

## **Responding in the Moment to Behaviors That Challenge Adults**

Sarah Basler: Hello, everyone, and welcome. Today, we are going to be talking about "Responding to Behaviors that Challenge Adults." We are so excited to be joined by our guest expert, Dr. Mary Louise Hemmeter, or M.L. as I know her. M.L. helped to develop the Pyramid Model, which is something that we're going to be talking about today. We will get the opportunity to interview her and learn about what adults can do in the moment when children engage in challenging behavior. I wanted to give M.L. a moment to introduce herself.

Mary Louise Hemmeter: Hey, everybody. Welcome. We're so glad you're here. I'm Mary Louise Hemmeter, as Sarah said, or M.L. I teach at Vanderbilt University and do research and all those kinds of things and also work on DTL. In my lab, we do a lot of work around coaching and the Pyramid Model. This is right up our alley today.

Sarah: I got so excited I think I forgot to introduce myself. I'm Sarah Basler. I am the host of the Coaching Corner webinars and I work for DTL. We are so excited that you decided to spend your hour with us today. Before we get started, let's go through a little bit of the logistics. For this webinar, we have a really important resource that helps to support you to engage in this webinar.

It's called the Viewer's Guide and it's located in the resource widget of this webinar platform. Take a moment and download if you haven't already. It's really great to give you extra information, it's a place for you to take notes, reflect and it also has some great resources in the back that we'll refer to throughout. If you haven't already, take a chance to download that and use that as we go along today.

Today, we're going to discuss strategies to support a coachee to use in the moment when challenging behavior occurs. We focus mainly on coachees, but we know that some of you that are joining us today will be a coach supporting a home visitor. A coach could support a coachee that is a home visitor to support an adult to use some of these strategies in the moment as well. We're also going to be talking about and watching an example and observing an example of challenging behavior or behavior that challenges adults and looking for the strategies that we're going to talk about.

We're going to watch an example and see what strategies we observe in that example. You may remember that last year the Coaching Corner webinars were focused on using PBC to support education staff using the different tiers of the Pyramid Model as the effective practices in the center of the PBC Model. If you didn't catch that series of webinars, not to worry, those can all be found on the ECLKC. They are linked in the resource list of this Viewer's Guide.

As a reminder for those of you who maybe didn't get a chance to see those, the Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development. The Pyramid Model builds on a tiered public health approach by providing those universal supports in the blue. Those are for all children to promote wellness

targeted to those that need more support. In the intensive services, for those who need extra. We've got universal in blue, the secondary tier is in the green and then we have the intensive intervention at the top. We see as we go up the pyramid that will be less and less children that need those targeted, really individualized supports.

In this webinar, we're really going to be focusing on how to respond to behavior that challenges adults in the moment. Throughout our webinar today, we're going to use the word "challenging behavior" or "behaviors that challenge adults" interchangeably. What we're talking about is the same thing. If you want more information about the Pyramid Model, you can check out the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations or NCPMI. The website is linked in the resource list of the Viewer's Guide.

Before we really dig in and get to hear more from M.L. on her words of wisdom about how to respond to these challenging behaviors, we want to take a moment to remind everyone that behavior is communication. When behaviors occur, there's a reason or what we call a function. Something else that is important to note about behavior is that our past experiences, child wellness and other contextual events can influence a child's behavior.

This picture is of an iceberg. And it illustrates that there's a small portion of the iceberg that's visible above the water level, but a much larger portion sits below the water level, which may not be visible from above. In some cases, the challenging behaviors that you observe or that a coachee observes may — is what's visible above. The tip represents those behaviors that we see, so what we see bubbling up or rising to the top.

What we see below might be the behavior that we see is just the tip of the iceberg. It gives us clues about what might be going on below the surface. These words here you see like trauma, illness, frustration, these are things that the behavior might be communicating to us. What we see is the behavior, but what we don't see are some of these underlying factors that might be causing the challenging behavior.

We want to center us in the fact that what we see often is only giving us a small picture and it's communicating something much deeper. In addition to meeting a child's basic needs, we want to support coachees who are home visitors in their efforts to support parents in providing a home environment in which children feel safe, secure to develop those strong social-emotional skills. And that can be by supporting a coachee to build a strong relationship with parents and sharing some of these strategies that we're going to talk about today to strengthen their relationship with their child.

Centering us into the fact that there is so much more that goes into the behavior that we see, some things that we might not even be aware of. While we know that it's essential for a coach to support a coachee to have these practices at the base of the pyramid in place, we know that even when we have a coachee that's using these practices that some children are still going to engage in these behaviors that challenge adults.

As a coach, you can observe and support a coachee to respond to challenging behaviors in ways that are culturally sustaining and in ways that hopefully keep behaviors from escalating or getting worse. For those that are home visitors, if you're supporting a home visitor, you may be supporting them in how to talk with and share these strategies for parents. It's important to note that while we understand that behavior, the things that trigger the behavior or cause the behavior and our responses to behavior are complex. And each child definitely has individual set of needs.

We want to make sure that while we're sharing these strategies and these responses to challenging behavior during this webinar, we want to make sure that if you are working with a child that already has an individualized behavior plan, you want to consult and follow that plan. It's also helpful to work with your disabilities coordinator or speak with the education manager at your programs to see if there's any information that might be helpful to you as you start to navigate and dig in to supporting children in the moment.

Now we're going to get to the exciting part, or my favorite part, which is the Mindful Moment segment. And we're going to interview M.L. to get more information about how to respond when these behaviors that we see happen. When challenging behavior occurs, coachees and coaches alike can feel really stuck and they might not know what to do or how to respond to the child. M.L., what are some of those in-the-moment strategies that you recommend a coach use to support a coachee when challenging behavior occurs?

ML: Thank you, Sarah. I think there are a range of strategies we can use to respond to behavior when it happens. I'm going to start by talking about strategies that I think you can use every time you need strategies in response to behavior and then I'll talk about some other strategies that might be more specific to the context. I think the first thing about how we respond to behavior is whatever we do should be developmentally appropriate.

And by that, I mean that when behavior challenges us, it can be tempting to respond in a way that's more punitive in nature. And what we really want to do is respond to children in a way that helps build their competence. And we can do that through the use of developmentally appropriate strategies like redirection, redirecting children to a more appropriate behavior, planned ignoring. We're going to talk about that in more detail in a minute because I think that's pretty important. We can also use things like proximity, those kind of things as developmentally appropriate responses. When a child engages in a behavior that's challenging, as Sarah said, they're usually telling us something they need. There's something else that they're telling us.

The other thing that we want to do when we respond to behavior is we want to respond to them in a way that tells them a more appropriate behavior to use in place of the one they're using. Or you might think about that as a more appropriate way. You might think about that as an alternative to the behavior that they're using. We're trying to spend more time helping them learn to do something than telling them what they're doing wrong is the general idea.

The third thing you can always and should always do when challenging behavior happens is that when you redirect them or when you prompt them to use a more appropriate skill or behavior in that context, you always want to be sure that you're giving them a lot of positive descriptive feedback for that. And that's merely being sure that they know what they've done is an effective way, an appropriate way to get whatever they need. And we want to be sure that we are engaging with children in positive ways as a response to their challenging behavior. We'll talk about all of that in a little more detail here in a minute.

Sarah: Many of our listeners are probably pretty familiar with redirection, but can you give us a little bit more information about what you mean when you say "redirection?"

ML: Yeah. Redirection is really about — you can think about it as interrupting the behavior that's challenging and redirecting the child to a more appropriate behavior. Sometimes when children engage in behavior that challenges us, we're tempted to talk to the child about it. A lot of times when we do a lot of talking to children, it does one of two things. It confuses them.

If you've got a three-year-old and they knock over someone's block tower and you say, "Oh, when you knocked over Sarah's block tower, that made her really sad and now she's crying," when you're doing that talking, the child's brain is not listening. It's not hearing you. Many young children can't kind of clue into the specific thing you're trying to talk about.

The other thing that happens when we do a lot of talking to children is that it escalates their behavior. What we really want to do is focus on redirecting them to a more appropriate behavior without doing a lot of talking and we want to model being calm. Let's say that Joyce is bumping her car into Sarah's block tower. And what we want to do is say, "Oh, let's drive our car around her block tower."

We're redirecting it, we're still letting the child push the car and we're not calling attention to "you knocked over the block tower and that made Joyce sad," because that's a lot for children to listen to, especially when there's already kind of escalated emotions. We're focusing on giving them an alternative behavior.

Sarah: I just want to acknowledge that I see a good question that's popped up about planned ignoring. And we are going to get to that in just a moment. That's really helpful to kind of dig into what you mean when you say "redirection." I wanted to walk through a couple examples and give the audience a chance to utilize the chat feature. In this scenario, if you see a child that takes another child's toy, you might offer a more appropriate social skill. Use the chat to say what you might encourage a coachee to say.

If a child takes another child's toy, and you want to offer a more appropriate social skill, what might that sound like? I'm going to monitor our chat feature. Let's see. It's taking a moment for things to come in. What might you say? Let's see here. "You wanted the toy, say 'please.'" Amber gives a good way of how you might redirect that and offer a different way to do that. "Can you ask your friend for a turn." These are all perfect examples of how you would —

ML: And someone else said "trade." Which would be —

Sarah: Trade is always real — there's a lot now. It took a minute for them to come in and now they're all coming in. "You can trade toys with Serenity." I love trade for younger kids, too. I think that it's less complex than sharing can be sometimes. Yes, these are great examples. If a child is throwing blocks, you might redirect the child by saying what? If the scenario is you've got a child that's throwing blocks, what might you do to redirect them?

ML: Oh, my gosh, these examples are so good from the last one.

Sarah: I know. I'm so glad they're in the chat so you guys can look at them since we can't get to all of them. "Let's find a ball to throw," that's a great one, Rowan. "You wanted a turn. When you want a turn, you can tap their shoulder and arm and say, 'Can I have a turn?'" These are perfect. "Oh, blocks are for building." Let's see. "See if we can find one like that." "Let's find a ball that you can throw."

You guys are already really good at knowing how to support redirection with your coachees. Those are all great examples. The one that we came up with was "Let's build. You can put your block here." Thank you guys so much for digging into that and sharing your examples. Now, we're going to get to the hot topic because I've seen some questions about planned ignoring. M.L. planned ignoring was something else that you mentioned as a developmentally appropriate strategy. I'd love for you to tell us a little bit more about what that is and when it's appropriate to use.

ML: We anticipated that there would be a lot of questions about this. As a matter of fact, in our team yesterday, we had a very long meeting about when planned ignore — not — we had a very long discussion about when you might use planned ignoring and when you might not. I want to start by saying — making this point, we're talking about ignoring the behavior not about ignoring the child. And that's really important to understand from the very beginning.

Let's imagine a scenario where — let's see, where — well, let me talk through this, and then we'll actually look at a video, and that's probably better. When we talk about planned ignoring, we're talking about ignoring the behavior while keeping children safe and by redirecting children.

We're trying to do all of that. And the idea with planned ignoring is that if — if children's behavior is about getting attention and you ignore the child, that doesn't help the child learn how to get your attention in a positive way. Let's say you're busy doing something and the child's tapping you on the shoulder, "Miss Sarah, Miss Sarah, Miss Sarah," and you're talking to another child and they're going, "Miss Sarah, Miss Sarah, Miss Sarah," you're not going to say, "Sarah, quit tapping me on the shoulder." You're going to say, "Sarah, I can talk to you in just a minute." You're ignoring the behavior, but you're responding to what Sarah needs.

Another example might be a child's crying to get your attention and you say something like, "I can tell you're really sad because I'm playing with somebody else. You sit there and take some

deep breaths and, as soon as I'm finished, I'm going to come play with you." You're not ignoring the child, you're ignoring the behavior. And that's really important. And we're not saying that you totally ignore it. We can say things like, "I see you're sad. I can tell you're sad because you're crying. If you need my attention, here's some ways you can get me," or "here's some ways you can get my attention." And then you want to be sure that you give the child that attention after you redirect them to a more appropriate way to get your attention if that makes sense. Is that good, Sarah? Do y'all have other questions specifically —

Sarah: One that came up that I just want to be sure that we cover is, "how does planned ignoring build a child's competence and confidence?"

ML: Let's unpack that a little bit. When children engage in behaviors that are challenging and get a lot of attention for them, they learn that that works. And what we want to do is teach them a more appropriate way to also be successful. If a child is often yelling or hitting you to get your attention, we can help them be a more effective communication partner by teaching them how to tap you on the shoulder, how to ask your name.

We're still doing that. That redirection to the appropriate behavior is part of planned ignoring. Planned ignoring is not "I'm going to ignore that child." Planned ignoring is "I'm going to ignore that behavior that's challenging and I'm going to use it as an opportunity to redirect the child to a more appropriate behavior." We're really not ignoring the child at all. We're just trying to get the child focused on a more appropriate way to communicate.

It doesn't mean, like I said, that we're not going to acknowledge the behavior, especially if it's crying or something like that. It just means that we're going to focus our time and attention on helping them get to a more appropriate behavior. But we're not going to do that rapidly. Some planned ignoring is also going to be helping the child regulate, co-regulating with the child, to a place where the child can then engage in a more productive or effective communication skill.

Sarah: Awesome. Thank you. That helps. And I think —

ML: I'm sorry, Sarah. One other thing I will say is that when children are engaging in those kinds of behaviors, crying, screaming, hitting, those kind of things, when we do a lot of talking, it actually escalates that behavior. Some ignoring the behavior is helping the child regulate, because we're attending to helping the child calm rather than calling attention to the actual behavior.

Sarah: The person who asked the question said, "I've seen so many people use the term 'planned ignoring' to mean ignoring." It's like they're out to ignore the child and it can escalate the situation. It certainly could in that sense. I think that's helpful. And I also think the next slide, which has some examples, might kind of bring — hit home that — what we mean when we say, "planned ignoring" and it builds in that redirection part.

This first example would be if you notice that another child is hurt. This can happen often where a child gets hit. You want to make sure that your attention goes to the child that was

hurt first. You're showing the child that did the hurting that the child that is hurt is getting the attention first and then provide brief redirection to the child exhibiting the behavior. That might sound like, "Tim, it looks like you got hurt. Come sit with me. Sarah, you can stack with the blocks." That gives Sarah the information about what she needs to do, but it puts the focus on Tim, the one that was hurt.

Another example of how that might look would be shifting your attention to the other children without saying anything to the child that's being disruptive. A little more context would be if Sam is making loud noises during Circle Time, the coachee might continue reading and say, "Class, the little red hen didn't get any help. How do you think she felt?"

It's not putting focus on the child that's making noises, it's continuing with the lesson, giving the attention to the children that are participating in the lesson. Of course, if Sam stops making loud noises, then maybe the teacher might call on Sam and say, "Sam, what do you think? How do you think that made the little red hen feel?" It's never ignoring the child, it's the behavior. Anything else you want to add.

ML: I'm actually seeing some questions, and we're going to talk about this again a little bit at the end, but I want to make the point here which is remember that what we're talking about today are what you do to respond to behavior when it happens. You're not going to get rid of the challenging behavior if all you do is respond to it when it happens.

What we're trying to do is help — in this webinar is help people focus on what do I do when the behavior happens. But, really, to prevent the behavior from happening, you have to do a lot so that the behavior doesn't happen. If you have a child who's always taking toys from other children and the only time you redirect them to asking to trade or asking to take a turn is when the behavior happens, they are going to continue to use the problem behavior.

If we know that Sarah has a hard time asking children for toys or is always taking toys from other children, then maybe what we need to do is spend five minutes each day, some adult in the class says to Sarah, "Now when we go to Centers today and you want a toy, what are you going to do?" And we actually practice with Sarah. And then when Sarah goes to her first center and we see her approaching a child that we're going to say, "Sarah, what are you going to do if you want a toy the child has?" Those are the things you have to do so the behavior doesn't happen. What we're talking about today is what happens when we haven't — those things haven't happened and the behavior is occurring.

Sarah: Good point. I do really quickly want to just touch on this one comment that came in. It says, "How do you utilize planned ignoring when utilizing class where it says you need to do peer perspective taking in those situations?" You can certainly still do both of those things.

It's just in that moment when that — when you're ignoring that behavior. For instance, in that Tim situation, "It looks like you got hurt. Come sit here. Sarah, you can stack the blocks." We're not going to do some peer perspective-taking right in that moment when things are

heightened, but you certainly might do that with Sarah after things have calmed down, we make sure Tim is OK.

It might be like, "Sarah," once Sarah's calm, "how do you think that made Tim feel when you — when he got hit with the block?" Or it could be like maybe if what Sarah was doing with the blocks was an accident, letting Tim know, "I don't think Sarah meant to hit you with the blocks, but it still hurt your feelings." You can do all these things. And it just — we're not talking about these skills in isolation, it's just in that moment what we're giving the most attention to. I'm going to move us along. This is one of our favorite topics. We could get stuck here all day. ML, are there other strategies that you think are helpful to recommend for a coach to use or support a coachee to use in the moment?

ML: I would say that there's three other things you can use. Some of these kind of overlap with what we've already talked about. But if you have behavior expectations in your classroom, like be safe, be kind, be respectful, be a team player, you can always redirect children to the posted behavior expectations. If a child is running through the classroom, you can say, "remember, Theo, in the classroom, we use walking feet."

Remind — and the difference in redirecting children just in general versus redirecting to the expectations is that presumably you've taught those expectations, and those things are familiar with kids. So that you're redirecting them to something that they already know. People who are coaching home visitors, this is a strategy that home visitors can use with families. And I think, Sarah, don't yall have expectations in your house?

Sarah: We do. Ours actually happen to align with our son's school. We are safe, we are kind, we are respectful. Currently, there's a lot of reminding about "we use our kind words." Yes, we do that at home as well.

ML: Sarah, it is great if your expectations align at school and at home. There may be some families where the expectations are different or where families haven't even thought about, "Do we need to have some family expectations." But that's a strategy that we can use in home—visiting situations. Another thing to think about is how you might use natural or logical consequences. I want to be really careful about this because I think we think children understand consequences when they don't.

If we're going to do this, we have to make those consequences really clear. We might say something like — if Serenity is throwing blocks in the block area, we might say, "Serenity, if you throw blocks, we're going to have to go play in another center." That's pretty concrete because it's something [right] versus, "Serenity, if you throw blocks, you're not going to get to go on the playground this afternoon," where that — it's not logical, throwing blocks and going to the playground aren't logical, and it's not concrete because it's too far apart.

We want to use those really simple ones. And use this sparingly because often we say things like this, "If you do this, you'll do that — this will happen," and we don't ever follow through, so it doesn't really have the impact on the child. You might want to just be thoughtful about that.



And then the other thing that you might do — you might use supporting children to do problem-solving. If — let's say Harrison is upset because he wants a toy somebody else has and he's crying, we might help him calm down, right, so help him regulate. And then, once he's calm, we might say, "Let's think about what you could do when you want a toy another child has." And you could walk him through the problem-solving process or steps. You can also use it as an opportunity to help children learn problem-solving.

Sarah: Yeah, awesome. Someone asked in the chat, and I think it's really great and I want to make sure we touch on it, it says, "How would you give this advice to an adult or parent or teacher?" Would it be in the moment or afterward in a conversation, maybe a little of both? What are your thoughts?

ML: How would I share this information with families? Is that what you're saying?

Sarah: Well, if you have an adult that might need to respond to challenging behaviors in the moment differently, how do you share that? Would you do it in the moment when it's happening, or would you do it afterwards?

ML: I wouldn't do it in the moment when it's happening. None of us learn best when there's a lot of heightened emotions. I wouldn't do it in the time. I think the best way to approach these things with adults so that adults don't feel like we're being critical of them is to say, "What do you think the child saw," or, "What do you think the child heard" or, "How do you think the child was feeling in that moment," so you can get them to reflect on that. "He really wanted to do this and so he just took the toy." "Well, how does he know what to do instead of taking the toy?" You're kind of doing problem-solving with the adult in a way that doesn't make them feel like they've done something wrong.

Sarah: This slide I think touches on something that you already talked about a little, but I'd love to hear a little bit more about your thoughts around this statement here.

ML: Any of y'all who have heard me talk have heard me talk about good times to teach and not so good times to teach. I don't know about any of y'all, but when I'm really upset or when I'm really mad or when I'm really whatever and someone says, "Do you want to talk about it," I'm like, "No, I just want to be mad." Those aren't good times to teach. The best times to for teaching and learning are when we're calm, right, are when we're calm, when we are in the context of a relationship with someone we trust.

If the only time we're dealing with behavior is when children's behavior is elevated and their emotions are elevated, we're not going to be successful with them. The kinds of things we're talking about today about responding to problem behavior or to behaviors that are challenging, these strategies will not work in the absence of nurturing and supportive relationships between teachers and children and without careful attention and being intentional about teaching children these skills. We need to think about social problem solving and friendship skills and anger management.

We need to think about those as skills children have to learn. They're not skills that we say to Sarah, "You need to be nice to your friend," and she knows how to be nice to her friend. What does that mean if you're three years old and how do you do that and what does that mean if your friend has a toy you want? If someone says, "You need to be nice," what does that mean if I'm three years old? We want to be sure we're being intentional about teaching those things as a prevention for challenging behavior rather than just in response to challenging behavior.

Sarah: Then, we got another comment. We could have just done a whole webinar on Q&A but — I just wanted to say that. Someone said, "Wouldn't ignoring the behavior be damaging? Aren't we supposed to help co-regulating them?" I think we've touched on this a bit, but I do want to say that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. We should never just be using planned ignoring without intentionally thinking about it. For instance, this spoke to me because I think about co-regulating, I have two kids that are very different. I have one child that likes to be supported in the moment and I have one child that if you try to co-regulate with him, he escalates again.

I think what is really important to say about behavior is that it's not a one-size-fits-all approach and it really takes building those relationships with kids, getting to know what kind of works for them, what their likes, their dislikes, the way that they respond and how they want to be supported in the moment. I just felt like saying that because I have two opposite sides of the coin at my house and I use different approaches.

ML: Sarah, not to put you on the spot, but — when Harrison escalates, what do you do? He's the one — sorry, I hope you don't mind that I used —

Sarah: No.

ML: His name. When he escalates, what do you do? What people want to know.

Sarah: When he escalates, him and his brother, it's like they — say he hits his brother because his brother's bothering him, because his brother's younger than him. I might say, "we use gentle hands to be safe." And then I move to make sure that kid is safe.

And then if he's tantrumming and throwing a fit, I will say something like, "I see you're upset. It's OK to be upset. It's not OK to hit. When you're ready to talk about it, let me know. I'm going to go over here." He actually likes space. I will often walk away but stay in the room. He can see me, but I'm not

ML: Right.

Sarah: Making it worse.

ML: When you've acknowledged the crying and the upsetness and now you're going to kind of ignore that and you're going to help him regulate. We're never ever saying that we're ignoring the child or that we're ignoring — we're still acknowledging the behavior, but the important thing is to help the child regulate. Sarah, I'm getting way off. I'm sorry.

Sarah: You're good. No, we're good. I think that this was more fun than what we had planned. No, while — we really are going to move into some practice. We're going to get — give you the opportunity to watch a video of a child and a teacher. Look for these essential three practices: Do we see this teacher using developmentally appropriate strategies, does the teacher respond to the child by stating expected behavior in positive terms or providing an alternative, and then are we going to — do you notice the teacher providing positive attention or feedback when the child behaves appropriately. We're going to watch this video.

Prior to this clip, the child in the purple shirt grabbed a yellow square from another child. That's like how they sit on the carpet is the squares. And the child accidentally poked her in the eye and the child is upset. We're going to look for these essential three. The responses can be recorded in your Viewer's Guide. And then let's watch the clip.

[Video begins]

Teacher: Somebody was sitting on it. I saw it. I know that makes us sad when you don't get what you want. There are other colors. And, Laura, there is a spot by [Inaudible], you can sit not on a color either. OK? Because you have this. You have this one to sit on. OK? I'm going to start group. Let me know if you need anything else. But I think you can do it. OK?

Child 1: Sandy [Inaudible] have my water.

Teacher: Yeah. Oh, and if your pointer finger knows where to point, let's point to the pictures, too.

Child 1: You know what, Miss McCall? What's [Inaudible].

Teacher: OK. Is anybody going to point with me [inaudible]? Here we go.

Child 1: [Inaudible] you [Inaudible] me.

Teacher: We're going to do our best to ignore that. OK?

[Class singing]

Teacher: Katie has her hand up. What is your question, Katie?

Child 2: I [Inaudible]. I'm a —

Child 3: Mine is [Inaudible].

Child 2: [inaudible] the problem helper.

Teacher: Katie says she likes being the problem helper. I like when you're the problem helper, too. Friends, if Katie is the problem helper, what can we ask her to do for us today?

Child 4: She [Inaudible] helps someone with a problem.

Teacher: If someone has a problem, we can?

Child 4: Fix it.

Teacher: We can say, "Katie, will you come help me with solve my problem?" And what do you think around the room Katie will go and get for us? Maybe a timer or the solution kit? That's right.

Child 4: Yeah. Now we can say, "Tap, tap."

Teacher: We could say, "Tap, tap."

Child 4: Yeah.

Teacher: Mhm, very nice. Laura, you have your hand up.

Child 1: [Inaudible] line leader.

Teacher: Are you the line leader? You get to be the line caboose.

[Video ends]

Sarah: Awesome. Use the chat to share out what were some of the strategies did you see. Did this teacher use some developmentally appropriate strategies? And share out in the chat what those are. Let's see here. I've got to scroll, we've got so many things in here. What were some of the things — what did you notice, M.L., while we're waiting?

ML: Well, the first thing I noticed at the very beginning was that she responded both to the child who had had the square taken away from her, but she also responded to the child who was sad when she didn't get what she wanted, which I thought was pretty remarkable because this is in a group. Remember, it's one thing to do these things when you're dealing with a child one-on-one or with one or two children, it's another to continue to manage a group when these things are happening.

Sarah: I'm seeing an overwhelmingly resounding "yes" with all the things that she did that were developmentally appropriate, acknowledged feelings, guided the child through their feelings, physical comfort. Not only did she provide physical comfort to the child that — the little girl that was upset and tantrumming, had the little spat with, she also goes over to Laura and gives her a little pat as well.

What about responding to the child by stating the expected behaviors in positive terms or providing an acceptable alternative? Did we see that happen? And, if so, what was that? I'm seeing "gave choices how to sit," "acknowledged that she was sad." Someone said, "Ignored behavior and continued group time." One thing that I noticed in that video, because it reminds me of my child, was that a child looked at Laura while she was doing the lesson and she goes to

the other child — to the — she goes, "Don't look at me," and that she bends down and she says, "We're going to do our best to ignore her."

What I like about that is that it's putting the power in the other child and also supporting Laura. Laura didn't want the other children to be looking at her in that moment. She's very skilled in that I think. What about the positive attention or descriptive feedback when the child behaves appropriately? What did you see happen there? Did we see that? And, if so, what did that look like? Let's see here. Did you notice that M.L.?

ML: Didn't she sit by her? Oh, now I'm confused about which child she did what with. But didn't she sit by her and gave her like a pat? Mhm, yeah.

Sarah: Yep, she sits by her and gives her a pat. And then I think she also asks Laura a question. She brings her back into the group, which I think is so important because I think sometimes, even as adults, we can kind of hold grudges against a child that's had behavior and we need to let them know right away like, "Hey, you're still a part of this group. I see you. Come right back on in."

ML: The cool thing is that she kept the child as part of the group. I think it's really tempting to send children away from the group if they're going to cry. But she kept her there and still supported her to calm down. Then it was easy to bring her right back into the group, which I think is just — you can see how she used all these strategies at one time and used really good strategies for engaging the other children while it was all going on.

Sarah: I think sometimes teachers or coaches rather feel this need to make the behavior stop, to like be in control. But you can certainly still be in control, continue with the lesson and have everybody feel accepted and heard and not take away learning time. I think sometimes we spend a lot of time trying to deal with the child that maybe is having the behavior and it's at the expense of other things, too. I like this clip a lot. I think she did it beautifully.

We have just a little bit of time to make a really important point where we're going to dig in a little bit to equity. I have one last question for you. And we talk about how culture and being culturally responsive — we talk about that all the time. But could you share a little bit more with us about how culture and our values and our experiences play into how adults respond to behavior?

ML: I hate that I only have a few minutes. I'll try to be short winded in this. I think we all know, we all come to this, whether we're the ed manager, whether we're the coach, whether we're the education staff, the home visitor, we all — families, we all come to this with our identities, with our values, with our beliefs. And sometimes those don't all match. Lots of times, those don't all match.

Our culture, our beliefs, our values might be different than families as a teacher, as a home visitor. Our values as a coach might be different than a teacher. And those differences may influence how we think about behavior. Let me give you an example. I might think of rough and

tumble play as something that I loved to do as a child, that when I think about being with my brother and my — the other kids in the neighborhood, that rough and tumble play was kind of fun. We did it. Or a teacher in a classroom might think rough and tumble play is not appropriate.

Different things are guiding the way that we view behavior. And we have to be really careful to not make judgments about behaviors based on our own values and beliefs without being curious. I think if there's one thing, I would want to leave you with today it's about being curious. If you're a coach and you're working with a teacher, let's say, around behavior in the classroom and the teacher thinks certain behaviors are not OK, let's ask why, why are those not OK.

I might say to someone, "Why — what's wrong with rough and tumble play?" And they might say, "Well, kids could get hurt and I don't want kids to get hurt." And then I might say, "I wonder if we could do rough and tumble play in a way where people wouldn't get hurt. What if we had rules about it? Like you can do it outside and you can only do it with children." And then the teacher says, "Yeah, but I have some kids who really don't like to be touched." And we say, "Well, maybe you can only do rough and tumble play if you ask the child if you can do rough and tumble play."

It's about being curious; it's about being curious about why does the family value this behavior or want a child to do something in one way that's different than how we think they should do it. And we can't know everything. We can't know how people's values and beliefs and culture and identity are impacting their perceptions of behavior or what we do about behavior.

The best thing we can do is be curious. And if children are engaging in behavior, I want people who are working with children to go, "I wonder what he's trying to tell me," or "I wonder what they're trying to tell me." If I'm working with a teacher who seems really frustrated by a child, I want to be curious about what's triggering for that child or that behavior or that — and we could go on up.

It's whoever we're working with, let's be curious about what's impacting their perceptions of behavior because there's probably no area in which we work in content domain of learning that is more driven by people's values. We don't think about math as being the same way. But when it comes to behavior, what drives what people think about behavior and what they want to do by behavior is sometimes about their own experience, their own beliefs, their — how they were raised, how they raised their children, all of those things.

Sarah: Awesome. I think that was a great smashing it into a short amount of time. We still do have a few minutes. And we had a couple questions that came in. First, I want to kind of just let everyone know that we're glad that you were here today and we're sorry we couldn't get to all these questions. We can get to some more real quick. One that came up that I think is important is related to what happens if you are working with a child that's bilingual or a dual language learner. How do you do this with them, what does that look like and just what are some of your ideas for that?

ML: That's a really good question and not one that I feel like I'm the expert on. But let's just reflect on why a child might — who's an English language learner might be engaging in behavior. They might be engaging in behavior because they don't understand what's going on in the classroom. And as long as we keep telling them in English what's going on in the classroom, they are not going to know what's going on in the classroom. How do we work with families to develop materials to support children's learning so that they know what's going on in the classroom?

Remember that it's always about what's the behavior telling me. And if the behavior is about "I don't understand what's going on, I'm scared, I need help, "we have to know how to respond to that in the way that a child will understand. And maybe we have to use some visuals at first. Maybe we work with the family to develop a social story about a routine that's hard for a child. But the overall approach is the same, what is the child trying to tell me and how do I work with the family or with an interpreter or with someone who can help me figure out how to respond to that child in a way that will help them understand.

Sarah: There was another one that came in about cursing. Like this child is cursing and they're worried about all those things. I think that cursing is definitely one of those where you want to ignore because the more attention you give and the more they perceive that as bad or wrong, the more they will want to do that. My son has used not the right language before and what I do is I redirect of like, "we use our kind words. You can say something different."

And then if he uses it again, I don't give it any more attention, which is hard if you have a classroom full of kids that you might be worried that they're exposed to that. But it's all about using these strategies and determining am I going to escalate it if I give it attention. And sometimes I have found that when it comes to cursing, like redirection, stating what they can say instead, and then doing your best to ignore that.

ML: Remembering to always go back to what is the child trying to communicate, are they trying to get attention, what are they trying to do and working sometime other than when they are cursing on doing it in a more appropriate way in a context where they're getting a lot of attention, and they don't have to use that to get attention.

Sarah: Last one, we're going to go out with a bang. There was one that was asking, "what do you do if they're hitting the teacher?" I've had thoughts about this because I've been hit before. But I wonder what you would say.

ML: First of all, I would never tell you what to do about a child who was hitting without asking you about 15 more questions. I don't feel like I can answer that specific question. But the question is always, "why are they hitting?" And the answer to what you're going to do once you figure that out is figure out why they're hitting, figure out what they can do instead, and teach that intentionally. If all you're doing is trying to respond to it when children hit, you're not going to be successful. You have to figure out why they're hitting, you have to intentionally, systematically, consistently teach them something to do instead. If it happens, you can redirect them to something you've already taught them.

Sarah: Awesome. Well, thank you so much. We went right up to time. M.L., this was great. Thank you so much. I think we could sit here all day and talk about challenging behavior.