents may feel criticized

From PITC Trainer's Manual Module I, *Resource Materials for Module I* (Temperaments Powerpoint handouts developed by Janet Poole), and *Fearful, Flexible, or Feisty* Video Magazine

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ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

REFRAMING SOME COMMON ATTITUDES ABOUT DISCIPLINE		
Get rid of conflict	⇒	Conflict is inevitable. Use it to teach.
Same problems over & over	⇒	What skills are missing?
Discipline interrupts teaching	⇒	Discipline/guidance is a key part of curriculum

Adapted from: Reframing Discipline Unit 1, Educational Productions, 1-800-950-4949

TECHNIQUES OF DIRECT GUIDANCE*

PHYSICAL

1. Give help based on the individual child's need.
2. Demonstrate or model the desired behavior or skill.
3. Lead the child by the hand to give direction, reassurance, or assistance.
4. Restrain the child where necessary to protect him or others.
5. Remove the child from the scene to help him relax and regain composure.
6. Use no punishment that is meant to hurt or humiliate the child.
7. Get down to eye level and use meaningful gestures.
8. Use your body language to help the child feel good about himself and comfortable in school.
9. Use gentle touch (slight pressure) to help children refocus.

VERBAL

1. Speak to the child eyeball to eyeball.
2. Use short sentences.
3. Use positive directions, telling the child what to do instead of what not to do.
4. Place the action part of your direction at the beginning of you r statement.
5. Give no more than two directions at a time, preferably only one.
6. Give the child directions when it is the time and place you want the behavior to occur.
7. Give only directions the child really needs.
8. Make it clear whether the child has a choice or not.
9. Give logical and accurate reasons for requests.
10. Keep competition to a minimum by motivating the child through helping him set new personal goals for achievement.
11. Praise the child for jobs well done.

AFFECTIVE

1. Give positive feedback for occasions other than when the child follows directions.
2. Give attention before the child demands it.
3. Reflect the feeling the child is expressing and give it a label.
4. Get to know the child better if you find yourself feeling negatively toward him.

*From "Including All of Us" Caring for Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Settings: Module III Handout

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