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PROJECT TITLE:

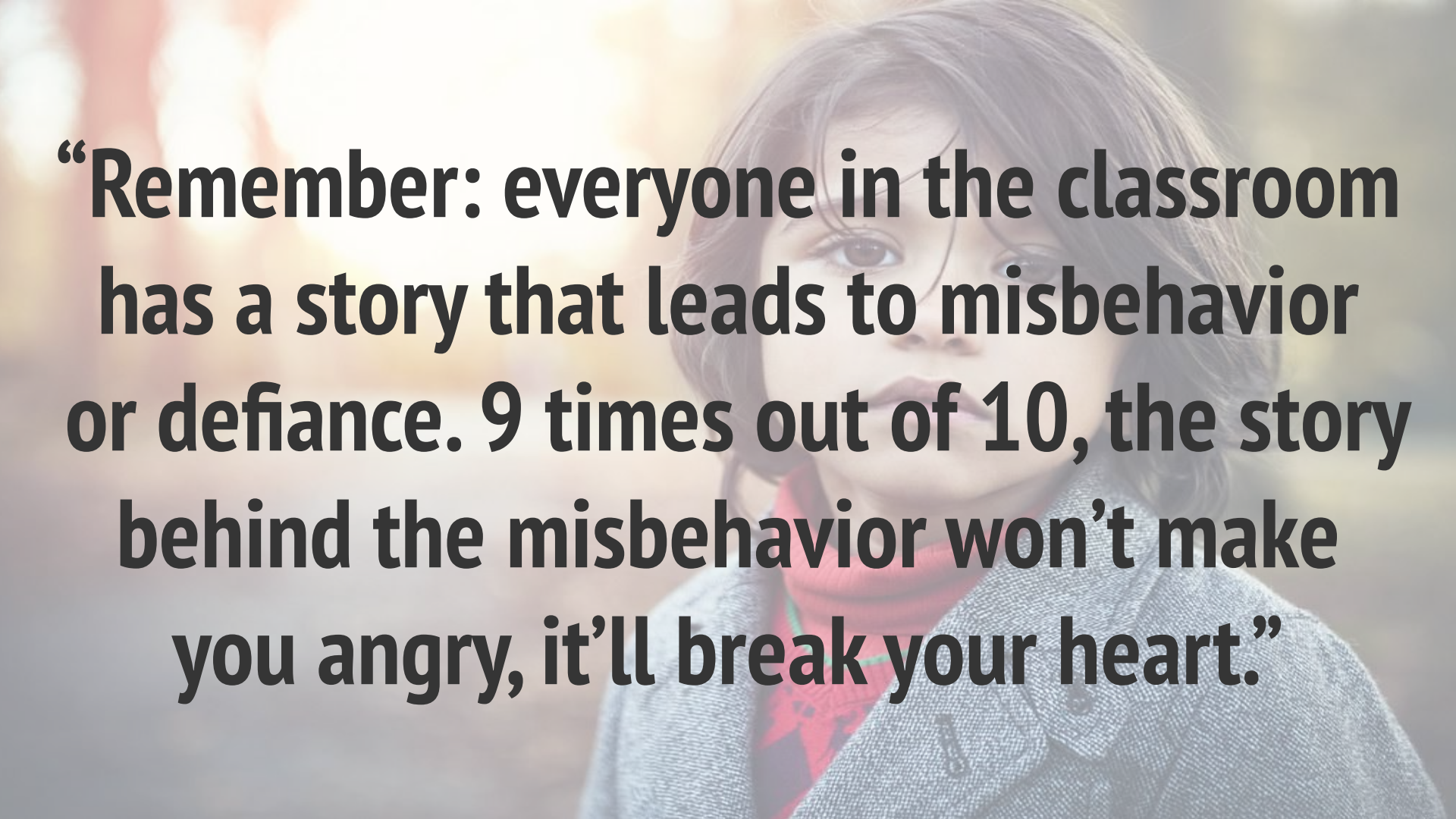


Challenging Behaviors

— Presentation by Sydney Prichard —

What would you do?

My friend. Tope
Elementary, 1st grade.



“Remember: everyone in the classroom has a story that leads to misbehavior or defiance. 9 times out of 10, the story behind the misbehavior won’t make you angry, it’ll break your heart.”

“Challenging behavior”... how do you define this?

It's not about children who occasionally behave inappropriately.

According to Barbara Kaiser, a graduate of McGill University's Masters Program in Educational Administration, *it's about children who come to rely on inappropriate behavior to meet their needs and are heading down a very slippery path.*



A challenging behavior is any behavior that...

- Interferes with a child's cognitive, social, or emotional development
- Is harmful to the child, other children, or adults
- Puts a child at risk for later social problems or failures



It's important to note...

Timid and withdrawn behaviors also qualify as challenging! It goes beyond aggression and disruptive behaviors.

**When does it
become concerning?**

Quick answer: after around 3 years of age!

Infants and toddlers begin to use aggressive and impulsive behavior in the first year of life. As they become frustrated and interested in having control over their own toys and activities, they may display what could be considered

“challenging behaviors.” ***For this age and these children, aggression is developmentally appropriate. However, most children gradually stop using physical aggression around 3 years of age.*** They start to learn to regulate their feelings, understand others' points of view, and utilize social skills to communicate their needs. Other children, though, may come to rely on challenging behaviors to respond to difficult situations.



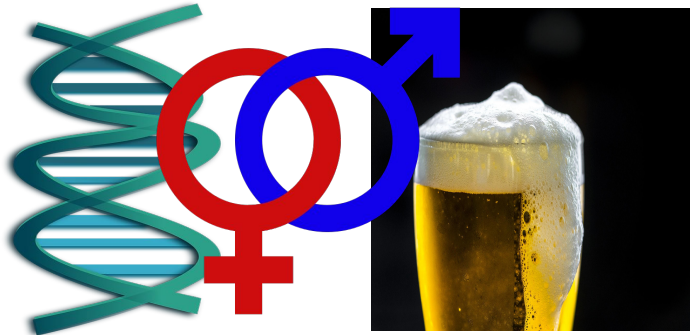
What causes challenging behavior?

Challenging behaviors are so complex that it's hard to identify actual causes. Instead, researchers refer to “risk factors” that may predispose a child to act in an aggressive or antisocial way.

Risk Factors

Biological

1. Genes
2. Gender
3. Temperament
4. Complications during birth or pregnancy
5. Substance abuse during pregnancy
6. **Neurological problems**
7. **Emotional and social disorders**



Environmental

1. Family factors/parenting styles
2. Peers
3. Child care and school (!!!)
4. Poverty
5. Exposure to violence
6. Violent media
7. Turbulent times



The process of preventing and minimizing challenging behaviors begins with **TEACHERS' SELF AWARENESS**. When teachers are aware of their own temperament, values, and cultural perspectives, they can more successfully build a relationship with each child.



“Teaching isn’t just what one does, but who one is.”

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

An approach to **prevent** and **reduce** challenging behavior through comprehensive lifestyle change, a lifespan perspective, stakeholder participation, socially valid interventions, multicomponent intervention, systems change, prevention, flexibility with respect to **scientific practices**, and multiple theoretical perspectives.

So, you've established that your student has some challenging behaviors...

You've done a Functional Behavior Assessment and put together a Behavior Intervention Plan. You understand why your student is displaying certain challenging behaviors and you have a plan in action to respond to these behaviors.

What are some strategies you can consider on a Tier 1 basis?

Strategies

Classroom Organization

Active Student Responding

Classroom-Wide Behavior Support

Classroom Organization

- Consistency and planning are key
- Kids need to know what is expected of them
- Visual, written, spoken schedules
- Establishing consistency can relieve anxiousness
- Class-wide and individual rules
- Contracts! Make it a choice



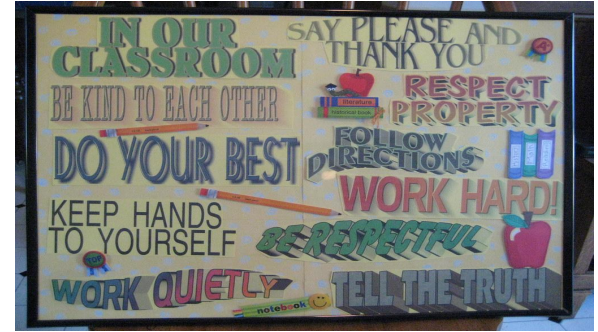
Active Student Responding

- Powerful set of low cost strategies teachers can use to promote high achievement
- Occurs when a student makes a response by answering questions or responding in some other way
 - Verbal: Choral responses, inside-outside circles, socratic seminars
 - Written: Guided notes, response card, turn-and-talk
 - Movement: Four corners, "show me"



Classroom-Wide Behavior Support

- Contingent praise and attention
- Teach students how to recruit teacher attention
- Error correction
- Classroom rules
- Active supervision



What educators are sayin'

It won't be a quick-fix.

Breeyn Mack

Teachers should focus on building meaningful relationships and maintaining them.

Anna Sullivan

Prevention is the best intervention.

Barbara Kaiser

Now, would you do anything differently?

**Challenging behaviors may seem overwhelming,
but with commitment and intentionality - you can
handle them! You got this.**

Thanks for listening!

Challenging Behaviors

What is it?

Any behavior that interferes with a child's cognitive, social, or emotional development, is harmful to the child, other children, or adults, and puts a child at risk for later social problems or failures.

What can it look like in the classroom?

Aggression, anxiety, shyness, social isolation, swearing, screaming, refusing to follow instructions, self-injury, property destruction, impulsive behavior.

What is School-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS)?

A systems approach for establishing the social culture and individualized behavioral supports needed for schools to be effective learning environments for all students.

Evidence-based Features of PBS:

- Prevention
- Define and teach positive social expectations
- Acknowledge positive behavior
- Arrange consistent consequences for problem behavior
- On-going collection and use of data for decision-making
- Continuum of intensive, individual interactions
- Administrative leadership and team-based implementation

How can we prevent challenging behaviors?

- **Communicate:** Many times, these challenging behaviors are a form of communication. Your student may be trying to tell you something. Teach your students functional communication skills and provide opportunities for students to practice these skills.
- **Get organized:** Provide your students with a daily visual schedule. Ensure that all students know what to expect for the day and the week. Review the schedule at the start of the day. It's also beneficial to provide students with to-do lists for the tasks they are expected to get done in a given day.
- **Encourage good behavior:** Praising good behavior decreases your student's desire to engage in challenging behavior. Most often, these behaviors are a result of a need for attention. Recognizing small achievements and victories can provide this attention in a healthy way, before it's demanded in an unhealthy way.
- **Monitor students' moods:** There may be variable factors that are affecting your student's behaviors that you can't see in the day-to-day of the classroom. Sleeping through the night, eating well-balanced meals, and engaging in physical activity can all affect behavior and motivation for learning.

What can you do when prevention doesn't work?

- When children are engaging in challenging behaviors, keep interactions with them to a minimum during these episodes. You should ensure the child's safety while providing minimal attention to the challenging behavior.
- Interrupt and redirect the child to the appropriate alternative behavior.
- When the incident of challenging behavior ends and the child engages in appropriate behavior, provide positive attention to the child.
- Figure out what makes the good times so good. Engaged children are less likely to exhibit challenging behaviors.
- Respond with humanity. It's more than likely that this child is acting out in response to a circumstance they cannot control. Give them back control over their emotions and interact with kindness, grace, and humility.

What do experienced educators say about challenging behaviors?

"Understanding why a kid is challenging is the first and most important part of helping them." Dr. Ross Greene

"If a child is off-task, perhaps the problem is not the child, but the task." Alfie Kohn

"Great teachers focus not on compliance, but on connections and relationships." PJ Caposey

So, what next?

Take the time to think about strategies before the year even starts. How will you prepare to prevent challenging behaviors, and when you can't prevent them... how will you respond to them? Consider all scenarios and put together a solid routine. Teach this routine on the very first day and reinforce it every day after that. Remember that the behavior is often an indicator of other emotions; these children may just need someone to talk to or a shoulder to cry on. Responding to the situation with grace, kindness, and sympathy can build a life-changing relationship and spark a connection that will inspire more engaged and appropriate behavior.

Notes

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