



Teacher Time

Responding to Persistent Challenging Behavior with Children Birth to Five

April/May 2023



In this issue, you will find:

- Understanding behavior
- Developing a behavior support plan
- Individualizing teaching supports



Table of Contents

- ELOF 3
- Positive Behavior Support (PBS) 3
- Highlights and Key Ideas (Across All Ages)..... 4
- Focus on Equity 5
- Understanding Developmental Stages..... 6
- Understand the Behavior 7
- Develop a Behavior Support Plan: ABC 8
- ABC Observation Card 9
- Develop A Behavior Support Plan: PTR 11
- Behavior Support Plan: Prevent, Teach, Respond (PTR)..... 12
- Infants – Early On
 - Try It Out..... 14
 - Talk About It 15
- Toddlers – Emerging Skills
 - Try It Out..... 16
 - Talk About It 17
- Preschoolers – Increasing Mastery
 - Try It Out..... 18
 - Talk About It 19
- It’s All About You..... 20
- Partnering with Families..... 21
- Individualized Teaching Supports 22
- Resources 24

This training was supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$10,200,000 with 100% funded by ACF. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. This resource may be duplicated for noncommercial uses without permission.

Adapted from:
Circle Time Magazine, Edition 5
 Addressing Challenging Behavior: Guidance and Support, 2019



National Center on
 Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning



ELOF

	Central Domains				
	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Literacy	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
Infant/Toddler Domains	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
Preschooler Domains	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning	

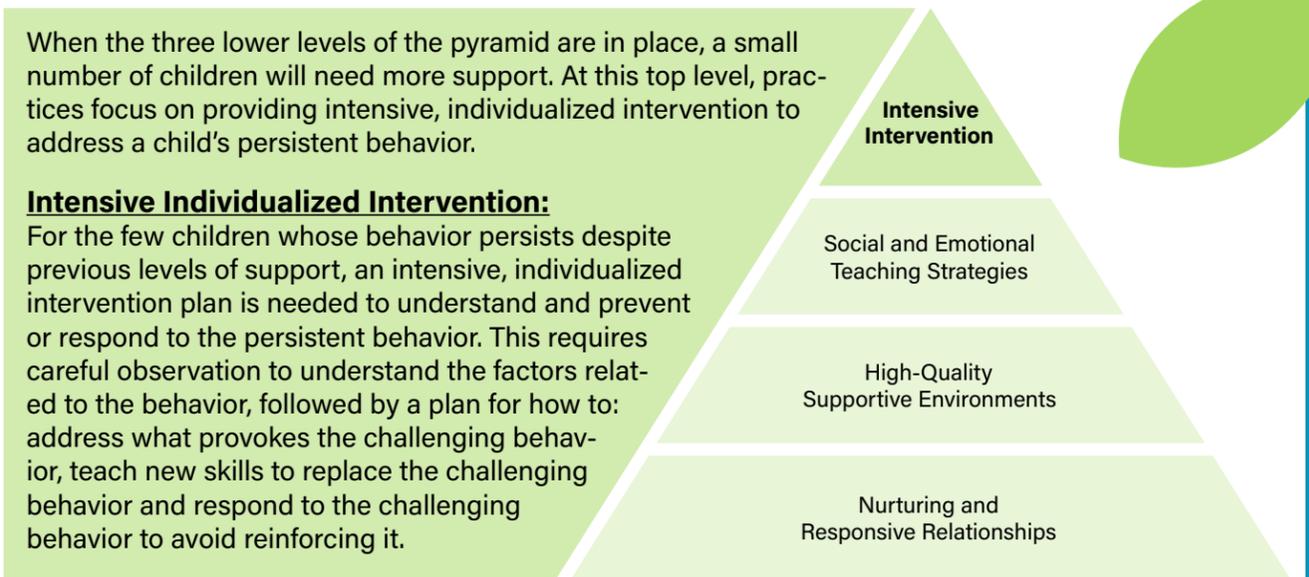
To learn more about the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF), [visit this page on the ECLKC website](#).

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a positive approach to addressing challenging behavior that focuses on building social and emotional skills. PBS recognizes that all behavior communicates a message or need. Once educators understand the meaning of a child’s behavior, they can, together with the family, teach the child more effective ways to communicate their needs.

A Continuum of Support

The Pyramid Model is an established PBS framework for addressing young children’s social and emotional development and challenging behavior. The framework offers a continuum of evidence-based teaching practices that are organized into four levels of support.



Adapted from Fox, L., Dunlap, G., Hemmeter, M., Joseph, G. E., & Strain, P. S. (2003). The teaching pyramid: A model for supporting social competence and preventing challenging behavior in young children. *Young Children*, 58(4), 48-52

Highlights and Key Ideas (Across All Ages)

To promote healthy social and emotional development, **all children** need nurturing and responsive relationships and an accessible, supportive environment. **Some children** need more direct instruction to build specific social emotional skills to address challenging behavior. **A few children** have persistent or severe challenging behaviors, even with those strategies in place. These children need highly intensive, individualized support to build positive social emotional skills.

Understand the Behavior

Pause to think about the influences on a child's behavior and adult perceptions of behavior.

Consider the Three Rs:

- Review
- Reflect
- Build Resilience



Individualize Teaching Supports

For a behavior support plan to be effective, the intervention and teaching supports must be tailored to match the child's developmental level, preferences, and unique needs.

Develop a Behavior Support Plan

- Observe:** Observe the behavior so you understand what the child is communicating.
- Partner with Families:** Family involvement and participation is critical to the success of highly individualized intervention.
- Prevent and Teach:** Develop a behavior support plan that has the strategies adults will use to prevent provoking the behavior. Teach new skills the child can use to meet their needs, and respond in ways that do not reinforce the challenging behavior.



Focus on Equity

The expectations we have for behavior are influenced by our cultural background and past experiences. Subtle biases that we are often unaware of can impact the behavior we notice and respond to. Uncovering these implicit biases takes time and reflection.

Reflection on practice

Ask your coach to watch you and notice:

- Who are you smiling at more often?
- Who do you console?
- Who are you near more often?
- Who gets their behavior redirected, and who gets your praise and encouragement?
- Are there any patterns that you notice? What might be influencing these?

Reflection on family partnership

- What behavior has the family noticed?
- What behaviors would they like to see instead?
- How am I feeling about the family's observations and desires?



Think of a child whose behavior is challenging to you. List 10 strengths of the child and their family.

1 _____	6 _____
2 _____	7 _____
3 _____	8 _____
4 _____	9 _____
5 _____	10 _____

Questions to consider:

- What are the strategies you have implemented to support the child?
- Does the child need more intensive intervention?

Understanding Developmental Stages

It is important that the behavior we expect from young children and the support strategies we use are developmentally appropriate. If children are unable to meet expectations, they will find creative ways to express themselves and get their needs met. Sometimes these behaviors can be perceived as challenging.



INFANTS — Early On

Children who are at an early stage of social and emotional development may have behavior, such as persistent crying or withdrawal, that is challenging to an adult. When educators establish a **nurturing and responsive relationship** with the infant, they can easily read the infant's cues and respond as needed. An infant overwhelmed with emotion **needs trusted adults to offer support through co-regulation strategies**, such as calm responses, nurturing, and soothing. It is important for the adult caregiver to practice self-regulation and resilience skills when supporting an infant who demonstrates a high level of need.



TODDLERS — Emerging Skills

Children who are at an emerging stage of social and emotional development may have behavior that is challenging to adults and some other children. Toddlers are **just beginning to build the language skills** needed to express themselves; they experience frustration when the right words don't come to mind. A toddler interacts with others in the moment and is often **not yet able to understand how their behavior impacts others**. A toddler typically has a short attention span, likes to move, and is curious about the world. **Keeping these developmental needs in mind** when setting behavior expectations for toddlers can help to prevent challenging behavior. When supporting a toddler's emerging social and emotional skills, it is important for the adult caregiver to practice self-regulation and resilience.



PRESCHOOLERS — Increasing Mastery

Children who are increasing their mastery of social and emotional development may have behavior that is challenging to adults and other children. Preschoolers **experience increasing demands for cooperative behavior**, friendship skills, managing their emotions, social problem-solving, and using language to express their needs. **Understanding the individual needs of each child** when planning behavior expectations can help prevent challenging behavior. It is important for the adult caregiver to practice self-regulation and resilience skills when supporting preschoolers with challenging behavior.

Understand the Behavior

Challenging behavior is any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with—or shows signs of interfering with—learning and relationships. However, adults ultimately decide what behaviors they expect in their learning environment and whether a child's behavior is challenging. Defining a behavior as challenging is influenced by the adult's culture, beliefs, and biases. In addition, the child's temperament, home environment, and cultural norms influence behavior. It is important to explore these influences to get a clear picture of the child's behavior. Consider the following tips when determining if a child's behavior is alarming and needs intensive support.

 Cut it out for your learning environment!

Review-Reflect-Resilience

Review: Consider the universal practices that all children need

Relationship and Environment

- How have I worked to establish a trusting relationship with this child and family?
- How have I intentionally designed the environment to support the child?

Teaching Strategies

- How am I teaching the child to understand and regulate emotions?
- How am I teaching the child problem-solving skills?
- Are my expectations developmentally appropriate?
- How have I incorporated the child's home culture and values into my expectations?

Context

- Is there anything outside the child's control impacting behavior—could the child be sick, tired, hungry, uncomfortable, overstimulated?
- Is there anything outside of my control impacting the child's behavior—such as homelessness, food insecurity, grief, trauma?

Reflect: Think about my own values, thoughts, and feelings about the behavior

- Why is this behavior challenging for me? For other children?
- Am I frustrated with the behavior or the child?
- Is there something about this child's cultural norms that are different from mine?
- Am I making any assumptions about the child's intentions?
- How have I partnered with the child's family to understand the behavior?

Resilience: Observe, think about, and intentionally plan responses that build resilience

- How does my typical response to the child's behavior:
 - Make me feel?
 - Impact the pattern of the behavior?
- What steps can I take to calm myself?
- What self-care practices can I try or do more often?

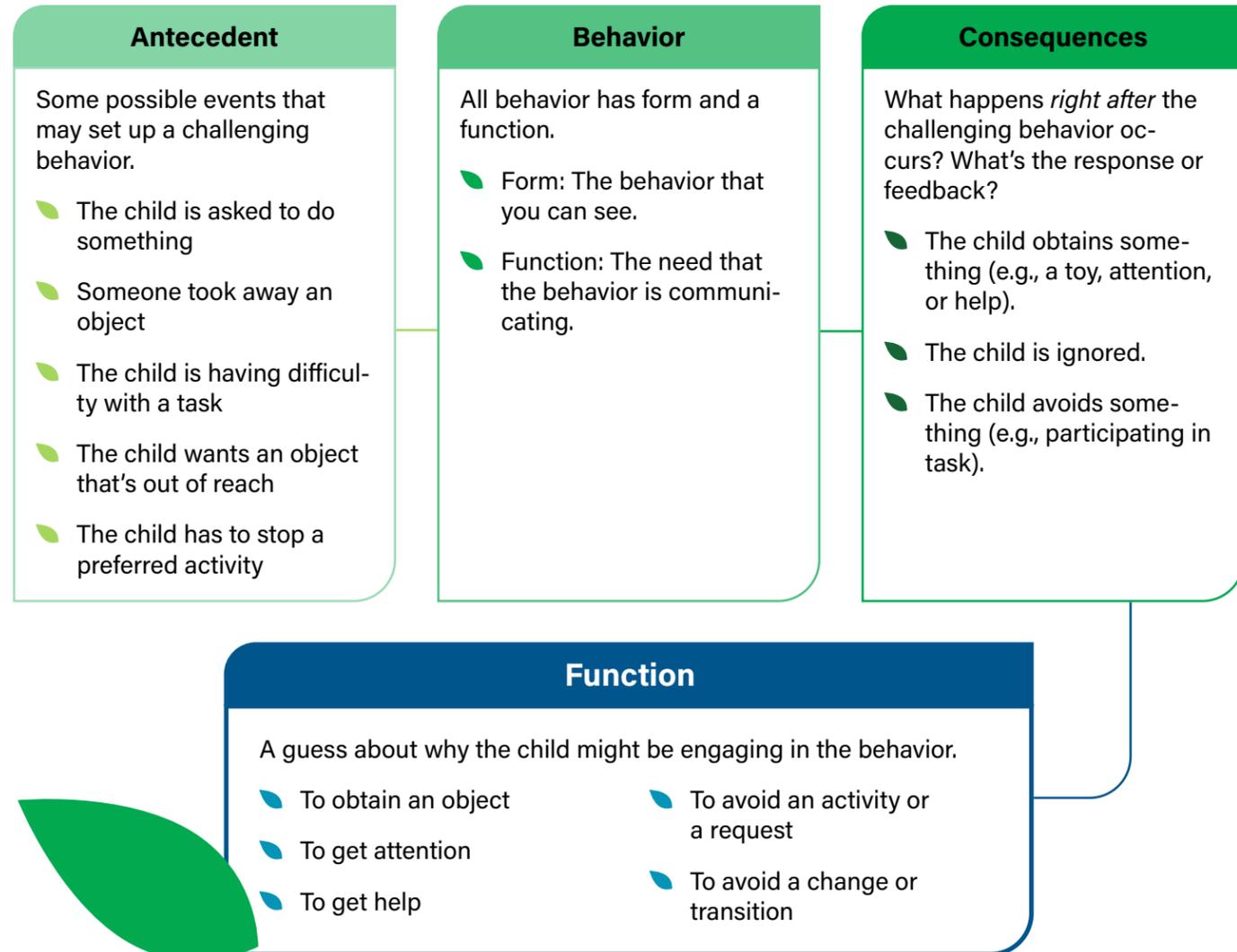
Develop a Behavior Support Plan: ABC

Behavior Equation

A clear understanding of the challenging behavior and why it is happening forms the basis of an individualized *behavior* support plan. Gather information about the environment and the child's behavior through direct observations and interviews with significant adults in the child's life. To observe, look at what sets up the behavior (*antecedents*) and what happens for the child as a result of the behavior (*consequences*), and see if a pattern emerges over time.

With this information, make a best guess about why the child is engaging in the challenging behavior (*function*). Typically, children engage in challenging behavior to get or avoid something.

Antecedent + Behavior + Consequences = Function



ABC Observation Card

Child's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Activity: _____ Observer: _____

Who was there/involved (other adults or children)? _____

Antecedent

What happens before?

Behavior

What happens during?

Consequences

What happens after?

Function

Child's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Activity: _____ Observer: _____

Who was there/involved (other adults or children)? _____

Antecedent

What happens before?

Behavior

What happens during?

Consequences

What happens after?

Function

This form is adapted from CSEFEL. The CSEFEL Tools for Developing Behavior Support Plans: Observation Cards are available in English and in Spanish at <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#toolspans>

This training was supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$10,200,000 with 100% funded by ACF. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. This resource may be duplicated for noncommercial uses without permission.

example

ABC Observation Card*

Child's Name: Sonia Date/Time: 2/21/2023
 Activity: free choice, dramatic play area Observer: Demeitri
 Who was there/involved (other adults or children)? Baruch



Antecedent What happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequences What happens after?
<p><i>At the cash register Sonia grabbed the pretend card from Baruch. Baruch pulled it away from her, closer to him</i></p>	<p><i>Sonia scratched Baruch's arm and went to bite his hand</i></p>	<p><i>Baruch dropped the card. Sonia picked it up and began playing with it at the cash register</i></p>
Function		
<p><i>Sonia grabs, scratches and bites to obtain toys and materials</i></p>		

* for reproduction

ABC Observation Card*

Child's Name: Sonia Date/Time: 2/22/2023
 Activity: block area Observer: Demeitri
 Who was there/involved (other adults or children)? Anna



Antecedent What happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequences What happens after?
<p><i>Sonia was building a house for her animals. She was reaching for the triangle block, Anna got it first</i></p>	<p><i>Sonia screamed, scratched Anna's shoulder and then bit Anna's arm</i></p>	<p><i>Anna dropped the block, Sonia grabbed it and added it to her structure</i></p>
Function		
<p><i>Sonia screams, scratches, and bites to obtain toys and materials</i></p>		

This form is adapted from CSEFEL. The CSEFEL Tools for Developing Behavior Support Plans: Observation Cards are available in English and in Spanish at <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#toolspans> * for reproduction

Develop A Behavior Support Plan: PTR

Prevent and Teach New Skills

Once a pattern emerges in your observations, and there is a clear understanding of the behavior and why it seems to be happening (the function), an individualized behavior support plan can be developed to replace the challenging behavior with new, more positive ways to communicate. An important part of clearly understanding the behavior and creating a behavior support plan includes partnering and collaborating with the family.

Prevent

First, select and use individualized strategies and supports that will prevent or make it less likely that the child will need to use the challenging behavior. Choose prevention strategies based on the information we collected about the antecedent of the behavior during the ABC data collection process. Prevention strategies are usually changes or additions to the environment or our interactions with the child.

Teach

After prevention strategies are in place, use individualized intervention and support to teach the child the new skill(s), called the replacement skill. For the replacement skill to be effective, it should serve the same function and be easier for the child to use than the challenging behavior and be more effective at getting their needs met. Intentionally plan when and how you'll teach the replacement skill. Provide many instructional opportunities throughout daily activities and routines to support the child in learning this new skill. You may develop and use instructional materials such as visual or communication supports as part of this individualized instruction.

Consider strategies that:

- Foster nurturing and responsive relationships.
- Create and maintain a safe, predictable, and engaging environment.
- Promote emotional literacy and self-regulation.
- Support friendship and social problem-solving skills.
- Expand verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Respond

Intentionally respond to the challenging behavior so it is no longer effective and ensure that the replacement skill works for the child to meet their needs.

Working as a team: You're not alone

- Continue to partner with families.
- Contact professionals to discuss a possible referral for developmental screening. This step always includes the families.
- Collaborate with other colleagues when possible.

Behavior Support Plan: Prevent, Teach, Respond (PTR)



National Center on
Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning

Child's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

All team members that agree to implement the plan:

Antecedent What happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequences What happens after?
Function		
Prevent	Teach New Skills	Respond
		To challenging behavior:
		To new skill:

This training was supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$10,200,000 with 100% funded by ACF. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. This resource may be duplicated for noncommercial uses without permission.

Responding to Persistent Challenging Behavior

example

Behavior Support Plan: Prevent, Teach, Respond (PTR)

National Center on
Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning

Child's Name: Sonia Date/Time: 2/28/2023 at 10:30am

All team members that agree to implement the plan:
Mom, Dad, Lead Educator, Colleague 1, Colleague 2

Antecedent What happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequences What happens after?
<p><i>Another child reaches for, takes, or is playing with a toy that Sonia wants</i></p>	<p><i>Sonia screams, scratches, grabs, and bites</i></p>	<p><i>Other child drops toy, cries, or walks away</i></p> <p><i>Sonia picks up the toy and plays with it</i></p>
Function		
<p><i>Sonia screams, scratches, grabs, and bites to obtain toys and materials.</i></p>		
Prevent	Teach New Skills	Respond
<p><i>Provide:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multiple items of Sonia's favorite toy - Visual reminders of "safe body" in play areas - A timer for turn-taking 	<p><i>When a peer takes or tries to take the child's toy, we will teach Sonia to use an open, hand out gesture</i></p> <p><i>We can also teach Sonia to say "mine" or "my turn" using verbal and visual supports</i></p>	<p style="background-color: #C8E6C9; padding: 2px;">To challenging behavior:</p> <p><i>Sonia does not get access to the toy and is prompted to use the replacement skill</i></p> <p style="background-color: #C8E6C9; padding: 2px;">To new skill:</p> <p><i>Give Sonia access to the toy and praise Sonia for using the replacement skill</i></p>

Try It Out

Try these BASICS strategies to promote friendship and social problem-solving skills with infants.

BASICS

Behavioral expectations in advance; **A**ttend to and encourage positive behavior; **S**caffold with cues and prompts; **I**ncrease engagement; **C**reate or add challenge; **S**pecific feedback

The BASICS is a collection of strategies that can be used while interacting with infants and toddlers in any setting. In this season's *Teacher Time*, we will focus on two letters of the BASICS in each episode. We hope that you will join us for all this season's webinars or access them on PushPlay so that you can get the BASICS of Positive Behavior Supports!



Attend to and encourage positive behavior

To learn an infant's cues and provide responsive care to behaviors adults might find challenging, like persistent crying, educators must build relationships with infants and their families. One way to do this is by attending to and encouraging positive behavior through noticing and naming infants' and families' strengths and by making deposits into an infant's Relationship Piggy Bank. Check out the Individualized Teaching Supports section on page 22 for more information.

Add Your Ideas Here



Increase engagement

Educators can use the Behavior Equation or ABC data collection (see page 9) to learn how their adult behaviors are impacting an infant's engagement. Educators can think about a behavior they find challenging, make note of what they were doing right before the behavior occurred and what they were doing right after. Observe and make notes over time to see if there is a pattern in how the adult's behavior is impacting the infant.

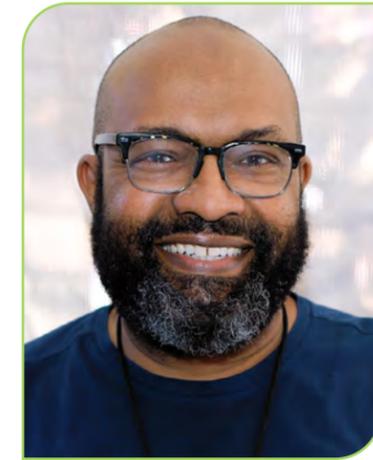
Add Your Ideas Here

Talk About It

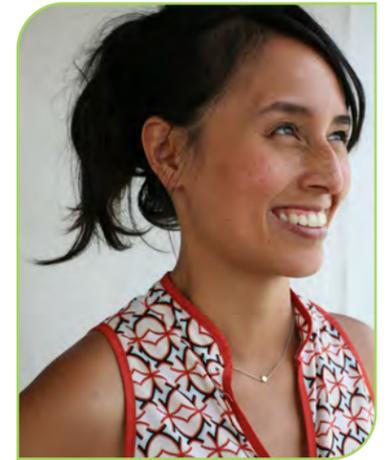
The BookCASE

Check out these books that relate to different tiers of the Pyramid.

- *Hello, Friend / Hola, Amigo* by Andrés Salguero (Author), Sara Palacios (Illustrator)
- *Hands Can* by Cheryl Willis Hudson (Author), John-Francis Bourke (Illustrator)
- *May We Have Enough to Share* by Richard Van Camp

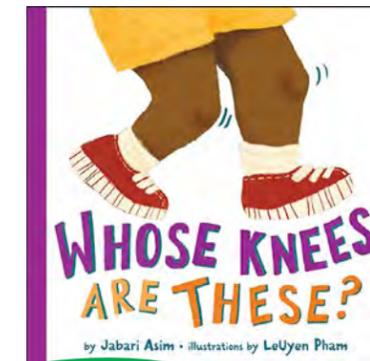


Jabari Asim, author of *Whose Knees Are These?*



LeUyen Pham, illustrator of *Whose Knees Are These?*

Please note: Your local library may have these titles and suggestions about other books on this topic.



Making the CASE

Whose Knees Are These? by Jabari Asim (Author), LeUyen Pham (Illustrator)

Connection - This board book focuses on celebrating the amazing things a child's body can do and how adults can celebrate a child's abilities, adding to their Relationship Piggy Bank. This book connects to many domains in the ELOF, particularly social and emotional development by supporting relationships between the adult and child.

Advanced vocabulary - Rhyming is a great way for children to learn the different sounds that make up words and learn new vocabulary. Here we see some simple rhymes with fantastic advanced language, such as knees and trees, strong and belong, and stair and pair.

Support active engagement - The child and reader could touch their knees each time the word knees is said. There are a lot of animals found throughout the book — encourage the child to share the sounds the animals make when they see them. This can help support engagement and lead to a positive reading experience.

Extend the learning - This celebration of knees is a great time to introduce other body parts! Sing *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes* while gently touching those parts of the child's body.

Try It Out

Try these BASICS strategies to promote friendship and social problem-solving skills with toddlers.

BASICS

Behavioral expectations in advance; **A**ttend to and encourage positive behavior; **S**caffold with cues and prompts; **I**ncrease engagement; **C**reate or add challenge; **S**pecific feedback

The BASICS is a collection of strategies to use when interacting with infants and toddlers. In this season of *Teacher Time*, we will focus on two letters of the BASICS in each episode. We hope that you will join us for all this season's webinars or access them on PushPlay so that you can get the BASICS of Positive Behavior Supports!



Attend to and encourage positive behavior

When challenging behaviors occur in the learning environment, consider looking back at the bottom of the Pyramid to nurturing and responsive relationships. One way to build, maintain, and repair relationships is to encourage positive behavior. Think of a specific toddler and write down, notice, and name 10 strengths of the child and family. Intentionally make deposits into a toddler's Relationship Piggy Bank through specific encouragement. To learn more about the Relationship Piggy Bank, check out the Individualized Teaching Supports section on page 22.

Add Your Notes Here



Increase engagement

Children who engage in challenging behaviors might be struggling to engage with their peers and/or learning environment. One way to increase engagement is to create and consistently follow a Behavior Support Plan (see page 14). Having prevention strategies in place and teaching the toddler replacement behaviors will support the toddler in engaging more fully in the learning environment.

Add Your Notes Here

Talk About It

The BookCASE

Check out these books that relate to different tiers of the Pyramid.

- *Hush! A Thai Lullaby* by Minfong Ho (Author), Holly Meade (Illustrator)
- *Hello, Friend / Hola, Amigo* by Andrés Salguero (Author), Sara Palacios (Illustrator)
- *Color Monster* by Anna Llenas

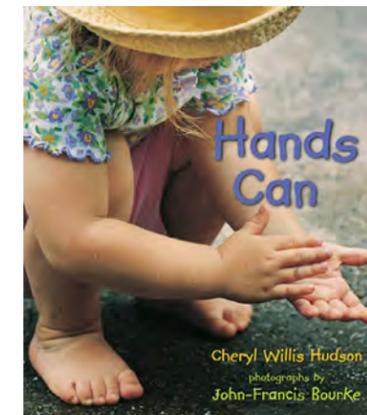
Please note: your local library may have these titles and suggestions about other books on this topic.



Cheryl Willis Hudson, author of *Hands Can*



John-Francis Bourke, illustrator of *Hands Can*



Making the CASE

Hands Can by Cheryl Willis Hudson (Author), John-Francis Bourke (Illustrator)

Connection – We want to reinforce the positive behaviors we see in the learning environment and this book is a fantastic resource for helping children know what they can do with their hands! This story connects to many goals in the social and emotional development domain in the ELOF.

Advanced vocabulary – Rhyming is a terrific way for children to learn the different sounds that make up words and learn new vocabulary. Here we see some simple rhymes with words like hold and mold, or mix and fix. There are also a lot of words that invite action, such as high, low, catch, and throw.

Support active engagement – This book invites children to act out the photographs they see on the page. They can reach high and low while the educator reads just like the children in the photographs. They can pretend to tie their shoes and hug a friend.

Extend the learning – Since this book is full of photographs, it would be meaningful to make your own version of what hands can do! This may spark making other books around positive relationships and learning.

Try It Out

Try these BASICS strategies to promote friendship and social problem-solving skills with preschool children.

BASICS

Behavioral expectations in advance; **A**ttend to and encourage positive behavior; **S**caffold with cues and prompts; **I**ncrease engagement; **C**reate or add challenge; **S**pecific feedback

The BASICS is a collection of strategies to use when interacting with infants and toddlers. In this season of *Teacher Time*, we will focus on two letters of the BASICS in each episode. We hope that you will join us for all this season's webinars or access them on PushPlay so that you can get the BASICS of Positive Behavior Supports!



Attend to and encourage positive behavior

When challenging behaviors occur in the learning environment, consider looking back at the bottom of the Pyramid to nurturing and responsive relationships. One way to build, maintain, and repair relationships is to encourage positive behavior. Think of a specific child and write down, notice, and name 10 strengths of the child and family. Intentionally make deposits into a child's Relationship Piggy Bank through specific encouragement. To learn more about the relationship piggy bank check out the Individualized Teaching Supports section on page 22.

Add Your Notes Here



Increase engagement

Children who engage in challenging behaviors might be struggling to engage with their peers and/or learning environment. One way to increase engagement is to create and consistently follow a Behavior Support Plan (see page 14). Having prevention strategies in place and teaching the child's replacement behaviors will support the child in engaging more fully in the learning environment.

Add Your Notes Here

Talk About It

The BookCASE

With spring comes many changes! Check out these books that focus on and support preschool children transitioning to kindergarten.

- *That's Not My Name* by Anoosha Syed
- *King of Kindergarten* by Derrick Barnes (Author), Vanessa Brantley-Newton (Illustrator)
- *Isabel and her Colores go to School* by Alexendra Alessandri (Author), Courtney Dawson (Illustrator)

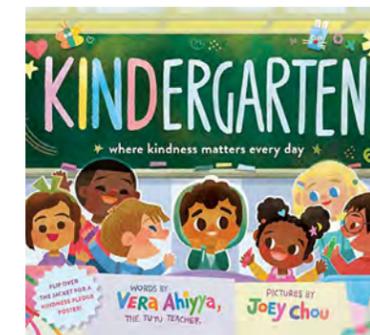


Vera Ahiyya, author of *Kindergarten: Where kindness matters every day*



Joey Chou, illustrator of *Kindergarten: Where kindness matters every day*

Please note: Your local library may have these titles or suggestions about other books on this topic.



Making the CASE

Kindergarten: Where kindness matters every day by Vera Ahiyya (Author), Joey Chou (Illustrator)

Connection - Leo is feeling worried about starting kindergarten. Based on the experiences throughout their day, the class works together to write a pledge about all the different ways they can treat their classmates with kindness. This book connects to many goals in the social and emotional development domain in the ELOF.

Advanced vocabulary - This book includes a wide range of vocabulary around emotions and how children may be feeling when starting something new, such as worried, scary, safe, kindness, and wonder. New kindergarten words—like PE, pledge, and dismissal—are also included.

Support active engagement - This book may be a bit long to read in one sitting, so planning to read it over the course of the day is a great way to keep children engaged and interested. Educators can start it during morning group time and then finish it at afternoon group time or even in smaller groups throughout the day.

Extend the learning - This is a great opportunity to use the content on the book's last pages to create your classroom's own kindness pledge. Ask a few open-ended questions that encourage children to think about how they can be kind to one another. Write down children's responses on a large paper or whiteboard so everyone's contributions are seen and heard. Facilitating thoughtful discussions around how it feels to start something new can help children as they transition to a new classroom or school.

It's All About You

Throughout the season, we have introduced the following self-regulation tools and techniques. We encourage you to cut these tools out and put them in your learning environment, if you haven't already.

 Cut it out and post in your learning environment!

Activity: Color Visualization

- ✔ **Sit** in a comfortable position with your body relaxed. Allow your eyes to close softly.
- ✔ **Imagine** a color that feels soothing or happy to you.
- ✔ **Inhale** and **visualize** that color entering your body.
- ✔ **Allow** the color to wash over you feeling calm, safe, and fresh.
- ✔ **Feel** your color travel through your body, from head to toe, relaxing your muscles.
- ✔ **Exhale** and return to this moment.



Activity: Body Scan

Start seated in a chair or lying down with your back flat against the ground.

- ✔ Bring your attention to your body.
- ✔ Close your eyes if that's comfortable.
- ✔ As you exhale, relax and notice your feet or body on the floor or seat.
- ✔ Notice your back against the chair or floor.
- ✔ Bring your attention into your stomach area. If it feels tight, let it soften.
- ✔ Notice your hands, arms, or shoulders. Let them be soft.
- ✔ Let your jaw and facial muscles be soft.
- ✔ Notice your whole body present.

 Cut it out and post in your learning environment!

 Cut it out and post in your learning environment!

Ideas to Try: 4-4-8 Breathing

Take a moment and focus on your breathing.

Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4, taking the breath into your belly.

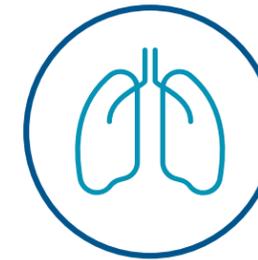
Hold your breath for 4 counts.

Release your breath through your mouth with a whooshing sound for 8 counts.

You can repeat this exercise 3 or 4 times for a full minute of mindful breathing.



4 breathe in



4 hold



8 breathe out

Partnering with Families

Working together with families to understand a child's challenging behavior and identify prevention and support strategies is essential. Creating a behavior support plan in partnership with the family significantly increases the likelihood of success. Approach this partnership with open curiosity and respect.

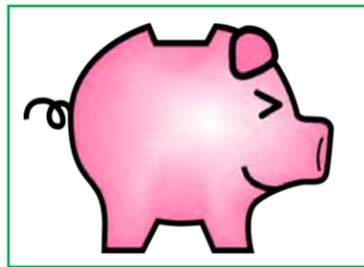
- ✔ Focus on child and family strengths.
- ✔ Respectfully discuss concerns. Avoid placing blame on the child or family. Be positive and reassuring.
- ✔ Ask families for their perspective on the challenging behavior and be open to understanding different viewpoints.
- ✔ Discuss with families how they would like to help develop and implement the plan.
- ✔ Consider and honor the family's culture and values.
- ✔ Be understanding of constraints on a family's involvement (e.g., time and stress).
- ✔ If there is agreement that professional specialists are needed, discuss and provide information about the process.





Individualized Teaching Supports

Try out these materials to provide individualized support to children who have one or more challenging behaviors. Be sure supports are tailored to each child's unique culture and needs. When a visual support is needed, make an individual set specific to the child's intervention plan and place it in a visible or easily accessible location. For quick and easy access throughout the day, keep portable sets of support materials in a fanny pack.



The Relationship Piggy Bank

Use the Relationship Piggy Bank to build, repair, and maintain positive relationships with children. Check out the October/November 2022 viewer's guide for more information.

Find additional information about the Relationship Piggy Bank in the [Fostering Connections 15-minute In-service Suite](#).



Warm Greetings

Encourage children's feeling of belonging in their learning environment by using a greeting choice board. Individualize greetings by having children choose which greeting feels comforting to them. Check out the *October/November 2022 Viewer's Guide* for more information.

To download this visual choice board for greetings, visit the [NCPMI website](#).



Feelings Faces Chart/Cards

Post the feelings faces chart or cut out the pictures to make a portable version of feeling faces to support children's emotional literacy. You can group them on a metal ring and have them handy throughout the day to help children who are receiving targeted emotional support identify their feelings. Check out the *December 2022/January 2023 Viewer's Guide* for more information.

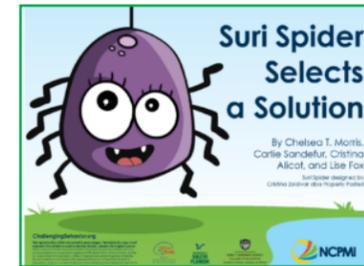
You can access a [Feeling Faces chart PDF](#) from NCPMI. Additionally, the Head Start Center for Inclusion provides another example of feeling faces that can be found on the [ECLKC Classroom Visuals & Supports page](#), under Emotions.



Emotion Regulation Visuals

Help children's self-regulation by placing sets of the emotional regulation visuals throughout the learning environment. Individualize this support by creating providing a child their own set of visuals tailored to their specific needs. Check out the *December 2022/January 2023 Viewer's Guide* for more information.

Find the Emotional Regulation Solution Visuals on [ECLKC Classroom Visuals & Supports page](#), under Emotional Regulation.



Social Stories

Write a short, individualized story for a child, from their perspective, about a topic that is challenging for them. Describe the situation that triggers the child's challenging behavior, then include directions about what the child can do in that situation that will result in a positive outcome. Add line drawings or photos to personalize it, and plan time to read and teach the story. Check out the *February/March 2023 Viewer's Guide* for more information.

Learn more about Social Stories and find Social Stories on the [ECLKC Social Stories page](#). Additionally, you can find more [Social Stories or Scripted Stories](#) on the NCPMI website.



Solution Kit Visuals

Make portable versions of solution kit cards. These include pictures of ways children can solve a social conflict. Create unique sets for individual children as needed. Check out the *February/March 2023 Viewer's Guide* for more information.

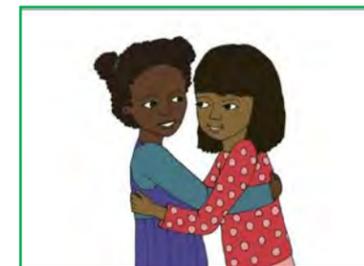
Find the Solution Kit Visuals on [ECLKC Classroom Visuals & Supports page](#), under Problem Solving.



Transition Cards

Create special transition cards for an individual child who may have difficulty transitioning from one activity to another. These may feature an image of the next planned activity, preferred colors or characters, a preferred transition activity, or photos of the child engaged in the expected behavior.

Find the Transition Cards on [ECLKC Classroom Visuals & Supports page](#), under Classroom Transitions and Routines.



Friendship Visuals

Help children increase their friendship skills by placing sets of images illustrating friendship behaviors in areas of the learning environment where conflict is more likely. Create individualized images or sets for individual children who need extra or more frequent reminders of ways they can interact with peers in a positive way.

Find the Friendship Visuals on [ECLKC Classroom Visuals & Supports page](#), under Friendship Kit and Building Social Skills.

Resources

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/interactive-head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework-ages-birth-five> (English)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/marco-interactivo-de-head-start-sobre-los-resultados-del-aprendizaje-temprano-de-los-ninos-desde-el> (Spanish)

Pyramid Model Overview

<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/overview/basics/>

How to Understand the Meaning of Your Child's Challenging Behavior

https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_behavior_understand-meaning.pdf (English)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/addressing-behavior-how-to-understand-the-meaning-of-your-childs-challenging-behavior-spanish/> (Spanish)

Help Us Stay Calm

https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Stay-Calm_Infographic.pdf (English)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/help-us-stay-calm-strategies-that-help-you-and-your-child-during-challenging-behavior-spanish-pdf/> (Spanish)

Addressing Behavior: How to Help Your Child Stop Hitting and Pushing

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/addressing-behavior-how-to-help-your-child-stop-hitting-and-pushing/> (English)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/addressing-behavior-how-to-help-your-child-stop-hitting-and-pushing-spanish/> (Spanish)

How to Plan Activities to Reduce Challenging Behavior

https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_routines_plan-activities.pdf (English)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/routines-and-schedules-how-to-plan-activities-to-reduce-challenging-behavior-spanish/> (Spanish)

How to Use Positive Language to Improve Your Child's Behavior

https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_emotions_language.pdf (English)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/emotions-how-to-use-positive-language-to-improve-your-childs-behavior-spanish/> (Spanish)

Facts About Young Children with Challenging Behaviors

https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/facts_about_sheet.pdf

Facilitating Individualized Interventions to Address Challenging Behavior: Toolkit

https://www.ecmhc.org/documents/CECMHC_FacilitatingToolkit.pdf

Challenging Behavior: Support Plans for Children with Disabilities

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/challenging-behavior-support-plans-children-disabilities>

Behavior Has Meaning 15-minute In-service Suite

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/behavior-has-meaning> (English)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/video/el-comportamiento-tiene-significado> (Spanish)

Understanding and Managing Children's Behaviors

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health/article/understanding-managing-childrens-behaviors> (English)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/salud-mental/articulo/comprender-y-gestionar-los-comportamientos-de-los-ninos> (Spanish)

Understanding and Managing Children's Behaviors: Individual Support Plans (ISP)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health/article/understanding-managing-childrens-behaviors-individual-support-plans-isp> (English)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/salud-mental/articulo/comprender-y-gestionar-los-comportamientos-de-los-ninos-planes-de-apoyo-individual-isp> (Spanish)

Cultivating Wellness: 8 Dimensions of Staff Well-being

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/cultivating-wellness-8-dimensions-staff-well-being> (English)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/publicacion/cultivar-el-bienestar-las-8-dimensiones-del-bienestar-del-personal> (Spanish)

Understanding Challenging Behavior: The Path to Behavior Support

<https://challengingbehavior.org/webinar/understanding-challenging-behavior-the-path-to-behavior-support/>