

Winter 2011



### A Special Story of Success

**A**s a recent graduate of Early Childhood Education and a recipient of a Bachelor of Education, I have had the opportunity to be a part of many children's lives. The reason why I wanted to become an educator and teacher is that I wanted to help children reach their potential and teach them right from wrong. I wanted to have a positive impact on their lives by creating a path where they could be successful. I would like to share a special story that is very dear to me and reinforces my reasons for becoming a teacher. It is a story of challenge, teamwork, dedication, and success.

My story begins in November 2009 when I began a year long contract position as a preschool educator. I was excited to have a group of my own and to use all of the knowledge and resources I had acquired during my studies. This is where I met a very special five year old boy. He was very charming, a boy you couldn't help but love. However, he was also a boy who needed a lot of support. He demonstrated behaviours that seemed at times impossible to manage. He would yell at educators and peers when he did not get his way. He would kick, hit, and attempt to bite others in frustration. He would not listen and ran in the other direction during routines and transitions. He ran the show! I knew that I had met a challenge and I was unsure of how I was going to handle this situation. I remember thinking to myself, "What have I gotten myself into?" Knowing that he would be transitioning to grade one come September, I knew that I had to find a way for him to

interact with others appropriately so that he could start out on the right path of success. The question was: How was I going to do this?

With the help of the other staff at the Centre, we started to document his behaviour, trying to observe if there were any triggers or consistent patterns in his behaviour. We could not. At times he would follow instructions and be very pleasant with his peers. Other times he would be aggressive, loud, and disruptive. However, during documentation I noticed that he was capable of completing tasks if he had one on one interaction with an educator. How could I provide this attention when we had fifteen other children who also required assistance and care? I was at a loss. I needed to duplicate myself; there needed to be two of me with the group and this little boy.



This was when the centre contacted Children's Integration Support Services (CISS) to request assistance in the preschool room. We could not have received the assistance any sooner. We were provided with an integration advisor from CISS who consulted with the program and assisted the teachers with behaviour strategies to help this boy

(continued on page 3)



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## Our mandate

To provide support services to licensed nursery schools, day care centres and private home child care programs that integrate children with special needs between 6 weeks to 10 years of age within the City of Ottawa.

Andrew Fleck Child Care Services is funded by the City of Ottawa to operate CISS.

## We want to hear your story!

Write about it and send it to the editor at [stourigny@afchildcare.on.ca](mailto:stourigny@afchildcare.on.ca).

## ACCESS Integration Newsletter Committee

Ingrid Fish, Julie Kanter, Penny Miller, Sylvie Tourigny  
and Roxane Desjardins, Design and Formatting

Letters from readers may be edited before publication. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of CISS.

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become school ready. She was a pleasure to work with. She was encouraging and compassionate, both towards this boy and towards the staff at the centre. We also collaborated with his guardian and his future grade one teacher recognizing the importance of “being on the same page”. It was great to be part of this dedicated team of professionals that really aspired for his successful outcome. By summer 2010, we were provided with a program assistant who enabled the educators to interact with the group, but when necessary, could support this boy with the assurance that the programming for the other children would continue.

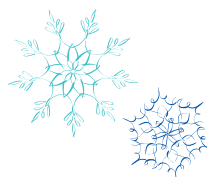
We collected data on this child so that the integration advisor and behaviour management consultant from CISS could evaluate and analyze his behaviour in order to offer appropriate strategies to implement. Some strategies, at first, seemed as though they were making his behaviours worse. This was discouraging. Our integration advisor was very supportive and I remember her saying to me that sometimes one must take a couple steps backwards in order to step forward. This truthful statement continues to return to me when I'm teaching children who have challenging behaviours.

In our determination to assist him, we were consistent with the use of the strategies, and they began to work. He slowly began sitting for lessons with less assistance; he began interacting with peers verbalizing desires rather than becoming frustrated. He began expressing himself to others in an appropriate manner. As his progress continued, he was learning material that was necessary for him to be ready for school. He was starting to show an interest in books and in writing. He was starting to participate in songs

and fingerplays which he began to repeat and sing on his own. His tantrums and outbursts became less frequent. It was incredible! It was then that I knew he was going to do just fine.

Before I knew it, it was August 2010 and this boy was graduating from preschool and on his way to “big school” and grade one. I remember watching him at the graduation ceremony and being so proud of him. He glowed with pride. He did it! He was learning how to control his behaviour and to cope with disappointments and challenges. Way to go!

He has now been in school for two months. I receive occasional sunshine phone calls from his guardian keeping me updated on his progress. She tells me that he still has moments where he needs extra assistance, but overall he is doing wonderfully. She explains that he is transitioning even better than she expected....this is the reason I became an educator. To know that I was a big part of this boy's success puts a smile on my face. To my surprise, not only have I had an impact on his life but he has had an impact on mine. I have learned that although teaching has its challenges, it is a team effort and a career of dedication. When all of this comes together, there is success. I am proud to have played a part in this special story of success.



Jessica Klassen B.Ed, RECE, B.A  
Tumiralaat Inuit Child Care Centre



## Andrew Fleck Child Care Services Anniversary Conference

*Celebrate - Inspire - Imagine*

*Save the Date*

**November 3 - 5, 2011**

*In celebration of Andrew Fleck's 100th Anniversary*



Check out our website for more information [www.afchildcare.on.ca](http://www.afchildcare.on.ca)

# The Joys of Parenting

August 28th marked Nicholas' four year mark in Canada and our four year anniversary as a completed family. Where does the time go?!!!! In some ways, it seems just like yesterday that we brought our wonderful little boy home from an institution in Bulgaria through the Loving Heart Adoption Agency. In writing this, I have tried to capture the absolute joy that Nicholas is bringing to us and our true amazement of how well he has done adjusting to his new family and new home. It is hard to imagine our family without him.

It is difficult to know where to begin in talking about the changes in Nicholas and measuring his progress. His physical growth is perhaps the easiest to measure. When we first brought him home in August of 2006, Nicholas was three and a half years old. He weighed 25 lbs and measured 35 inches tall. He has just hit the 50 lb mark and now stands 47 inches tall. From a little boy in diapers with a very limited diet, Nicholas now goes to the bathroom on his own and, typical of many little boys his age, he constantly asks to go to "Old McDonalds" for French fries and chocolate milk. The days of soaking bread in warm milk and the daily ritual of pureeing everything are distant memories. His diet is quite varied but pizza and pasta are definite favorites! He is not overly fond of vegetables, ice-cream and popsicles are too cold and he really doesn't like sandwiches!



As much as Nicholas has grown physically, his emotional and intellectual development has been phenomenal! Developmental delays are common in children living in institutions and even though Nicholas was over three, he was not speaking at all when we brought him home. I can still remember the first time in the fall of 2006 that he made the sound "p". Kaylee, his sister, and I looked at each other

wanting to make sure that we had actually heard it! Now he is talking a mile a minute and his speech is pretty much age appropriate! Typical words of late are "that's gross", "oh my goodness", "ewwwwww, yuk!", "that's cute", "cool" and "awesome". Recently when we were taking a different route to go to his cousin's house, he told his daddy "we are going the wrong way, trust me, trust me". His adaptation to his new family and new home is also incredible. He is totally attached to his father Dan, to Kaylee and to me; we all love him very dearly. Just last week, he told my brother that he couldn't go home with him because "I belong to my family. I would miss them". He looks to us for praise when he does something he is proud of and comes to one of us for comfort when he gets hurt.



Nicholas' play skills and imagination have also improved. He continues to love cars, planes and other vehicles. He fills the cars with gas, washes them, puts them under "tarps" to protect them from rain and has his pilots drive his planes to Toronto, New Brunswick, Texas, etc. He has a love for dinosaurs and pretending to be a T-Rex is common these days. One of his latest loves is pretending we are going camping in the comfort of our newly renovated basement.

Nicholas now swims like a little fish and is even joining his sister's swim team in the fall! This is a far cry from the screams we got when we put him in the bath tub the first few times. He runs and jumps and appears to have good hand eye co-ordination. You should see him hit a baseball! He is also learning to ride his bicycle and this past summer, he was able to paddle a kayak all on his own. There is no more fear climbing the jungle gym at the park or going down the slide. Four years ago every new place brought screams and tears from Nicholas; the park, the church, the grocery store and Kaylee's school were all scary places. Now, he asks "what are we going to do today?"

Academically, Nicholas was very pleased (as were we) with the A's and B's he got on his report card in June. He is learning to read, and to do addition and subtraction. Last year, his teacher told us that he was in the upper one-third of his class in terms of academics.

Yes, the progress has been very encouraging but I would be lying if I said it has all been easy. We have worried, worried some more and have lost sleep. We have shed a few tears, especially when the reports from his doctors and therapists were not what we wanted to hear. What parent wants to hear that their child “is severely delayed”? Would our little boy learn to talk? Would he be o.k.? We have had feelings of guilt when our patience was a little thin and we were perhaps more harsh than we would have liked. Of course, we always questioned whether we were doing enough or if we should be doing something differently. Nicholas has had more therapy sessions than I can begin to count: speech therapy, occupational therapy, sensory therapy and group therapy to work on social skills. At one point we were doubling up on the speech therapy to try to push him a long a little faster. We have volunteered in all the activities he has been in, everything from being a Sunday school teacher to a soccer coach to a Beaver leader. Thankfully, he has responded well and Dan and I have had the financial resources to be able to offer him the help he needed. We are truly blessed.



I once read the following: “A hundred years from now, no one will remember how much money you had in the bank, what kind of car you drove or what kind of job you had, but the world might be different because you made a difference in the life of a child”. We hope we are making a difference in Nicholas' life, he is certainly enriching ours. We are so thankful that God chose us to be parents to this dear little boy. His little smile warms our hearts each and every day! God bless you Nicholas and bless us as we continue to grow as a family!

Written by Karen Scott, Nicholas' mother




## Memorable Teaching Moments

A four year old boy with Autism was standing alone flapping his arms. Thinking I needed to help redirect him to a more appropriate activity, I asked what he was doing. He looked up at me with the most perplexed expression on his face and said “flying isn't as easy as it looks”.

*Cindy Mitchell  
Bettye-Hyde Co-op Nursery School*

We had a special event with some museum workers talking about making rainbow colours. They asked about favorite colours. One little fellow who has significant language delays and pronouciation difficulties, and subsequent behaviour issues, put up his hand and said “yellow!” Most of the teachers in the room had tears in their eyes, because for him, this was a HUGE achievement.

*Janet Clayton  
Riverside Park Nursery School*

I have the children's names printed on a magnet for circle time. As we sing “and your name is...” the children “find” their name and put it on the magnet board. There is one child who reads and pronounces all the children's names but his own! When it is his turn he refuses to say his own name so we just say it together, he finds it, puts it on the board and we go on with our circle. Another group uses the board after us so I have to take the names off the board before that next group arrives. I decided to let the children “find” their names on the board and put them away in the bag. This same little boy “helped read” everyone's name as we took them off the board and when it came to his name and I asked “whose name is this?” he immediately said his name and got up to put it away! I have done this several times and he is still saying his name to put it away but will not say it to put on the board!

*Janet Clayton  
Riverside Park Nursery School*

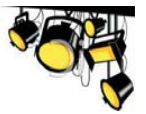
*Do you have a teaching moment that you would like to share? We would love to hear them!*

*Email to : [ciss-sije@afchildcare.on.ca](mailto:ciss-sije@afchildcare.on.ca)*





# Lights, Camera, Action...Learn!



The following is an exercise that I like to do with my son, Zygy, who is five years old. Essentially, I videotape Zygy and I having a conversation, then replay it and discuss it with him. The objective of this exercise is to get Zygy to express himself and is intended to build communication, eye contact, and self-esteem. The topic of conversation could be a new toy, something he has recently accomplished or a favourite toy or play date. We also talk about the intangibles (i.e. how he or his sister is feeling: happy, excited, proud, etc). Videotaping Zygy and then replaying and discussing it together, gives him the chance to be his own critic and see how he interacts with dad/mom in a conversation.

## EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:

- 1 digital camera with video recording capability
- 1 laptop/computer (sound/screen) for playback

## THE EXERCISE:

### A. Activity

Typically, we engage in an activity (game, arts/crafts, science, etc) or go on an outing (museum, play date, or sporting event). The activity could also be unpacking and playing with a new toy or a game. The activity can vary in length but should be fun and/or exciting and, not too complicated.

### B. Interview

We do our best to start the interview as soon as the activity is done and it should last about 1 minute. Before I begin, I try to gauge Zygy's energy level. I try to make sure that he is alert and in a good frame of mind. If he is too tired or a little crabby, I might let the interview go.

### IMPORTANT

*I have Zygy sit down on the floor or on a chair, someplace where he is relaxed and not distracted. I try to be enthusiastic and positive throughout the video. I also allow Zygy to make mistakes and try not to correct him during the recording; I like to see if Zygy will figure his mistakes on his own during the playback. I watch Zygy during the interview to see how he processes feelings and memories.*

## The "How to"...



I turn on the camera and start with a common routine greeting: "Hello Zygy" or "Hello Zygy! How are you today?"



I start the interview with a simple question or comment to introduce the topic of discussion: "The experimental farm was fun today. I had a great time! Did you have a good time?" "Hey that's a new toy! WOW!!! What is it? Can you show me what it does?"



We talk about something tangible: "Chickens and cows live on the farm but they sure look different. Can you tell me some of the ways in which cows are different?" "The toy feels rubbery. Can you make it bend or stretch for me?"



If we do a science or craft, we talk about the process and the result: "What do you have there? How did you make that? How did that happen? What did you learn / discover?"



Sometime we talk about feelings associated with the experience: "Were you scared when the horse ate the apple from your hand?" "Are you happy mom bought that toy for you? "How does sharing make you feel?" "You must feel proud of yourself... that can be tricky but you did it all by yourself!"



Incorporate amazement and wonder in your questions

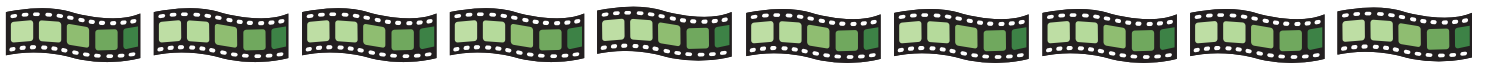


Wrap up the conversation: "Thanks for talking with me, Zygy. I would like to do this again soon. Would you like to see the video now?"



Sometimes, I end the video by commenting on the time and date and topic... this is useful if you want to check progress.





### C. Replay

The replay should occur as soon as possible after the interview is over and should last from 3 to 10 minutes. I transfer the file to my computer.

I have Zyggy sit beside me or on my knee and play back the video for him. I let him to talk during playback and comment on what was done and said. If Zyggy looks/seems embarrassed or bothered, I encourage him to talk about it. I tell him what my favourite parts of the interview were.

When the video is done, Zyggy may want to watch it again (even a few times). Sometimes he seems to be processing something or may want to revisit a memory or his feelings several times and I try to give him that chance.

When Zyggy is done, I tell him that he was awesome, that I am proud of him, and that I want to do this with him again. Sometimes he has suggested we do another exercise immediately. If time permits, we do it all again.



### FINDINGS

The initial 3-4 interviews were a bit clumsy on my end: the interview was way too long, questions were too complicated, events occurred more than 1-2 hours before the interview, etc. Over time and after thoughtful review of the first few videos (often with my wife), I learned to do less talking and allow Zyggy more time and opportunity to collect his thoughts and talk. Some prompting seems to work but the idea of the interview is to give Zyggy some level of confidence and empowerment.

I've noticed increased enthusiasm for the things we do such as science, swimming, arts/crafts, and kitchen science. Even toy cleanup is fun and has been a topic of casual discussion (not video taped however). He seems to like seeing himself talk about things and sometimes restates some of the answers or comments during replay.

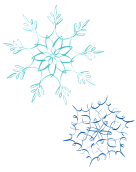
Outside of the interview, he has suggested activities for us to do for example "Let's go to the museum, corner store, swimming, etc." and is willing to initiate this sort of conversation on his own without prompting.

I'm starting to ask two simple questions at once to see if he can answer them in sequence for example "Are you thirsty? Do you need to go to the bathroom?" I'm getting mixed results here but we are making progress. I've also made statements that are false just to see how Zyggy responds such as "Cows run around on two legs." or "Chickens have fur, right?" Most times he laughs at these sorts of statements but doesn't try to correct me.

I've noticed a huge improvement with eye contact. At first, I had to direct Zyggy's attention and focus to the camera for the initial "Hello!" Now I find I don't need to do that as much and he is beginning to know when to look away and when to look back at the camera. Lights, Camera, Action...it's working!

Written by Paul Michniewicz,  
Zyggy's father





## Looking Back

Looking back to the early 1990's, I remember the parent co-operative nursery school where I was director, as a vibrant, creative, nurturing place. The parent support was fantastic, the staff absolutely committed to quality, and children were thriving in this partnership. Even so, as is the nature of Early Childhood Educators, we wanted to do more. We felt the strength and stability of our program meant we were in a position to provide even greater service to the families in our community. We wanted to embrace the goal of integrating children with special needs.

There was a family in our neighbourhood with a beautiful, little, red-haired boy who wanted to register at our preschool. Colin had Down Syndrome and because of a hearing deficit, wore two hearing aids. He also had a language delay. The family dearly wanted Colin to attend preschool in his community. We wanted to make this possible. It was time to put our new vision into focus and to get answers to the many questions and uncertainties that come with new ventures. How would we provide the very best experience for Colin and his family? What would this mean for our staff, parents and other children? We had plenty of commitment and enthusiasm but were we equipped with the practical knowledge and skills needed?

Children's Integration Support Services (CISS), recently established in 1991, was the very organization that would help us move forward. A representative from CISS met in person with our parent executive and staff to answer our questions, quell our concerns and explain the many resources available to licensed programs like ours. We would be supported by an integration advisor, have access to a resource library, be provided with professional development opportunities and most importantly we realized help was just a phone call away. Once we saw that this venture would be embraced by many partners and that we would be part of a supportive team co-ordinated by CISS, we were ready to welcome Colin and his family with open arms.

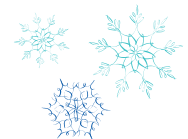
We have continued to welcome many children with a variety of special needs to our preschool. Colin and every child with special needs have enriched our program. They have taught us that creativity and ingenuity are greater than obstacles. In meeting their needs, we developed activities and strategies that ultimately benefited all children in our

program. We learned sign language to help Colin communicate but it continues to be a very fun and integral part of our program today. Even if we don't have a child who needs to sign specifically, all children benefit from the visual and kinesthetic nature of sign language. Also, being three years old and being able to teach your parents and siblings a new language that you learned at preschool is very empowering! As educators, we eagerly participated in many professional development opportunities to learn new skills and apply them to the program in general. All the parents and children in the school learned about the importance of giving every child the opportunity to be equal partners in the greater community. Colin's mom says, "Colin was treated with respect and acceptance by all the children and adults involved in the program; he was not seen as a "special needs" child, he was seen as a child." By age 12, and before moving away, Colin continued to play with and was still accepted by those same children.

One mom who had difficulty finding a nursery school space for her son who had Autism, found that once enrolled with us, she felt welcomed by everyone including parents, staff, children and CISS. She said with an audible sigh of relief "I have never had this kind of support before." The support was a two way street. While families of children with special needs came seeking a program for their children, parents became a resource for each other and have contributed greatly to the well-being of the parent co-operative. Colin's mom, Liz became an energetic fundraiser in their family's first year with us and one of our best-ever presidents of the board in the family's second year.

In looking back, I can't help but look ahead. The warmth of that embrace in 1994 continues to today but in a way that is greater than we imagined. We continue to welcome children with special needs and meet these needs with the same commitment that inspired us to include all children so many years ago. CISS still reassures us and answers our questions although we don't need to call as often! We have a special relationship with our integration advisor of many years. We are true partners with speech pathologists, occupational therapists and other professionals that we collaborate with along the way. We continue to teach the broader community about the joys of inclusion. We keep growing professionally and personally as we touch the lives of all children and their families. We are privileged.

by Lavone Carter  
Retired Director  
Westboro Nursery School



# FROM THE CISS RESOURCE LIBRARY

## BOOKS

RBE 550

Warren, Jean

### **1.2.3 Colors: Color Day Activities for Young Children**

Everett, WA: Warren Publishing House, Inc., 1988. 159 p.

- \*contains hundreds of activities, for young children, based on ideas contributed to the Totline newsletter by teachers
- \*includes a seasonal selection of color stories, songs and rhymes, each accompanied by flannel board patterns

RBE 549

Catron, Carol Elaine & Parks, Barbara Catron

### **Cooking Up a Story With Reproducible Patterns**

Minneapolis, MN: T.S. Denison & Company, Inc., 1986. 215 p.

- \*combines two favorite activities - story telling and cooking
- \*16 stories including recipes for cooking activities that relate to the story theme, as well as patterns and suggestions for props to use in telling the story

RBE 887

Evans, Betsy

### **“I Know What's Next!” Preschool Transitions Without Tears or Turmoil**

Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 2007. 115 p.

- \*offers guidelines that help preschool teachers understand transitions from the child's point of view, as well as providing ideas for making transitions go smoothly
- \*provides ideas for: drop-off and pickup times; starting and ending group times and work time; cleanup time; mealtime and naptime beginnings; waiting times; going outdoors; room-to-room transitions, and moving on to kindergarten
- \*provides: strategies, songs, games, and other experiences that promote learning while easing particular transitions; real-life transition scenarios; reproducible parent handouts

RBE 801

Fleming, Maria

### **Poem of the Week: 50 Irresistible Poems With Activities That Teach Key Reading & Writing Skills...and Inspire a Love of Poetry All Year Long!**

Jefferson City, MO: Scholastic Professional Books. 128 p.

- \*promotes students' language development and stimulates their curiosity about the world around them
- \*you'll find poems that will take you through each week of the school year, from September to June
- \*topics include: seasons and special days, favorite animals, and ones that center around themes such as friendship, weather, colors and plants
- \*provides tips for introducing poetry into the classroom curriculum

## DVD's

DVD 63

### **Super Groups: Creating Engaging Group Times**

Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 2009. 1 DVD, with subtitles and facilitators' guide, 94:00 minutes.

- \*offers key teaching strategies to make group times more enjoyable for both children and teachers
- \*includes three complete 30-minute video programs that model key techniques to engage and involve children ages 3 - 8 years.
- \**Come Join In!* - introduces three guidelines for successful group times: choosing appropriate activities, creating a safe environment, and making activities interactive
- \**Give Yourself a Hand* - focuses on positive guidance strategies for group time and addresses planning and implementation
- \**Once Upon a Time* - demonstrates ways of reading aloud that get children actively involved and support their understanding of the story

## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **HELPING YOUR ANXIOUS CHILD**

**S/E, RBE 858**

By: RONALD M. RAPEE, ANN WIGNAL, ET AL

Anxiety is the most common Mental Health problem among children today. Fifteen percent of pre-schoolers suffer from atypically high levels of depression and anxiety (S. Cote et al. 2009, 5 year Quebec study).

This book provides a step-by-step concrete guide for parents/guardians to teach their child to cope with anxiety. In each chapter, you can find a “Parenting Activity” and a “Children Activity”. These are simple activities the child can do to help manage his/her anxiety. Each activity provides a short, simple description of what adults can say to their child as well as how to use the anxiety management skills worksheets. At the end of most chapters there is a “Children's Practice Task” section.

Adults can download the “Helping Your Anxious Child Workbook”, from the internet. This workbook is free of charge. Please note that you must have the book in hand, in order to have the password needed to download the workbook. Tasks worksheets are included as well.

# Responsiveness – Working Positively with Challenging Behaviours



## A positive approach to behaviour management for parents and teachers.

There are many approaches to challenging behaviours that adults can use with children. Despite all of these choices for adults, behaviour management is something that most parents and teachers continue to struggle with! The usual way to do behaviour management includes rewarding behaviours you want to see, for example using a sticker or stamp program, and being firm and ignoring behaviours you do not want to see, maybe through the use of 'time-outs'. These strategies can work really well when dealing with problem behaviours. So why are many parents and teachers feeling unhappy with behaviour management?

The following article introduces a fairly new approach called responsiveness that reduces challenging behaviours and increases positive behaviours in children. It has seen great success with the hardest to manage behaviours. In this approach, the challenging behaviours are still dealt with (I'll get to that later) but the adult's main focus is the relationship with the child and increasing the positive moments that they have together.

Many of you may be thinking that you have lots of positive moments with your children already. If that is the case, then you are doing well! However, think of the 'harder to manage' child. If you are a parent, or if you are a teacher or professional, you know that it is much more of a challenge to be positive with the harder to manage children. You spend so much of your time dealing with their challenging behaviours, that there seems to be little time to join in on their play or have a conversation. You may even be so frustrated or tired that when things are going well you do not want to jinx it by interrupting play and asking questions!

The idea behind responsiveness is simple and straightforward, but the results are incredible. Anyone can find the time to use it. Responsiveness means you enthusiastically respond to children's interactions. You follow the child's lead and also go out of your way to interact with them. Behaviours you can do include mirroring what they are doing and joining in on the child's

play, asking them questions, praising and reinforcing them. It also means answering their questions and continuing a conversation that the child starts. The more that you engage in these responsive behaviours with a child, the more likely that child will do what you ask him or her to do.

Studies have shown that parents who add these responsive behaviours to their interactions are much more successful at getting their children to comply and listen, even with children who are hard to manage! Even in my own research to complete my masters I found this to be true. I observed social workers doing group therapy with children with behaviour problems. All of the adults were skilled in being firm, ignoring and giving consequences. However, it was the adults who were highest in responsiveness who were by far the most successful at dealing with the problem behaviours.

Adding responsive behaviours to aid in behaviour management does not mean that now problem behaviours can be ignored or not dealt with. On the contrary! A responsive adult is someone who is in tune with all of a child's behaviours, the good and the bad. A child still needs clear limits that are consistently followed through on by an adult. Stamp programs, ignoring and time-outs may all be necessary if the child's behaviour calls for it. Responsiveness simply means that you continue to respond to the problem behaviours, and also increase your efforts to interact positively. Children who display problem behaviours regularly will benefit the most from this increased positive attention.

Answering questions, mirroring a child's play, continuing a conversation, are all simple behaviours that can be added to any adult's behaviour management tactics. By adding these positive interactions, adults will see improvements in children's behaviours and, the child will be more positive to the adult in return! This can lead to a positive relationship forming between the adult and the child, which in turn, will decrease the adult's stress level and set the child up to be successful in the future.

For reminders on how to be responsive when your child is being neutral, positive and displaying challenging behaviours, please see the included chart. Post it on your fridge or in your classroom so that you can be responsive all the time!

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