

# Week 11: Developmental-Behavioral Approach

## Chapter 12

### I. Highlights

- A. Children's behavior is affected by everything: hungry, tired, sick, temperament, environment, home life, weather, time of day, teacher turnover, etc.
- B. What you don't have, you cannot give. Practice problem-solving and empathy in your own life if you want your children to learn it too.
- C. The effectiveness of an ECE program can be measured by the growth/ change/ progress our children make over the school year, including their behavior and social-emotional maturity.
- D. We all learn from success, so set up the environment and activities for children to succeed at their current level and be challenged to step to the next level.
- E. Modify the environment to help change behavior.
- F. Different types of reinforcement: negative, intrinsic, positive, natural consequences, logical consequences, withdrawing/ withholding reinforcers (all of these can be used on purpose or can happen by accident, which is sometimes why behavior gets worse even when you're trying to make it better)
- G. The goal of discipline (including time-out) is to help the child learn to gain control of his/her own body and behavior. It's not about the adult having power over the child.
- H. Always remember to separate the behavior from the child. There are no bad children.
- I. Task analysis: break a task down into tiny steps, then help children as much as needed (but no more) with one step at a time.
- J. One of our jobs as teachers is to help children develop a lifelong love of learning.

## II. Homework

- A. Catch up on anything you're still missing. It's already week 11!
- B. Read Chapters 13 and 14 by next week
- C. Final project presentations are not far away...

## III. Discussion

- A. What affects the behavior of the children?
  1. Environment: way the classroom is set up, adult attitude & interaction, other children
  2. Genetics, nutrition, health, lack of sleep, medicine, teething/pain, constipation
  3. Temperament of the child
    - a) Inherent, set when they're born, never try to change but can work with it
    - b) Remember if theirs is different from yours, put yours own hold and meet their needs (ex: calm/slow yourself down if you're feisty and the child is slow-to-warm)
    - c) For the super energetic child, what can I do in this environment to calm them down and help them stay in control? Not change temperament, but work with it.
  4. Home environment, especially if two different homes (mom's house, dad's house) or lot of conflict/stress at home or not calm/safe/clean at home
    - a) Can help to offer artwork, coloring, playdough, etc. to calm them down when they arrive angry
  5. Weather
  6. Time of day, day of the week, holidays

7. Have to help the parents understand we're not being nosy when we ask questions about changes at home, how their night was, etc. It's because we can support the child much better when we understand the context. If the child is not listening and we know dad just moved out of the house last week, that's different than just not listening.
  8. Teacher turnover (due to low pay, coworker conflicts, stress, etc.), especially after multiple teachers come and go so the child stops developing trust in new teachers
- B. What do children do that really annoys you? What pushes your buttons?
1. Snatching toys from another child who was playing happily by themselves
  2. Spitting food out
  3. Playing helpless, when a child can speak and do things for himself, but refuses to because he knows someone else will do it for him (instead, provide loving support, sit next to him and talk him through the sequence, but don't do it for him if you know for a fact he can do it)
  4. Tattling about unimportant things, asking for teacher help with every step instead of problem-solving process themselves (can help by talking infants through problem-solving and modeling it for them, so they'll learn for when they're older)
- C. Rule #1: What you don't have, you cannot give. If you want children to practice problem-solving, you have to practice problem-solving when you have your own conflicts with other people. Avoiding it or trying the silent treatment doesn't help. Also doesn't mean having power to make the other person do it your way. Means talking it out to find a solution you're both happy with. Empowers children to resolve their own conflicts.

1. Remember that children come in with their patterns/habits/ways of doing things based on home and family life. We sometimes have to help them re-learn new patterns/habits for dealing with situations at school.
2. Most helpful if they get consistent messages at home and at school. Talk to the parents: "This is what we're trying at school, and we really need your support. The more consistent we can be, the more successful he'll be here and at home. What is your approach to this at home...?"
3. Role model positive behavior and say what you're doing. "I'm going to open the door for my friend Teacher Mary because she has her hands full..."

D. "Don't react. Teach instead." What does this mean?

1. Instead of knee-jerk reacting to the child's behavior, make it a teachable moment. If a child takes another child's toy, instead of grabbing the toy back for them, encourage the child to ask for it back themselves.
2. Role model and set up the environment in a way that helps them make positive choices.
3. Giving attention for negative behavior is reinforcing the negative behavior, even though you don't mean to. This happens when you react instead of stopping to make it a teachable moment.

E. Lack of empathy, no emotional attachment to other children getting hurt, is a learned behavior. Can learn from dad pushing mom, older brothers being rough, violent video games, non-nurturing discipline at home, etc. We can model the opposite when we show empathy for all children and talk about their interactions. "Just because you see people play rough with each other, does not mean it's okay. You can do this instead..."

#### IV. Chapter 12: The Developmental Behavioral Approach

- A. Challenging behavior is in the eye of the beholder. (Something that annoys you isn't necessarily an unacceptable behavior or the child's problem. It may be *your* problem that it's pushing your buttons.)
- B. The effectiveness of an ECE program is demonstrated by changes in children's behavior.
  - 1. When you enter a program, how do the children socialize and interact? How do teachers talk to them? How does it change from September to June?
  - 2. What difference do we (teachers) make in the lives of children by empowering them with problem-solving skills, confidence, empathy, self-control, etc.?
- C. How to support children towards change
  - 1. Environment gives messages
    - a) Twice a day, observe your room (once with children in it, once without) to make sure the room is meeting the needs of this specific group of children
    - b) Is this a happy room? Do I feel a sense of "home away from home" when I walk in, or is it smelly and uncomfortable?
  - 2. Learning from success
    - a) All people learn from their successes, so set the child up to succeed
    - b) Provide experiences where children can do well, then acknowledge when they succeed
    - c) When experiences are successful, children feel comfortable in the environment and the material, which inspires them to try harder to find success in new / other experiences
  - 3. What is a developmentally appropriate environment?
    - a) An environment set up to meet the children's needs at this age and stage of development

- b) Materials match to each child's current skill levels (will be different at the end of the school year than in September because the children become more capable during the year)
4. Materials sequenced in small segments, to provide both success and challenges
    - a) Break difficult tasks down into small steps, teach a little bit at a time
    - b) When they achieve one step, then teach the next step
    - c) Sequence from easy to difficult. When they've mastered one bit, give them that one bit (so they can succeed every time) and then the next step (which they're learning). Help them with the rest of it.
    - d) Example of tying shoes: put foot all the way in, pull laces tight, make one knot, then tie the bow. You don't learn it all in one day.
  5. Learning through play
    - a) To practice something over and over, it has to be enjoyable
    - b) They won't learn from a toy they only use once or twice and get bored
    - c) Helps to have materials they can use in different ways
  6. Responsive teachers
    - a) Knowing the children as individuals
    - b) Responding to needs immediately as they arise, not telling a child, "Stop crying. No crying right now."

#### D. Behavior modification

1. A system by which particular environmental events are systematically arranged to produce specific behavior changes.
2. Examples
  - a) If a child routinely has a meltdown during transitions, set up a system where they get a two-minute warning that there's a transition coming.

Make it predictable and give them a place to save what they were working on.

- b) If a child has trouble saying good-bye in the morning, set up a “good-bye chair” next to the window where they can watch their parent walking to the car and driving away.
- c) If a child misses Mommy too much, can make a book with family photos and routines specific to her family. Put it somewhere special where she can look at it.
- d) Children were struggling with staying quiet at naptime, asking, “Is it 2:00 yet? Is it 2:00 yet?” We got a silent visual timer so they knew that when the red was gone, it was 2:00. Solved the problem.
- e) When the kids are super energetic and unfocused, be open to going outside earlier. Our preschool teacher will have the class run laps outside sometimes before coming in to settle in for circle time.
- f) Use a visual schedule for a child with autism who has trouble with any changes to the routine. Have the child help make the sequence of what is going to happen during the day. (Avoids the meltdown when the teacher and the child have different ideas about what should happen next.) Note special guests or birthdays or unusual things coming up this month so he can be mentally prepared for those things.
- g) For a child with Down Syndrome whose tongue pops out a lot, can put a red dot on the ceiling. Telling him to look at the red dot makes him look up, which moves his jaw and makes the tongue go back in.
- h) For a child who can’t sleep next to the window or mirror, move her crib to another space.

- i) When a new child is having separation anxiety, can put parent chairs outside the window so they can observe. Then the child can go check in to see if Mommy is still there. Soon the child stops needing to check.
  - j) Make a “crying corner” where children can go throw tantrums or have crying meltdowns if they need to. (It’s still a supervised area, and she goes there by choice.) Lets her get it out of her system instead of telling her to stop.
3. When children’s behavior is so severe that it affects your ability to care for the group, you first have to make sure that child is safe and the other teachers can take care of the rest of the group. In case of a tantrum, if possible, remove the child from the room so the rest of the children can stay focused on their work.

#### E. Reinforcement

1. Negative reinforcement = the strengthening of a behavior by the removal of an unpleasant consequence. When something unpleasant is stopped.  
Example: when a toddler whines to be picked up and you pick him up, he stops whining. This is negatively reinforcing your choice to pick him up when he whines because the unpleasant thing (the whining) went away when you did it. You are more likely to pick him up again next time because you’ve learned that picking him up stops the unpleasant whining.
2. Intrinsic reinforcement = feelings of pleasure and personal satisfaction derived from working on or accomplishing a task, discovering something new, or solving a problem. Examples: “I did it!” or having their drawing hung up on the wall or reading a great book if you like to read.
3. Positive reinforcement = something that follows a response/behavior and results in an increase of that particular response/behavior
  - a) Rewarding a child for doing what they’re supposed to, such as a sticker chart



- b) Noticing & acknowledging positive behavior, thanking her for playing gently
  - c) Maybe something you don't mean to be a pleasant consequence, but is still a "positive reinforcer" if doing it makes the behavior happen more often. Example: a child gets sent to the office every time he hits or bites, but now he's hitting or biting more, it turns out he likes going to the office! Going to the office is accidentally a positive reinforcer. Need a new strategy if you want him to hit or bite less.
4. Natural consequences = what would occur without an adult's intervention. Examples: feeling hungry if you choose not to eat lunch, child won't play with you if you kick him, etc.
  5. Logical consequences = set by an adult, but related to the child's original inappropriate behavior. Examples: putting the scissors away when children are cutting hair or clothes instead of art. Use this when it's not safe to let the natural consequence happen. More meaningful for children than some made-up consequence (such as no dessert after hitting your sister) that is disconnected from their behavior.
  6. Withdrawing and withholding reinforcers = taking away something the child likes. Remember adult attention is a good reinforcer, so ignoring inappropriate behavior (as long as it's safe) would count for this.
- F. Discipline vs. punishment
1. Punishment is against the law.
  2. #1 best option: catch the child being good
  3. Reminder of what is expected (come down to their level, make eye contact, don't scream across the room)
  4. Redirection (help them find something else to do, diver their attention to something else)

5. Verbal reprimands (saying “no, that’s not okay, stop that”)
6. Sit and watch (have the child sit and watch me do my job, or I’ll sit and watch the child, say, “Show me how you do this job...” so we can guide them to the right choices)
7. Time out (making the child sit away from the group for a while because they did something wrong)
  - a) Not effective, doesn’t help -- the child often doesn’t know what they did wrong because the consequence doesn’t seem connected to what they did and they didn’t think their behavior was wrong at the time
  - b) If you need to do it, first sit and explain to the child why they have to be by themselves for a little while (was hurting other children). Then say, “You can sit on this chair and get up when you’re ready. When you feel in control of your body, you can come back.” (Teacher doesn’t know if it will take 1 minute or 10 minutes. The child knows his body.) Give him a book or a puzzle to do while sitting there; don’t make it a waste of time. Yes, sometimes they stay for 5 seconds, come back and do the same thing, so then you *patiently* repeat the process over and over if needed. They learn eventually what it means to feel in control of his body. Empowers the child to control his own behavior. Teacher has enough power, we don’t need to have power over where the child sits right now. They learn nothing from me exercising my power over the child. Only the child knows when he feels back in control.
  - c) Time-out is to help the child learn to control his own behavior. Do it this specific way. Don’t use it to get him out of your sight for a while because you’re out of patience. If you need a break, give *yourself* time out by asking another teacher to give you a break.

G. Always remember to separate the behavior from the child.

1. Throwing a block is a bad behavior choice, but it doesn't make him a bad child.
2. Make it clear the child is loved, is a good person, but made the wrong choice in this case and we're going to help you make better choices next time.
3. Super important because if we tell the child he's bad, he'll believe you and keep making worse behavior choices.
4. Have a common phrase/vocabulary that all teachers use consistently.

H. Task analysis

1. The process of sequencing developmental tasks into small incremental steps.
2. Prompting (words, gestures, or physical help to help the child learn the skill)
3. Fading (gradually stepping back more, supporting less as they become more independent)
4. Manual prompt (hand-over-hand showing them how to do it)
5. Cueing (same as prompting)
6. Praise (positive feedback for their efforts, regardless of whether they're doing things successfully independently or not)
7. Descriptive praise ("I see you're working really hard on that picture. I see you used a lot of blue..." instead of "Good job!" or "I like it!")
8. Shaping (positive reinforcement when the child gets it right, or almost right, instead of every time)
9. Our job is to help them when they need it, then step back so they can learn to do it alone. If they're used to getting big excited praise for everything they do, they become "praise junkies" and want your attention for every little thing they do. Can help to tell them, "Go look in the mirror to see if it's done. You decide."

## I. Learning by imitation

1. Observational learning (learn by watching each other)
2. Modeling (from adults or other children)
3. The educational practices relate to reinforcement procedures: if we want them to develop love of learning, we have to reinforce the positive experiences with books and learning.
4. Never promote competition, especially under age 6. Competition & comparison among young children has no place in ECE. Save it for school age.

## V. Textbook notes

A. One of our jobs as teachers is to help children develop a love of learning.

1. When children are internally motivated to learn, that helps them throughout life.
2. Helping them develop this love of learning should be a main part of our teaching philosophy.
3. This can start in preschool and help them throughout life.

B. Control of error: when children practice something, they need a way to figure out whether they did it right or not.

1. Building a tower with the big block on top and small block on the bottom, the tower falls over. This tells the child immediately that it didn't work out, so the child will keep working on it to figure out the right way.
2. When the puzzle has a frame and a clear picture, that guides the child to see whether he did it right or not. The teacher doesn't have to say it's good or bad.
3. Whenever a child does it the wrong way, don't just say, "That's the wrong way to do it." Show her the right way, over and over if needed.

4. When a child is misusing or abusing a toy, instead of “Stop doing that” (negative) try, “Here’s what you can do instead...” (positive). Remember that negativity grows more negativity, but positive grows more positive. Instead of “stop running,” say, “walk.”
- C. Spend a lot of time getting the environment ready for the children.
1. Sit down and play with the toys yourself so you can know how to show the way to use them.
  2. Infant teachers, put the toys in your mouth to see how it feels! If you don’t know how it feels, how will you know if it will be a learning experience for your infants?
  3. Work with the crayons, different types of papers, etc. that you’re providing the children. Know how they feel. Know what they can do.
  4. When you buy a new set of blocks, sit down and build with it yourself first. Figure out ways you can help your different children at different skill levels connect with this new toy.
  5. If you feel a child is not using the material properly (such as hitting someone with a block, rolling marbles across the room instead of using them properly), show them over and over how they are supposed to use it.