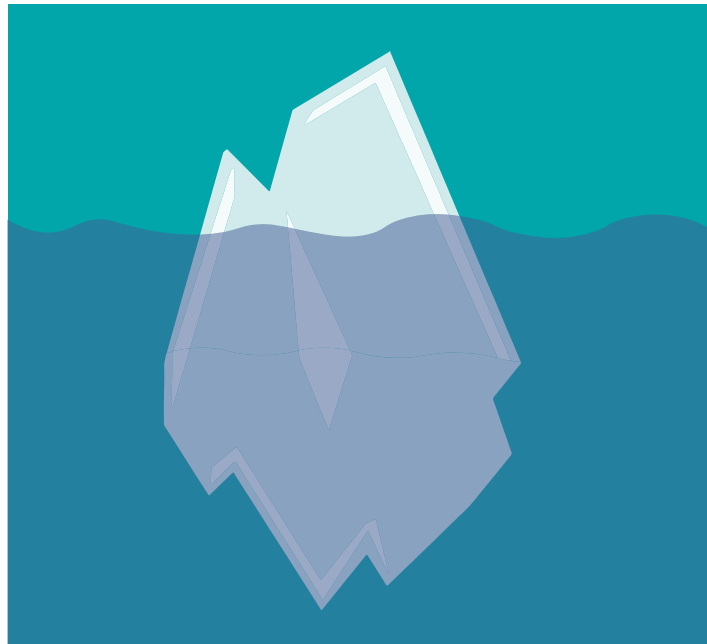


# PRISM Training Modules

## Challenging Behavior

Pyramid Resources for Infant-Toddler  
Social-Emotional Development  
Juniper Gardens Children's Project  
University of Kansas

Adapted from:  
The Center on the Social and Emotional  
Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)  
Vanderbilt University



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# PRISM Training Module Series

Introduction & Understanding  
Social-Emotional Development

Focusing on Relationships

Responsive Routines,  
Schedules, & Environments

Understanding Child Behavior

Teaching About Feelings

Supporting Active Engagement  
& Peer Interactions

**Challenging Behavior**

## PRISM Training Modules\*: Challenging Behavior

We expect working with infants and toddlers to create some challenging situations. But what behaviors are considered truly challenging and interfering with a child's development and growth? Today we will identify and define challenging behavior and work to understand why challenging behavior happens. We will discuss how to gather data and implement strategies that will PREVENT challenging behavior. In doing this, we can BUILD social-emotional competence in our young learners.

### Learner Objectives

How do we define Challenging Behavior in infants and toddlers.  
Ways to gather information to help us better understand challenging behavior.  
Effective ways to respond to challenging behavior.

### Agenda

- I. Setting the Stage - 10 minutes
- II. What is Challenging Behavior - 20 minutes
- III. Identifying Challenging Behavior- 20 minutes
- IV. Using Data-Based Decision Making- 20 minutes
- V. Responding to Challenging Behavior- 30 minutes
- VI. Wrap-up & Reflection - 5 minutes

\*For references and more information about the PRISM Training Modules, please visit [prism.ku.edu/trainings](http://prism.ku.edu/trainings)

My Notes:



## Training Preparation

- Edit Agenda in Microsoft Word as needed, then print
- Print PRISM Challenging Behavior - 1 PowerPoint, 1 copy per participant
- Print PRISM Challenging Behavior - Handouts, 1 copy per participant, or print each handout listed below individually
- Prepare and review videos
- Activity: Iceberg reflection slide 24 - Review questions so you have examples of your own to share
- Activity: ABC Activity slide 30 - review possible responses for completing chart

## Handouts

- PRISM Challenging Behavior - 1 PowerPoint
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - 2 Agenda
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - 3 Identifying Behaviors
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - 4 Iceberg Activity
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - 5 ABC Chart
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - 6 Training Feedback

## Videos

- PRISM Challenging Behavior - Internal & External Behavior
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - Challenging Behavior - Biting
- PRISM Challenging Behavior - Supporting Children with Challenging Behavior

## Materials Needed:

### Technology

- PowerPoint File
- Video Files
- Computer
- Projector

### Printables

- Handouts
- Certificates of Completion
- Sign-in Sheet

### Supplies

- Name tags
- Pens
- Snacks and drinks
- Chart paper/white board and markers
- Tape
- Table fidgets/manipulatives

### Other Items

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Slide 1: Challenging Behavior Training

Welcome to the Challenging Behavior training in the PRISM Training Series where we are going to learn about how we can better understand and respond to challenging behavior. These trainings are meant to be used hand-in-hand with the practice-based coaching model. We'll give you an overview at these trainings, but you'll get into more specifics with your coach.

I am (name) and (give some personal background history relevant to training). Here with me are (introduce rest of team).

Let's get some logistics out of the way before we begin.

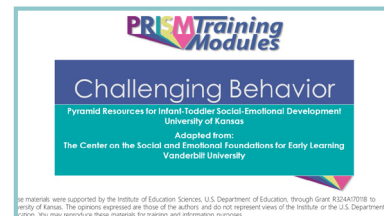
Breaks:

Lunch/Snack:

Parking:

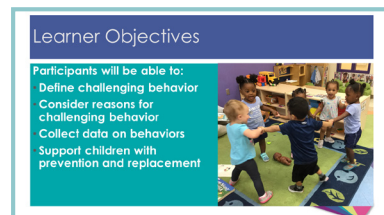
Restrooms:

Last, you should have a set of materials that includes handouts, slide notes, and other useful information. We'll reference some of these throughout the training, so keep them handy. If you don't have the materials you need, please let us know.



## Slide 2: Learner Objectives

Today we are going to talk about behaviors and situations that are considered challenging in infant and toddler care. We will define what challenging behavior is in the context of infant and toddler care and consider reasons why these behaviors may occur. We will talk about ways to gather information and data so we may have a better understanding of these challenging behaviors, and so we can understand how to respond. Together we will also discuss ways to prevent challenging behavior, teach more appropriate behaviors, and support children as they manage difficult situations.



### Slide 3: Training Agenda

You can find our training agenda for today on [Handout 2](#).

While the learning objectives represent what we hope you receive from the training, the agenda represents how we are going to get there.

At the end of the training, we will ask you to complete a questionnaire about the training. We look forward to receiving this input as it will improve the training for others.



### Slide 4: Our Learning Environment

We'll be spending a lot of time together throughout this training and future trainings. It's helpful to decide together what sorts of agreements are important to the group. Think about what makes a positive learning environment for you. What are those things?

Pause for responses



### Slide 5: Possible Shared Agreements

With that in mind, what are some agreements we can make about how our learning environment should look? You can use the agreements on the slide as a jumping point.

Pause for responses, then summarize agreements





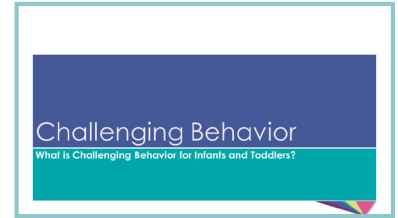
## Slide 6: Challenging Behavior

Throughout infant and toddler development, new challenges emerge. Young children's behavior is constantly changing – we expect this, and it is a sign of growth, development, and greater independence. But as children grow and develop, challenges arise as well.

Sometimes these challenges might be due to a child acquiring a new skill. We see this when tantrums increase as independence develops and as children become more mobile. These challenges may also arise when skills have not yet developed. For example, a child may bite because she lacks the ability to use words to communicate and describe what she needs.

Sometimes our expectations can lead us to view children's behavior as unusually challenging, when in fact their behavior may be a behavior that is typical for children at their stage of development, and just a sign that development is progressing. For instance, even though tantrums can be challenging, they are a part of typical child development and would not necessarily be unexpected. They may also signal that a child is ready for a new stage of development. As we think about challenging behavior for infants and toddlers, we will talk more about behaviors that are considered "typical" for infants and toddlers. We will also talk about how to identify and address those behaviors or situations that become more intense or more persistent over time and may interfere with interactions and learning.

Our goal today will be talk about and share ideas for how you can identify and define challenging behavior. We will work to understand why challenging behavior happens, as well as how to gather data, and implement strategies that will PREVENT challenging behavior, and BUILD social-emotional competence.

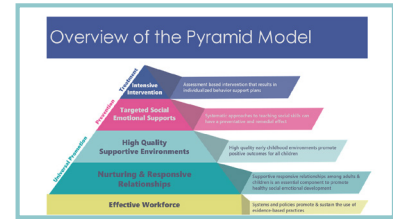


## Slide 7: Overview of the Pyramid Model

Let's do a quick review of the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model for promoting social-emotional competence for infants and toddlers involves three tiers of supports to ensure that all children receive the individualized level of support they need – universal practices ensure that all children benefit from high quality environments, and nurturing and responsive relationships that are essential to healthy social-emotional development. Most children under your care will be successful with strong universal practices at the Tier 1 level. These practices include establishing high quality supportive environments and promoting warm and nurturing positive relationships throughout daily activities. These practices also include establishing behavioral expectations, and strategies for responding in challenging situations or when children are in distress.

For most children, Tier 1 universal strategies are enough to manage typical challenging behaviors which often are short-lived or are situational for most children. In some cases, however, there may be instances where challenging behaviors are persistent or more intense.

The Pyramid Model provides a framework for determining when additional support is needed, planning for implementation of those supports, and evaluating how those supports are working. While Tier 1 focuses on universal practices that promote social-emotional development in the classroom, Tier 2, involving Targeted Social Emotional Supports, focuses on systematically teaching social skills, improving social competencies, and preventing challenging behavior with specific children in the classroom. This level of support is represented by the pink tier. In infant and toddler settings, the practices that become part of Tier 2 targeted supports often involve practices that will be delivered more intentionally, in a targeted manner, across multiple routines in the day.





## Slide 7 cont.

For an even smaller number of children, those targeted supports may not be enough. Some children may need more individualized or intensive interventions. Tier 3 Individualized Intervention, represented in purple, refers to an individualized behavior support plan that might be developed when children have intense, persistent challenging behavior, or when a child is identified with a delay or disability. In these cases, some children may benefit from even more individualized supports or interventions in order to engage in the classroom activities and with teachers and peers.



## Slide 8: Definition of Social-Emotional Development

Let's also refer back to our definition of social-emotional development. Our definition says that social-emotional development is the developing capacity of the child to:

- form close and secure relationships;
- experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways; and
- explore the environment and learn;

and that this all takes place in the context of family, community, and culture.

Again, most children will develop these skills when their care settings provide multiple opportunities for social-emotional learning and growth and a solid foundation for these skills.

However, we know that many children will engage in difficult or challenging behaviors along the way. For the children exhibiting challenging behaviors that are getting in the way of their learning and engagement, we may need to take a closer look and address these behaviors more directly and intentionally.

Let's define what types of behaviors we would consider as challenging behaviors.

### CSEFEL Definition of Social/Emotional Development

The developing capacity of the child from birth through five...

- To form close and secure relationships;
- To experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways;
- To explore the environment and learn;

all in the context of family, community, and culture.

## Slide 9: Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors can be Challenging

We must first think about what behaviors are “typical” for infants and toddlers – that is, what behaviors we might expect to observe among infants and toddlers considering their development and growing independence.

When we think about behaviors that could be described as challenging behaviors for infants and toddlers, we understand that sometimes behavior that is typical or developmentally appropriate for an infant or toddler can still be very challenging for caregivers. Most infants and toddlers engage in behaviors that are challenging for care providers at some point in time. The pace at which infants and toddlers develop often means that these behaviors can come and go or be situation- or caregiver-specific. We often talk about “phases” – think about teething, having sleep regressions, introducing new caregivers. Sometimes these situations can result in children having challenging behavior in response to natural changes.

What behaviors can you think of that are challenging, but, in some form, are fairly typical for infants?

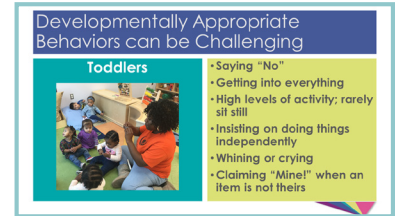
Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors Can be Challenging	
<b>Pre-Mobile Infants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Crying to communicate</li><li>• Cluster feedings or increase in need to eat</li><li>• Fussiness</li></ul> 	<b>Mobile Infants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking toys from others</li><li>• Mouthing toys</li><li>• Climbing on others</li><li>• Knocking things down</li><li>• Stronger anxiety</li><li>• Biting</li><li>• Crying/fussiness</li></ul>

## Slide 10: Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors can be Challenging

What behaviors can you think of that are challenging, but, in some form, are fairly typical for toddlers?

These infant and toddler behaviors can certainly feel challenging for caregivers. These behaviors are also pretty common for most children in their development. These behaviors are not necessarily unexpected or uncommon and will most often respond to the use of universal practices. It is when these behaviors persist, become more intense, or interfere with learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults that we may want to examine what is going on a little more closely. It may become necessary to examine these behaviors, identify why they are occurring, and make a plan for responding to them.

It is important to remember that as we work to address challenging behavior, we should approach them with a "prevention" frame of mind. Plus, we also want to work to promote strong social-emotional skills. Whenever we aim to decrease challenging behaviors, we need to also work on teaching and encouraging more desirable and appropriate behaviors in their place. These two goals go hand-in-hand.



Presenter Notes:

If not mentioned by participants, discuss crying, fussiness, tantrums, biting, running away, hitting, taking toys, anxiety, overactivity, lack of following directions, choosing to not engage in interactions with others or having periods of being disengaged

## Slide 11: Challenging Behavior & Equity

Decades of research has established that children's school success depends on whether they have learned certain emotional and behavioral skills before they enter kindergarten. The care provided in the infant, toddler, and preschool years lays an important foundation for later success, which is the rationale for why we are here today talking about how we can prevent challenging behavior and teach social-emotional competence. So, our problem-solving emphasis is typically on relieving the distress the child may be experiencing early on, teaching and supporting social-emotional competence, and prevention of further challenges.

Prolonged challenging behavior can have significant long-term consequences for children, but we have learned from a more recent line of research that the consequences can differ based on children's race, gender, and disability status. In private childcare, rates of suspension and expulsion for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers have been shown to be different based on race, gender, and disability status. In private childcare, young boys of color have the highest rates of suspension and expulsion, and young children with disabilities are twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension than students without disabilities.

Research from the Yale Child Study Center has shown that unconscious ideas that we all hold, such as preconceived ideas about children and behavior based on race, gender, or ethnicity, can play a role in how we perceive and respond to child behaviors. These "implicit biases" can create inequalities in care and eventually, compound the challenges faced by some children and families.

Challenging Behavior and Equity

High rates of suspension and expulsion with disparity based on race, gender, and disability status

Young boys of color have highest rates of expulsion and suspensions

Young children with disabilities are twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension

\*\*Later school success depends on learned emotional and behavioral skills before entering kindergarten.

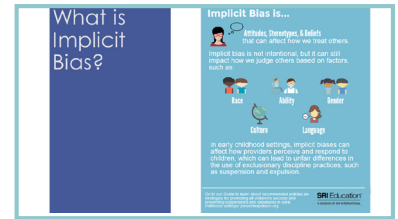
Presenter Notes:

Consider differentiating between less severe challenging behavior from more severe instances of behavior (Tier 3).

More information about this study can be found here: <https://modules.nceln.fpg.unc.edu/sites/modules.nceln.fpg.unc.edu/files/foundations/handouts/M2H2-PreschoolImplicitBiasResearchBrief.pdf>;  
Resources for addressing equity in early childhood settings can be found on the NCPMI website: <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Implementation/Equity/index.html>.

## Slide 12: What is Implicit Bias?

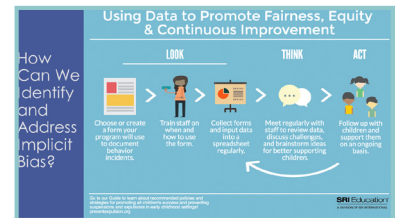
What do we mean by using the term “implicit bias?” This term refers to the attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes all of us have at some level. It may be that a caregiver maintains a belief that a child from a certain culture is “babied” at home and not pushed to be independent – but of course this is not always the case. Or, a caregiver might be especially aware of challenging behaviors among a new boy in the class, and unconsciously assume that this boy then requires more attention simply because he is a boy – but of course this is not always the case. As childcare providers, we want to provide care for all children in our classroom, but it is especially important to be aware of and reflect on these implicit, or unconscious biases, especially in situations in which we might be assuming and judging a child before we really get to know them and their family.



## Slide 13: How can we Identify Implicit Bias?

So what can we do as teachers to make sure we are interpreting children’s behavior as objectively as possible, and implementing strategies in ways that are fair and equitable to all children in our care at all times, especially when it comes to how we perceive and respond to challenging behavior. We need to consider our own implicit bases and look at the child’s behavior with an open mind.

Our first tool is the way in which we work to form strong, collaborative relationships with all families. It is important to develop partnerships with families early and provide ongoing communication of what a child does well. When providers and family members know each other well and have a strong relationship it is much easier and even helpful to discuss concerns and challenging behaviors that may be happening at home and school.



## Slide 13 cont.

Additionally, we can use data to identify and track challenging behavior, and guide our decisions and strategies. Collecting and reviewing data at the program level can help us look at challenging behavior with a more objective lens. This brings us back to the plan that asks us to “look – think – act” when working with challenging behaviors. Collecting and studying data on behavior, broken down by race, ethnicity, language, disability, and gender may help us learn about how implicit biases, procedures, and policies may be impacting the way in which we perceive and interpret challenging behavior. For example, when we look at behavior data across a program, we may find that challenging behavior is reported for some groups of children more so than for others, or, that the responses to challenging behavior differ based on factors such as disability status, race, or gender. When we step back and review our program’s data with an eye toward how children of different races, ethnicities, genders, or disability status might be experiencing our program, we can then think about how we as a program can act to support children in inclusive and equitable ways.

## Presenter Notes:

The following information can be included if using the Behavior Incident Report System (BIRS):

Data tools are available that can help programs collect and analyze behavior incidents in their program. The Behavior Incident Report System provides an efficient mechanism for gathering information on elements related to behavior incidents that can be analyzed to make decisions about providing supports to teachers and children within the program. Teachers within programs collect data on behavior incidents that are not developmentally normative or are a cause of concern to the teacher. These data are summarized monthly to provide formative data for examining factors related to behavior incidents (child, teacher, activity, behavior type, behavior motivation, and responses to the behavior). In addition, these data provide summative information on the frequency of behavior incidents over time and an analysis of potential equity issue by calculating disproportionality related to race, ethnicity, IEP status, gender, and dual language learners.



## Slide 14: Behavior Incident Report System

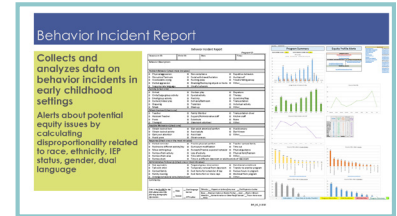
(may omit this slide and BIR information if it is not a good match for intended audience)

The Behavior Incident Report System (BIRS) collects and analyzes behavior incidents in early childhood settings. The system provides an efficient mechanism for gathering information on elements related to behavior incidents that are used to make decisions about providing supports to teachers and children within the program. In addition, the BIRS includes alerts about potential equity issues by calculating disproportionality related to race, ethnicity, IEP status, gender, and dual-language learners. The BIRS also provides information on the frequency of behavior incidents resulting in suspensions and expulsions. The goal of the BIRS is to support the child, teacher, and consider the actions needed for program improvement.

What is a Behavior Incident Report (BIR)? A Behavior Incident Report form is used by teachers to record serious behavior incidents and gathers critical information around the following factors:

- Problem Behavior
- Activity
- Others Involved
- Possible Motivation
- Response
- Administrative Follow-up
- Race/Ethnicity
- Gender
- IEP Status
- Dual-Language Learner

The BIR Form is provided to a designated person or staff who enters the data into the BIR Data System. The BIRS uses an Excel spreadsheet to track and summarize behavior incidents. A Program Summary is generated containing relevant charts and tables specific to program-level data, making it easy for programs to view and analyze data on a monthly basis. Classroom level and individual child charts and tables are also provided. In addition, users can analyze data further by each factor on the BIR form (i.e., Problem Behavior, Activity, Others Involved, Possible Motivation, Response, and Administrative Follow Up). The data system includes built-in filters giving the user the ability to narrow down data sets.



## Slide 14 cont.

The Leadership Team of a program uses BIR data to make data-based decisions related to the support of teachers, children, and the program. The team uses the data to summarize and highlight critical data and focus on the “patterns” and “trends” at the program, classroom, or individual child level. The summarized data are used to: Identify training needs; deliver professional development; problem solve around specific children or social and emotional needs; make other programmatic changes (e.g., playground schedule, program-wide expectations); and examine equity.

For more information, visit <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Implementation/data/BIRS.html>.

## Slide 15: Emotions & Behaviors of Young Children

Now that we have looked a little more closely at our role in identifying and interpreting challenging behavior, let’s look at the emotions and behaviors of the children in our care.

As caregivers, it is important to note the individuality of infants and toddlers as they are rapidly developing during this period of their lives. As teachers of young children, we are empowered to promote and build a young child’s language, social, motor, and cognitive foundation. Some children will have big emotions, and some will have little emotions. It is our job to know what behaviors are developmentally appropriate for each child and when there is a need for additional supports from caregivers, including families.

When we think about the behavior of infants and toddlers, much of the behavior that we consider “challenging” are behaviors that express strong emotion. The behavior we are talking about is behavior that may be typical for a child’s developmental stage, but it is the intensity, the frequency, or duration of the behavior that causes it to be unusually challenging to caregivers. These behaviors, the ones that are more intense, happen more often, or last longer than expected, are the ones that will require some additional, more targeted or even more intensive supports from caregivers.







## Slide 16: Continuum of Emotional Expression

Let's look at these challenging behaviors a little more specifically. When we think about challenging behavior and distress for infants and toddlers, these behaviors can be thought of as falling into two general categories of behavior. These can be characterized as "acting outward" or externalizing behaviors, or "withdrawing" behaviors, which are called internalizing behaviors.

It's important to remember that this is a "continuum." Sometimes it is not as simple as being EITHER withdrawing or acting outward. Sometimes children can engage in BOTH types of behaviors. For example, a child might demonstrate withdrawing behaviors when they continuously move away from peers to be alone but may exhibit externalizing behaviors by hitting other children when they enter the same play space.

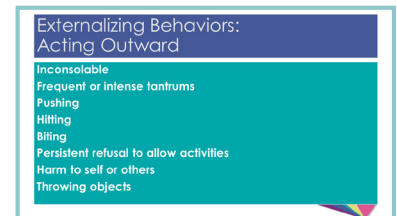


## Slide 17: Externalizing Behaviors

"Acting outward Behaviors," are also sometimes called "externalizing behaviors." Hitting, tantrums, and biting are a few examples. You'll notice these and the other behaviors listed are likely to impact others in the classroom and are easily observed. This is what makes the behaviors "outward."

How do these behaviors stand out from behavior that seems more typical? For example, all infants and toddlers can be fussy at times, but inconsolable crying or lengthy, persistent periods of fussiness can be indicative of a need for additional support.

Are there other acting outward behaviors you see in your classrooms that aren't listed here?



## Slide 18: Internalizing Behaviors

The second group of behaviors is termed “Withdrawing Behaviors,” they are also referred to as “internalizing behaviors.” Examples might include withdrawing from interactions or being held, rarely cooing or babbling, lack of eye contact, and being overly compliant or avoidant. A child exhibiting this type of behavior may appear to have given up attempting to get his needs met and to have moved away from interaction with others, or may not initiate interactions with others. This type of challenging behavior is often overlooked in a busy childcare setting, and it can be difficult to differentiate between avoidance withdrawal and preferring to play alone.

This is one reason we universally screen children – social-emotional screenings may help us identify which children are exhibiting a preference to play alone on occasion, and which are exhibiting a pattern of withdrawal, and may benefit from specific supports.

What are some examples of withdrawing behaviors you’ve seen in your classroom? Are there any withdrawing behaviors you’ve seen that aren’t listed here?



## Slide 19: Internalizing/Externalizing Behavior

Let’s watch a video involving a teacher and two children, each exhibiting behaviors that might be considered challenging, but could be considered either withdrawing or acting outward. Afterward, we will talk about what we saw and then where we might go next.

### **Play Video 1: Internal & External Behaviors**

What behaviors did you observe that might be considered “acting outward” or “externalizing”?

What behaviors did you observe that might be considered “withdrawing” or “internalizing”?



Presenter Notes:

Throwing toys, grabbing toys, hitting, yelling

staring off, sitting quietly, hand in mouth, no longer initiating interaction

## Slide 19 cont.

When we think about how to address situations like these, one of the first things might include gathering information. This might include talking with Michael's family in order to learn about what they might be experiencing at home.

Thinking about your own experience, how have you approached families with challenging situations or behaviors? What worked? What didn't? What are some considerations to take into account as you think about what your next steps might be?

## Slide 20: Internalizing/Externalizing Behavior

Let's continue thinking about "acting out" and "withdrawing" behaviors. Take out **Handout 3** from your packet. We will use the scenarios on this chart to think about what actions by the child can be considered either an "acting out" behavior or a "withdrawing" behavior. We will also consider some ideas in response to the question, "What might be going on for the baby/toddler?"

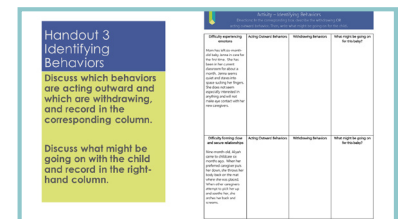
Discussion topics:

Jenna – withdrawing behaviors. Might really miss her mom. Might be used to a quiet home environment without other crying babies, so this environment may be overwhelming. Doesn't feel secure with new caregivers yet.

Aliyah – acting out behaviors. Might find it difficult to bond with a caregiver and may have taken a long time to find a preferred caregiver. Has taken patience and slow, gentle steps to create this bond so will likely take patience and slow steps to bond with others in the room.

Jasmine – acting out behaviors. Loves being at school and with the other children but when she gets excited she expresses it in socially undesirable ways. She might be becoming overwhelmed by her own emotions and be somewhat immobilized.

David – withdrawing behaviors. He might not just be shy but instead is having a hard time regulating his emotions. He was able to manage as long as he was in a familiar quiet environment, but the chaos of a toddler room might be testing his ability to cope.



Presenter Notes:

This can be a group discussion or a small group activity.

Handout 3 is two-sided, with examples for Jasmine and David on the back.

Encourage participants to be creative to considering circumstances that may be contributing to the child's behavior.

Hypothesize about what the child may be experiencing or needing that may contribute to his or her behavior.

## Slide 21: Identifying Behaviors

Let's picture an iceberg, in which a small portion of the iceberg is visible above water level, but a much larger portion sits below water level, and may not be visible from above. Focus on the "tip of the iceberg," the part above the water level. In some cases, the challenging behavior that you observe is what you see above the water, (i.e., the tip). The tip represents the behaviors infants and toddlers use when they are not able to:

- experience, express, and regulate emotions
- form close and secure interpersonal relationships, and
- explore the environment and learn

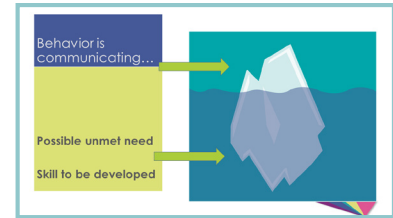
The rest of the iceberg, which is hidden from sight below the surface, represents potential needs that are not being met and skills that need to be developed and nurtured. What is going on that causes the behavior? Like the larger portion of the iceberg that is under the surface, the meaning of, or reason for extreme behavior is often difficult to see and to understand.

The behavior we see, the "tip of the iceberg," may give us clues as to what is below the surface, or, what is the reason for the challenging behavior. In this case, the behavior "communicates to us" what need that child has, or what skill is ready to be developed. This is why we often say "Behavior is Communication" – challenging behaviors are often the way we learn about needs.

What are some key "essential needs" of infants and toddlers? In other words, what are some basic needs we need to meet for infants and toddlers?

Now, what are some additional basic needs that infants and toddlers might need to feel safe enough to engage, learn, from relationships, and explore?

It is worth noting that in addition to meeting a child's basic needs, we want to strive to create an environment in which they feel secure enough to grow and develop strong social-emotional skills. When we observe challenging behavior, our job as caregivers is to understand that "behavior is communication" and then work to understand what is being communicated.



Presenter Notes:

If additional ideas are needed, suggest transitions from one activity to another, changes at home, transition to a new classroom or new teacher.

Presenter Notes:

May include being held, sleep, food, safe environment

Write their ideas on the chart paper near the bottom of the iceberg.

This list may include:  
Feeling safe, Good nutrition, Good health, Well rested, Ongoing, responsive relationships with one or more adults, An environment that is matched to the child's temperament, Structure and consistency, A sense of belonging within the family and culture, engaging/ stimulating environments with opportunities for movement



## Slide 22: Reasons for Challenging Behavior

We know there are many reasons why children might engage in challenging behavior, and there is not always only one specific reason. There are a number of factors that are always important to consider.

We understand that children are learning to communicate and interact with others, and so the lack of ways to communicate may be expressed in challenging behavior.

Exploring recent and past changes with families is critical to understanding an infant or toddler's unique experiences. We know that experiences such as chronic stress or witnessing or experiencing abuse can impact babies negatively, however, even positive changes such as a move to a new home or an extended visit from a well-loved grandmother can be challenging to an infant or toddler.

Too much excitement or too many changes over a period of time can make it difficult for a very young child who is not yet able to self-regulate to maintain a sense of equilibrium. This may result in behavior that is uncharacteristic of that child or that is a regression to an earlier developmental behavior, such as waking in the night for a baby who has been sleeping through the night or toileting accidents for a child who has previously been fully trained.

Can you describe some additional reasons that may contribute to a child engaging in challenging behavior?

### Reasons for Challenging Behavior

- Lack of skill in communicating & interacting with others
- Surges in developmental growth
- Medical/health reasons
- Social emotional environment
- Physical state: colic, hunger, overstimulated
- Differences between care program & home
- A combination of more than one above

## Slide 23: Iceberg Example

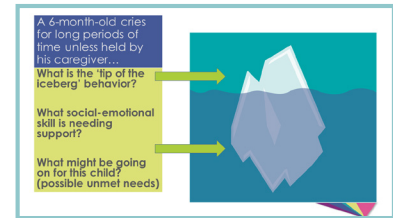
Let's use the comparison to the iceberg again with regard to the following situation: think of a 6-month-old who cries for long periods of time unless he is held by his caregiver.

What behavior, in this situation, would we consider the tip of the iceberg, or the indicator we can see that shows there may be an underlying problem?

Which social-emotional skills may the child have not yet developed or be able to use in this situation?

What might be "underneath the surface" or what might be a possible reason for this behavior?

It may be helpful to keep the concept of the iceberg in mind when thinking about human behavior. Our efforts to understand the meaning of the behavior are the first steps in finding an appropriate response to the child. All behavior has a purpose and for young children, the challenging behavior is not a form of manipulation. In other words, a young child is not purposefully behaving in a way that is meant to cause difficulty. A young child engaging in challenging behavior needs support. Challenging behavior is the "signal" that a child is struggling. It takes time and effort, however, to understand the intent of a child's communication and then to find new ways to fulfill the need or teach the child other ways to communicate his or her needs.



Presenter Notes:

Crying

Self-regulation

He is scared when he is alone.  
Childcare space is noisy and frightening to him  
Feeling unsafe  
Loneliness  
He is held a lot at home because his family believes that an infant should be held close or perhaps, he lives in a large extended family where there is always a pair of arms, and the floor is not a safe place for a baby. (Ongoing, responsive relationships with one or more adults)  
He is sensitive and is anxious about the room noise and the other children. (Environmental match to temperament)  
He does not feel good and may be getting sick. (Health)



## Slide 24: Data-Based Decision Making

We're going to watch a video that shows two children playing at a table. You'll see a common early childhood challenging behavior in the video. Watch for that tip of the iceberg behavior and think about why that behavior might be happening. You can take notes on what you are seeing on the Iceberg on **Handout 4**. When the video is over, we'll break up into small groups and you'll answer the questions on **Handout 4** together.



### **Play Video 2: Challenging Behavior - Biting**

Now that you've seen the video and jotted down some of your ideas, let's break up into groups to complete the handout.

You're going to discuss the situation in this video:

- What behavior would we consider the tip of the iceberg?
- Which social emotional skills may the child not have developed or be able to use in this situation?
- What else might be "underneath the surface"?

After a few minutes, we'll gather back together and talk about what your group decided.

### **Wait for groups to complete handout**

Okay, let's start with the first question. What behavior did your group decide was the tip of the iceberg?

Which social emotional skills may the child not have developed yet or not be able to use in this situation?

Did your group have ideas about what else might be "underneath the surface"?

Observing closely and considering varying circumstances, as well as what might be going on "underneath the surface," will help you understand why the behavior is occurring, and then, determine the most supportive and appropriate solutions and strategies for children in your care.

Presenter Notes:


Biting


Self-regulation, problem solving skills (e.g., turn taking, verbally asking to play with peer or play with a toy when the peer is finished)

He feels frustrated.  
He does not have the language necessary to control a situation, or his attempts at communication are not understood or respected.  
He is tired or does not feel good and may be getting sick (health).  
He is feeling stressed.

## Slide 25: Purpose of Toddler Behaviors

Why do children engage in challenging behaviors? When we talk about why challenging behavior occurs, we are talking about the “function” or purpose of a challenging behavior. We might also describe it as the “motivation” behind the behavior, or what the child is trying to gain by engaging in the behavior. The primary reason, or function of challenging behavior is often communication, meaning children are often communicating a need, a desire, or a state.

 One common function, or reason, for challenging behavior is to escape. For Toddlers, this might mean trying to escape from attention or an interaction, from a task or an instruction, or from an activity. A child who does not come to circle time, and leaves or refuses to join, or cries and fusses while in or near circle time might be engaging in these avoidance behaviors in order to “escape” from circle time demands.

 Another common function of behavior is to gain access to adult attention (whether that is positive or negative attention), or gain access to an item or activity. A child who constantly follows one teacher, and wants to always be held by that teacher, and no other, and cries when that teacher is not nearby might be engaging in that crying behavior in order to gain access to that preferred teacher.

In these two scenarios – crying and fussing to gain access to a teacher, and crying or fussing to avoid joining circle time – the behaviors are similar, but the functions, or reasons for the behaviors are very different. In order to determine how to address these challenges, it's important that we understand the function of the behavior – the reason or “motivation” for the child engaging in this behavior. Then, we can design an intervention and select strategies that address the reason for the behavior, and help children engage in more appropriate responses or behaviors.

Purpose of Toddler Behaviors	
<b>Escape</b>	<b>Gain Access</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Sitting alone when others are gathering for activities such as circle time or book time</li><li>- Running away when asked to walk inside after outdoor play</li><li>- Tantrums upon arrival at the center</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Taking toys from others and watching for teacher response</li><li>- Taking food from others' plates</li><li>- Prolonged crying when desired teacher leaves the room</li></ul>



## Slide 26: Purpose of Infant Behaviors

What do escape behaviors and behaviors to gain access look like in even younger children? Infants may display challenging behaviors because of the state they are in, or how they are feeling. Here we need to consider meeting basic needs such as hunger, sleep, and comfort. And with babies, it is even more common to have the same outward behavior – such as crying – but for a variety of different reasons.


Crying could be used as an escape behavior if an infant is reacting to an overstimulating environment that they want to get away from; crying could also be used as a behavior to gain access if the infant is crying because they are hungry. An infant could be crying because they are hungry, tired, overstimulated, or just prefer to be held. It is important in these cases that we use our observation skills, and even some data collection to figure out the “why” behind their behavior.

Purpose of Infant Behaviors	
<b>Escape</b>	<b>Gain Access</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Turning head and refusing bottle/food</li><li>• Stiffening body or pushing away from caregiver</li><li>• Turning head to avoid eye contact</li><li>• Crying when peers are near or room is overstimulating</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kicking and fussing when put down</li><li>• Screaming when pacifier falls from mouth</li><li>• Crying when hungry</li></ul>

## Slide 27: Gathering Information for Challenging Behaviors

We have now spent time both defining challenging behavior and examining possible reasons for challenging behavior. Remember, the majority of challenging behaviors in a classroom will be handled with strong Tier 1/Universal practices. If universal practices are being implemented throughout the day, most challenging behaviors will subside. These are the behaviors we consider typical to children’s developmental stages. It is those behaviors that are happening with more frequency, more intensity, and are getting in the way of a child’s social-emotional development and learning that may require additional support or intervention. We may need to do some additional observations, notice the situations in which the behaviors are occurring, and develop a better understanding of why children are engaging in such behaviors.

As caregivers, by working to determine why children are engaging in challenging behavior, this helps us create strategies that help to prevent those challenging behaviors, teach more appropriate or acceptable behaviors and reinforce those acceptable behaviors so the children are more likely to use them. For this to be successful, it is

Gathering Information for Challenging Behaviors	
	<b>What data do we need?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What behavior is happening?</li><li>• When is it happening?</li><li>• Why is it happening?</li><li>• How can we keep it from happening or change what happens?</li></ul>

## Slide 27 cont.

important that we collect information about the behavior itself, as well as the conditions surrounding the challenging behavior through observation and some simple data collection. Some of the questions we will want to ask ourselves include what is happening, when is it happening, and in what contexts. Finally, we will want to consider how we can reduce or change this behavior, and how we can teach “replacement” behaviors, which are positive or desirable behaviors that can help children better engage, develop relationships, and learn and grow. To answer these question about “what, when, and why,” we will talk about some ways we can use our observation skills and collect some basic data that we can use to inform us in how best to address challenging behavior.

## Slide 28: KIS - Keep it Simple

When we talk about “collecting data,” it may be difficult to know just how to start. Our goal is to collect information that will help us understand WHY this child is demonstrating this challenging behavior. Remember the iceberg - these behaviors often have a purpose and it is often something happening below the surface. Observing and gathering information and data can help us understand why the behavior is happening. By simply writing down things like the time of day the behavior occurs, the activities the child is engaged in when the behavior occurs, or what happens right before the behavior, we may identify the conditions under which the behavior occurs. We may discover, for example, that it always occurs 30 minutes before nap, right after drop off, when other children are nearby, or when the room is loud. And finally , we will use the information collected to make a plan to help prevent the behavior from occurring and to teach the child a more positive replacement skill.

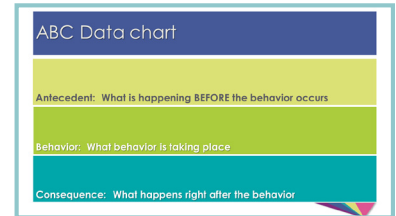
### Data Collection: Keep it Simple

Information gathered should help you figure out:  
WHY this challenging behavior is happening  
WHEN the behavior is happening  
HOW do we want to change it with prevention and replacement skills



## Slide 29: ABC Data Chart

One of the most common forms of behavior data collection is an ABC chart. You may have seen various versions of this chart, and you have an example of this chart in [Handout 5](#).



The "ABC" stands for "Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence." The "**A**" stands for "**Antecedent**," and by that, we mean what was happening "before" the challenging behavior. This might also include factors such as the activity or routine, a time of day, or a specific interaction.

The "**B**" stands for "**Behavior**" and this refers to the specific child behavior that is challenging or concerning. This could include behaviors such as biting or taking toys, but it could also include tantrums, crying, or distress.

The "**C**" stands for "**Consequence**," and by this, we mean what happens after the behavior occurs; what "result" the challenging behavior produces for the child. This could include other children backing away from a preferred toy, the teacher has to pick up and hold the child, the child is given more juice so they stop crying, the child is moved to a different part of the room, etc.

Keeping track of what happens before the behavior (Antecedent), describing the behavior (Behavior), and then listing what happens after the behavior (Consequence) can give you a better idea of how to help a child change their behavior. Collecting this information may help you determine the purpose of the behavior, or "why" the child is engaging in this behavior, and therefore help you decide on your next steps. Our goal is to teach new, more appropriate behaviors that still help children meet their needs. When setting up this chart, remember to Keep It Simple. The data you collect does not need to be complicated or difficult to collect. Our hope is that the tool you use for collecting data can easily fit into your day, and does not take too much time to complete.

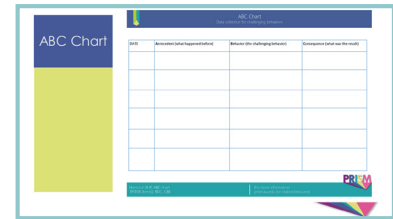
## Slide 30: ABC Activity

Let's look at **Handout 5** together. This example of an ABC chart is simple but also gets to the important information we need to be proactive in altering a challenging behavior. Remember it tells us what the problem behavior was, what happened immediately before the behavior, and what occurred immediately after the problem behavior occurred. The information collected on this chart should shed some light on Why this behavior might be happening, or what are some of the reasons below the surface.

Let's re-watch the biting video. This time think about what is happening before, what behavior we want to change, and what happened after.

### **Play Video 2: Challenging Behavior - Biting**

Think about the little boy that was biting/tried to bite. Keep him in mind as you go ahead and fill out the ABC chart yourself or with your peers and we will discuss the chart together.



Ant	Behavior/Event/Response/Event	When the following behavior	Consequence/Event/Response

## Slide 31: ABC Chart Discussion

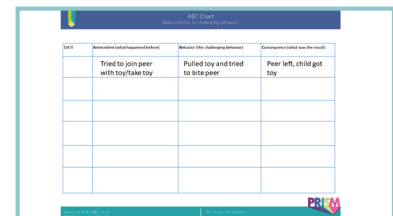
When observing the little boy who is biting, or trying to bite what information did you collect?

What did you put in the "A/Antecedent" column?

What Behavior did you list in the "B/Behavior" column?

And finally what was the "C/Consequence" of this behavior?

Now that we have collected our data, this will help us plan how we will respond.



Ant	Behavior/Event/Response/Event	When the following behavior	Consequence/Event/Response
Tried to join peer with toy/take toy	Pulled toy and tried to bite peer	Peer left, child got toy	

Presenter Notes:  
Answers can include playing with toy, tried to take toy, tried to join in play

Biting, attempting to bite, tried to bite peer, tried to get toy

Peer left, child got toy to himself, child did not have to share or take turns, child loses chance to interact with peer appropriately



## Slide 32: High Quality Universal Practices

Before thinking about implementing new strategies or practices to address challenging behavior, an important first step is “checking in” on implementation of Tier 1 Universal practices throughout the classroom. In the Pyramid Model, Tier 1 Universal Practices ensure that all children experience Nurturing and Positive Relationships, and High-Quality, Supportive Environments. When Tier 1 Universal Practices are in place – these practices are used consistently throughout daily routines with all children, many instances of challenging behavior will be prevented. Any time we as caregivers observe a change in behavior, instances of challenging behavior, or children struggling to engage in classroom activities and interactions, our first step is to always go back to those Universal Practices, and make sure that they are being implemented in a high-quality, consistent manner, by all caregivers, with all children. Some specific practices to reflect on when challenging behaviors arise are practices related to Engagement, Expectations, and Responding.

High Quality Universal Practices		
<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Responding</b>
Supporting engagement Redirection Positive attention Choices	Developmentally appropriate Individualized Communicated positively	Remain calm and supportive Label and teach about emotions Redirect Problem-solve

For engagement, we want to be sure that caregivers in the classroom are all working together to ensure that children are engaged and experiencing positive attention that supports their continued engagement. Offering choices, and redirecting children when challenges arise can prevent many difficult situations.

Relating to our expectations of children’s behavior, it is always important to “check in” with our expectations for individual children. Are our expectations for a child’s behavior developmentally appropriate, or are we expecting more than what they are capable of, at their stage of development – understanding a lot of patience is needed here, as well. Then, are our expectations individualized, and communicated positively through positive comments and modeling.

When responding to distress and challenging behavior, it is important to focus on remaining calm and positive. While challenging behavior can cause us to feel our own stress or distress, being mindful about modeling calmness and positivity can help diffuse a tense situation. Maintaining a calm presence also acts to “model” or demonstrate self-regulation – “sharing your calm” can be an important way to model how we can deal with challenging situations.

Even when Tier 1 Universal practices are in place, we know that challenging behavior and challenging situations may still occur – this is the nature of how children grow and develop.

## Slide 33: Responding to Challenging Behavior

In the past, responding to challenging behavior often involved implementing “consequences” for challenging behavior – that approach took the position that if the behavior happened, then use a consequence or punishment to discourage that behavior from happening in the future. In this approach, we may have learned to deal with behavior challenges by RESPONDING to challenging behaviors so that they do not occur in the future. For instance, in looking at the biting video, the child biting would be placed in “time-out” regardless of the “function of his behavior.” These types of interventions were typically “reactive” in nature; they were applied after the child demonstrated a challenging behavior and the aim was to deliver a powerful enough consequence that the child would be discouraged from engaging in that behavior again.

Years of research has shown us, however, that these types of consequences, considered punishment or negative reinforcement, do not typically have the effect we originally intended. They are not the most effective method of reducing challenging behavior.

The reactive approach did not always take into account why challenging behaviors were happening, or what the child was experiencing or feeling, or what was difficult for that child. This old approach put a band-aid on the problem, without addressing the reason for challenging behavior, or teaching more adaptive or appropriate behaviors or skills. We have learned, through research and experience in this field of study focused on early childhood, that there is a different approach that is preventative and encourages teachers to help children change their behavior, while still supporting children where they are, and understanding that behavior is a form of communication. By observing and listening, and understanding why challenging behavior occurs, we can be better equipped to support children in these challenging and distressful situations.

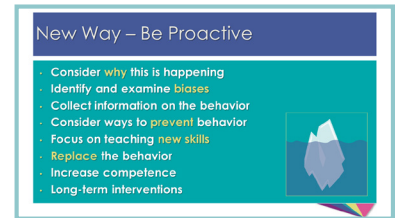


## Slide 34: New Way - Be Proactive

In this approach, we consider the reason behind challenging behavior. Sometimes that involves thinking about the feelings behind the behavior. Thinking about the child's emotions that are associated with challenging behavior may help us better understand why that behavior is happening, or what function it fulfills for that child. We also need to remember to consider the role that implicit biases may play in the way we are interpreting behavior.


With this new approach, we are now matching the intervention to the purpose of the child's behavior, or the function. It is a proactive approach; most of the power in the intervention approach is preventing the behavior from occurring in the first place. Like we discussed, challenging behavior is viewed as meeting a need for the child. Children use challenging behavior because they lack more appropriate social or communication skills to get their needs met, or don't have the skills to deal with situations that are challenging or distressing to them. So, this approach involves strategies that move beyond the "band-aid quick fix."

Remember when we talked about challenging behavior being the "tip of the iceberg" and that there is often much going on "under the surface." This approach addresses what is behind that challenging behavior – the underlying need that child may have. It often involves teaching new skills. Learning a new skill takes time, but the child is also more likely to sustain it over time because the child no longer needs to use challenging behavior to meet his/her needs.



New Way - Be Proactive

- Consider why this is happening
- Identify and examine biases
- Collect information on the behavior
- Consider ways to prevent behavior
- Focus on teaching new skills
- Replace the behavior
- Increase competence
- Long-term interventions



### Presenter Notes:

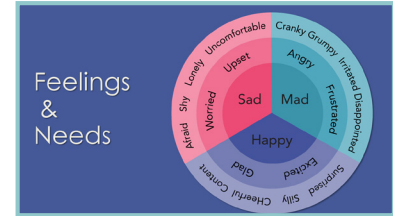
May include modeling and supporting turn taking, modeling and supporting playing with toy together, teaching child to say "mine" or "my turn" when using a toy.

## Slide 35: Feelings & Needs

For example, if a child is often worried and anxious, we may observe that child withdrawing from daily activities. It may be, however, that the child would benefit from more predictability and consistency. Thus, a preventative measure would focus on meeting that need by addressing the schedule of the day, and how we communicate that to a child.

If a child is frustrated and having challenging interactions with peers or teachers, she may be a toddler in need of autonomy, independence, and choice. Strategies can include building more choices into the child's day and providing the child with better ways of communicating her preferences.

If a child is angry, he may be in need of more understanding and acceptance, help with self-regulation, more one-on-one time, or support in expressing what he wants. Preventative strategies might include responding with empathy at early signs of anger, and providing more opportunities to express preferences and engage in activities of his choosing.

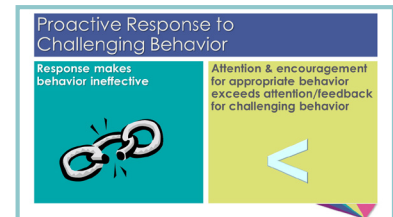


## Slide 36: Proactive Response to Challenging Behavior

Once we have considered a child's immediate needs, and their emotions, we can begin thinking about how to identify strategies aimed at both preventing challenging behavior and teaching other behaviors.

One of the best ways we can prevent or address challenging behaviors is to identify and use strategies that do not reinforce the challenging behavior. We want to respond in a way that makes the challenging behavior ineffective – so that the challenging behavior “does not work” anymore. Our goal should be to create an environment in which the challenging behavior no longer “functions” to gain the access the child was looking for, or to escape from what was being avoided. Additionally, we want to shift our praise and attention to the child as they learn and use a more appropriate, or replacement behavior.

For example, think of a young toddler demonstrating a challenging behavior by crying and holding on to the leg of a favorite teacher when she wants to be picked up. The teacher may wait until the child calms a little and then encourages





## Slide 36 cont.

the child to lift their arms up to signal they want to be held or say the word “up” if they are able. By responding when the child is calm they are helping the child learn that the crying is ineffective. When the teacher responds with encouragement and picks up the child after supporting better communication they are putting the attention on the appropriate behavior.

Therefore, our basic approach is to redirect the child to use an alternative skill or a new skill by:

1. Selecting procedures that will make the challenging behavior ineffective, so that it does not “work” the way it once may have worked to gain access or escape.
2. Make sure that attention/encouragement for appropriate behavior exceeds attention/negative feedback for challenging behavior.

In doing so, we help the child find other, more appropriate ways to meet that need or desire. It is important to remember that these strategies will be even more effective if we are working closely with families. Keeping families engaged in these strategies will provide consistency between family and caregivers.

## Slide 37: Prevention is Powerful

Now that we are looking at behavior in a new way, we want to focus on prevention. Prevention strategies should be selected so that when the child learns to engage in the replacement behavior, this makes the challenging behavior irrelevant — that is, the prevention strategy reduces the likelihood that the child will need or want to use the challenging behavior. Examples of prevention strategies might include positioning a child so that they cannot take other children’s materials, adjusting instructions or expectations so children can succeed, providing additional transition time and support so children know what to expect, or simply redirecting them to another activity, toy, or person.

Prevention strategies are often simple, natural practices that teachers use every day. Some more examples may include considering time of day by putting fewer demands on children as they get closer to nap time; strategically seat children at the table so children who trigger more conflict are farther apart from each other, while seating children that help the child regulate sit closer together.



Prevention is Powerful

- Helps children participate successfully
- Can be strategies you're already using
- Fits naturally
- Stops challenging behavior from working

Prevention might be:

- adjust the environment
- expand on what already works
- avoid or adjust triggers
- redirect



## Slide 38: Table Talk: Prevention

Thinking back to the biting video, what was the function of that child's behavior?

Now think about what would be some possible prevention strategies to use in this situation?

Can you think of some prevention strategies that you have used in the past when children engage in challenging behavior? Discuss this with those sitting near you, and then we will share with the group.

Table Talk: Prevention

**At your table, discuss a successful prevention strategy you have used for an individual child**

Presenter Notes:

Possible responses may include child wanted toy to himself, child is worried other child will take his toy

Getting out multiple similar toys, introduce a second toy so each child has something to play with, giving that child a space to play by himself for a few minutes

After discussion, offer any of the following that have not yet been identified –  
Arranging the environment – grouping children in strategic ways, putting some materials out of reach, providing multiple versions of a toy to prevent conflict.  
Using visuals, such as a visual schedule or depiction of desired behavior.  
Introducing novelty – introducing a new element to an activity or interaction to maintain attention and engagement.  
Redirection – redirecting children's attention to a new activity or interaction, as a way to distract from a different activity, and promote engagement.

## Slide 39: Teaching Replacement Skills

Now that we've brainstormed some prevention strategies, let's think about another strategy – teaching a replacement skill. Children will be most successful, and classrooms will run smoothly when we are able to both prevent challenging behaviors and support children learning a replacement behavior. If we don't want children using challenging behavior to express their needs, how can they express them in ways that are appropriate? They need a new skill to replace the challenging behavior and act as the alternative behavior to challenging behavior. The new skill should be efficient and effective. It may be a skill the child already has, but new to the scenario in which the challenging behavior occurs.

We want to make sure that as children are learning and using these taught replacement skills they are also receiving lots of positive reinforcement that will encourage them to KEEP using this skill in the future. So, when the child uses the replacement skill, we also want to consistently provide positive feedback. The replacement skill should also be taught throughout the day when the child is NOT having the challenging behavior.

Teaching Replacement Skills

- Alternative to challenging behavior
- Efficient and effective
- Consider child's existing skills
- Consistent encouragement for appropriate behavior

## Slide 40: Replacement Skills

Let's look at some specific replacement skills. These are only a sample of possible replacement skills for escape behaviors and behaviors intended to gain access. For a replacement skill to be effective, it needs to match the purpose of the behavior. For example, a child throws a plate across the room and the teacher tells him he is all done eating and takes him out of his highchair. Through careful observation, the coach and teacher determined function of throwing the plate was to get out of his highchair. The replacement skill could be saying "All done" or having a bin near the child to drop the plate into to show he is all done. In this way, the replacement skill serves the same purpose as the challenging behavior of throwing the plate across the room.

Again, thinking about the biting video, what are some possible replacement skills we could teach?

Replacement Skills for Toddler Behaviors

Escape Replacement Skills	Gain Access Replacement Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request help</li><li>Participate in routine</li><li>Say or sign "No" or "All done"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Participate in routine</li><li>Request help</li><li>Request attention</li><li>Ask for a turn</li><li>Ask for item</li></ul>

## Slide 40 cont.

When thinking about replacement skills we are primarily talking about children over 12 months. When infants display challenging behaviors it would be important to rule out some other possible causes such as medical issues, conditions such as failure to thrive, lack of sleep, etc..



## Slide 41: Supporting Children

Some children will still be demonstrating behaviors that are more intense, more frequent, and interfering with their social-emotional growth despite the strong universal, Tier 1 practices that are in place. Let's take a minute to watch this brief video. Listen as they discuss the importance of recognizing what behaviors are developmentally appropriate and what behaviors can be considered more challenging in young children. These are the behaviors that may need to be addressed at a Tier 2 or 3 level with your coach and education team.



### *Play Video 3: Supporting Children with Challenging Behaviors*

These professionals provide a nice summary for what we have discussed today. They are reinforcing the idea that most challenging behavior can be managed in the classroom with universal strategies. These strategies include trying to figure out "why" this behavior is happening and how we can either prevent it or replace it with a more appropriate behavior. Using this method of thinking, we will be able to provide more long term success for the children in our care and strengthen their social-emotional development.



## Slide 42: Reflection

In considering your next steps to manage challenging behavior in your classrooms, it is important to also learn more about your center's approach and protocols, collaborate with your team, and engage families. Different centers have different levels of support available to their caregivers. Make sure you know who to include on your team when making decisions about managing behavior, and keep open lines of communication with parents and families.

We're about to wrap up this session with some reflection time, but before we do, do you have questions about the material we've covered today?

Today we've learned about different types of challenging behaviors. We examined the importance of responding, preventing, and replacing these behaviors, and touched on some ways to collect data about challenging behaviors.

Reflection

- What questions do you have about challenging behavior and ways to address it?
- What insights do you have about your own practices?
- What insights do you have about the children and/or their families?
- What strategies did you see or hear that might be useful in your role and work?
- What would you like to learn more about?



## Slide 43: Next Steps

In considering your next steps to manage challenging behavior in your classrooms, it is important to also learn more about your center's approach and protocols, collaborate with your team, and engage families. Different centers have different levels of support available to their care givers. Make sure you know who to include on your team when making decisions about managing behavior, and keep open lines of communication with parents and families.

When children with challenging behaviors are in your care, our first step is to observe and collect some data on this behavior. The ABC chart can be a good way to organize this information. As a team you can then discuss ways to prevent or replace the behavior while engaging the family and support staff within your center.

Next Steps

- Identify and observe challenging behavior
- Collect data on behavior
- Create a plan to prevent or replace the behavior
- Include support staff and family in your plan



## Slide 44: Major Messages to Take Home

As we wrap up today, remember that all children exhibit some level of challenging behavior, and child care itself is full of challenging situations. The majority of these situations and behaviors can be managed by strong Tier 1 supports throughout the day. However, for those behaviors that are more persistent intense, or happening more frequently than is developmentally appropriate, we want to learn more so we can support these children in their success and strengthen their social-emotional skills.

### Major Messages to Take Home

- All children exhibit some level of challenging behavior, but it is the frequency, intensity, and duration that determine the need for extra support.
- In helping children curb challenging behaviors it is important to look at the possible reasons for the behavior and to look for ways to prevent and replace these behaviors.