

Parenting The Explosive Child

Collaborative Problem Solving

Two philosophies of child misbehavior

- Children do well if they want to
 - Teach by reward and punishment
 - Three possible outcomes for misbehaving
 - You win
 - You punish
 - You lose
- Children do well if they can
 - If the child's behavior isn't successful something is in the way

Your Explanation Guides Your Intervention

- "Children misbehave because of bad parenting"
 - Parents didn't teach child who is boss
 - Children need to learn primary lesson: obedience
 - Punishment
 - Reward
 - If this stops working punishment increases frustration
 - For child
 - For parents

CPS Philosophy

- Children do well if they can
- If a child fails to cope it is because they lack skills to cope
 - Delayed development in
 - Flexibility
 - Adaptation to change
 - Tolerance for frustration
- What children need is to incrementally learn new skills

Pathways to Explosive/Noncompliant Behavior (lack of thinking skills)

- Executive skills
- Language skills
- Emotional regulation skills
- Cognitive flexibility skills
- Social skills

Executive skills

- Frontal lobe functions
 - When successful
 - Clear thinking
 - Organized thinking
 - Reflective thinking
 - When unsuccessful
 - Impulsive thinking
 - Unplanned thinking
 - Disorganized thinking

Solving Problems Requires

- Stepwise Thoughtfulness
 1. What is the problem?
 2. How did I handle it before?
 3. What do I do now?
 4. What will be the outcome?
- Separation of affect
 1. Ability to put feelings on a shelf
 2. Increases frustration tolerance

Language Processing

- Language is how the human processes , labels, understands and expresses feelings
- Crucial to flexibility
 - What do I do when I'm frustrated?
 - Problem solving requires communication
 - Without language processing skills there is no information for management

Emotional Regulation

- Not separation of affect but ability to regulate emotions when not frustrated
- Chronically anxious individuals have trouble summoning calm

Social Skills

- Required social skills
 - Recognizing impact of behavior on others
 - Self perceptions
 - Reading social cues
 - Starting interactions
 - Joining groups
 - Reciprocity of interactions
 - Point of view variations
- Thinking distortions misinterpret information

Pathway To Change

- Two problems “yet to be solved”
 1. Undeveloped cognitive skill sets
 2. Triggers to explosive behaviors

Introduction to “Baskets”

- Three ways to approach problems
 1. Solve the problem your way (make the child meet your expectations)
 2. Work it out with the child
 3. Drop your expectations (solve the problem the child’s way)

Basket A

- Adult's concerns considered
- Impose adult will on child
- Tends to be the preferred way of parenting
 - "No"
 - "You can't"
 - "You have to"
 - 1.....2.....3

Basket B

- Concerns of **both** adult and child
- Solve the problem that caused the child's frustration
- Work on pathways by teaching skills
 - "We practiced a skills"
 - "We solved the problem"

Basket C

- Child's concerns considered
- Possible assumptions
 - The child is not capable
 - The issue isn't enough of a concern to deal with
- "We aren't working on that right now"

Goals for Explosive Children

1. Reduce meltdowns (in Malay, krisis): stability
2. Help adults to pursue expectations effectively
3. Teach child thinking skills that are lacking

How Each Basket Addresses The Goals

- Basket A
 - Allows adult to pursue expectations (question is its effectiveness)
 - Doesn't reduce but causes meltdowns
 - Doesn't train thinking skills that are lacking

- Basket C
 - Doesn't allow adult to pursue expectations
 - Reduces meltdowns, lends stability
 - Doesn't train thinking skills that are lacking
- Basket B
 - Allows adult to pursue expectations
 - Does not cause meltdowns
 - The only basket that allows parent to teach thinking and problem solving skill that are lacking

When to use what basket

- Basket A
 - When critical safety issues exist and parent **must** make the decision
- Basket C
 - When the issue is not a concern
 - When parent and child aren't working on the issue yet
- Basket B
 - When working on thinking skills
 - When solving the problem (when child is frustrated or to solve future problems)

Basket B: The Preferred Basket

- Three entry steps into Basket B
 1. Empathy, reassurance
 2. Define the problem
 3. Invitation to problem solving
- Counselors working with parents on implementation of Collaborative Problem Solving should listen for missing steps

Step 1: Empathy

- Reasoning
 - Feeling understood is calming
 - The child's concern is on the table
 - The child learns to express what is really going on (part of thinking skills) rather than react
 - Children are used to being "blown off" (diabaikan) and are more likely to react rather than express themselves
 - Child has real, unexpressed concerns
 - Parent loses no authority by acknowledgement

- Summarizing statement of child's request/demand
- Keep it simple, don't interpret what the child has just said
- Ask what is going on with the child (in U.S. we ask, "What's up?")
- Make sure there is a real concern on the table not a solution: if "I don't know, offer possibilities"
- Use summarizing statement again when parent hears the child's concern
- Reassure: let the child know you aren't rejecting the concern, request or demand right now

Step 2: Define the Problem

- A problem is known only when there are two concerns, the child's and the parent's
- Parent states her or his concern

Step 3: Invitation to problem solving

- Repeat both concerns
- Suggest that the two work together to solve the problem ("Let's see if we can work this out.")
- Offer the child the first crack at a mutually beneficial solution (teach thinking skills)
- Stop when a solution solves the problem by addressing both concerns

Proactive vs. Crisis Basket B

- Basket B may work as a emergency intervention so long as frustration hasn't interfered with the ability to think but it is pressured and the best solution may not be introduced
- If emergency Basket B is used, come back to the issue once "the heat" is off
- Proactive Basket B allows work without emotional instability and teaches separation from emotions
