Effective Parenting Skills for Child Behaviours

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“I belong only when you are paying attention to me, or giving me undue services”

Notice me. Involve me usefully.

(Dreikurs, 2004; Nelsen, 2006)
Misguided Power

"I belong only when I’m the boss, or at least don’t let you boss me around"

Let me help. Give me choices.

(Dreikurs, 2004; Nelsen, 2006)
Revenge

“I believe I don’t belong and that hurts, so I’ll hurt others”

I feel hurt. Validate my feelings.

(Dreikurs, 2004; Nelsen, 2006)
Assumed Inadequacy

“I believe I don’t belong, so I give up. Leave me alone.”

Don’t give up on me. Show me a small step—I need help!

(Dreikurs, 2004; Nelsen, 2006)
Positive Discipline

Connection before Correction

Feel better, Do better

Children see, Children do
Nature of behaviour

Behaviours requiring handling:
• Aggressive
• Violent
• Non-compliant
• Attention seeking
• Inattentive
• Release of frustration
• Task avoidance
• Self-stimulation
• Isolation
• Challenge authority
• Social skill deficit
• Lack of motivation in learning

• Behaviours that are related to Special Learning Needs
The common challenging behaviours and emotional problems among pre-school children in Hong Kong

1. Compliance
2. Learning behaviours
3. Social-emotional behaviours
Functions of Behaviours

There is always a reason behind any behaviour

Questions to ask yourself -

• What need does the behaviour serve to meet?
• What are the environmental circumstances stimulating unwanted behaviour?

| Antecedent (what occurs immediately before the behaviour) | Behaviour | Consequence (occurs immediately after the behaviour, usually others’ immediate response towards the behaviour) |
Why are these challenging behaviours and emotional problems so difficult to handle?

Behaviour can be caused / maintained by multiple functions (e.g. task avoidance and attention seeking)

Multiple functions can result in multiple behaviours (e.g. screaming, hitting, kicking as a result of not getting the iPad)

Behaviours is sometimes related to a function first but maintained by another (e.g. making a funny face to avoid a task → everybody laughs → attention given to maintain the behaviour)
Common malpractices that reinforce negative behaviours

• Bribing
• Application of an inappropriate consequence
• Use of incorrect strategies
• Forgetting to keep your promise
• Too much lecturing and too many reprimands

Reference Materials:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0T2R8pTpcoo
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rIV_Cw9q5E
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2bgO6leTpg&list=PLcTm82VWzbBJ0FeGvuRZwYcTNaEl5WYoo
Reinforcing Positive Behaviours

- Use reward to build up positive behaviour
- Use reward to diminish negative behaviour
- Teach social skill / play skill
- Teach knowledge, concepts
Practical Strategies (1)
No bribing

a. State the rules clearly
b. Remind the rules when needed
c. Reinforce the positive behaviours when it occurs
Practical Strategies (2) – Set up a behavioural plan

Use correct strategies
a. Develop SMART behavioural objective(s)
b. Implement the strategies step by step
c. Generalise the strategies to other situations and other environments

Are these targets small, clear, achievable?
1. Remind others after you have first minded your own business
2. Control own emotions, not to lose temper when we go out
3. Have a harmonious relationship with younger sister
4. Tidy up the toys after playing
Behavioural plan

Be specific with your target behaviour

Your target is…

↑ Compliant behaviour
↑ Appropriate replacements
↓ Inappropriate behaviours

Teach new behaviours

Always start with something easy → to get reward, to accomplish
Practical Strategies (3) – Tips of using reinforcement

When
- Immediately after the correct behaviour
- Consider the frequency – depends on the intensity of the negative behaviours and the stage of implementation

What
- Something your child likes
- Something he/she does not get access to very often
- Small and frequent reinforcers are better than a single but huge reinforcer

How
- Consistent and persistent
- Use of tokens

Why
- Pair up reinforcer with reasons
- Reinforce the behaviour, the attitude and good behavior exceeding expectation
What are effective reinforcers?

1. Child’s favourite
2. Easily accessible and can be used in most places
3. Can be given in small amount or only for a short time
4. Can be given immediately
5. Must accompany with verbal praise, social reward, and reasons for reward
Use of tokens

• Format of tokens – points, ticks, stars, stickers etc.
• How many?
• How often?

Start with 5 tokens. Keep your promise!
Practical Strategies (4) – develop self-regulation

Over time: Move on to use partial reinforcement to collect a bigger reinforcement

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<th>Miles</th>
<th>Destinations</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>Taiwan, Kunming</td>
<td>$1,500, $2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>Cebu, Beijing, Hokkaido</td>
<td>$2,000, $2,500, $?</td>
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<td>40,000</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>Europe</td>
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Practical Strategies (5) – use of a timer

a. State the rules clearly
b. Use a timer
c. Give pre-warning / reminders
d. Count 3-2-1

3-2-1

Take away

The rule is....
Practical Strategies (6) – minimise negative behaviours

a. State the rules clearly
b. Remind the rules when needed
c. Apply a consequence when there is a negative behaviour

Reduce negative behaviours
• Give a warning for the first rule breaking and give a chance
• Take away the token for the second (and onwards) rule breaking
• Use over-correction
• Give a token for good behaviour as soon as possible

Relate antecedent and consequence
Practical Strategies (7) – importance of generalisation

Generalise the established positive behaviour to other people and other environment. Make sure the child does not listen to one person ONLY.
Behaviour is learnt!

• Behaviour needs to be tackled at early stage
  
  ▶ Behaviour can be improved
  ▶ New behaviours including positive and negative do occur.
Parents’ Education Talks 2019/20

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The child is the father of the man; Early intervention is always the key.

Strategy is a commodity, Execution is an art.

Effective Strategies
- Develop self-regulation
- Understand the functions of behaviours
- Generalisation
- Set up a behavioural plan
- Use of timer
- Reinforcement
- No bribing
- Minimise negative behaviours

Children learn best when they are taught by both example and precept of parents.

Prevention is better than cure; Educate your child the earlier the better.

Connection before Correction
Feel Better, Do Better
Children See, Children Do
For more information...

Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong

https://web.edu.hku.hk/event/parent-seminars
Thank you!