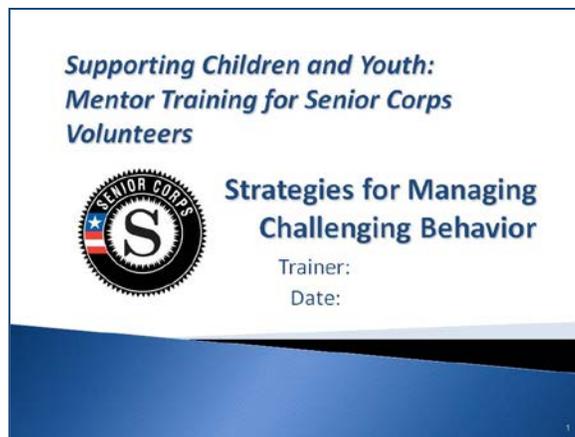


Module 5 Handouts

The following handouts are included in this module:

1. Typical Age Characteristics of Children and Youth
2. Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavioral in Children and Youth
3. Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior
4. Positive Reinforcement Works! (optional)
5. Recommended Resources on Challenging Behaviors (optional)
6. Training Feedback Survey



Typical Age Characteristics of Children and Youth

Below is a list of some general characteristics typical of children and youth in different age groups. Keep in mind that children are unique and develop at different paces.

Age: 3-5 years

- **Physical:** May require rest after high energy activity, developing coordination, developing gross motor skills (walking, balancing, skipping, jumping, throwing a ball), developing fine motor skills (use a writing tool, using toys that require finger coordination such as beads or puzzles).
- **Social/Emotional:** Eager to receive adult praise, likes to explore new activities, likes to copy older children, may be timid in new environments or with new people, learning to cooperate, likes responsibilities they can handle, can play with others but is still self centered.
- **Cognitive:** Understands language better and learning to speak, beginning to express needs in words, interested in the present, eager to learn, asks “why”, defines things by their use, developing a sense of humor, needs adult guidance when starting a new task.

Age: 6-8 years

- **Physical:** high energy levels, practicing lots of new activities, developing more difficult gross and fine motor skills.
- **Social/Emotional:** Beginning to compare self to others, beginning to want self improvement, likes responsibility, likes to be with groups and wants to belong, developing peer group (same gender), typically has a best friend.
- **Cognitive:** Likes to talk, developing a sense of time, enjoys collecting, learning problem solving, learning to plan ahead, becoming more self directed, learning to appreciate differences, strict sense of right and wrong.

Age: 9-11 years

- **Physical:** May be careless about clothes or hygiene, enjoys mastering specific skills, generally high activity, girls have a growth spurt.
- **Social/Emotional:** Competitive with peers, anxious to grow up, loyal to peer group, asserts independence, may be critical of peers and adults, beginning to be self-conscious.
- **Cognitive:** Asks questions expecting thoughtful answers, beginning to understand others' point of view, more complex problem solving, likes rule-based games, beginning to understand more global issues, enjoys daydreaming, more developed humor.

Age: 12-14 years

- **Physical:** Rapid growth may create awkwardness, beginning puberty, tires easily, increased appetite, may participate in fads (e.g., clothing styles).
- **Social/Emotional:** Sensitive to appearance, developing a personal moral code (sense of right and wrong), beginning to develop identity, critical of parents, strong desire to assert independence.
- **Cognitive:** Abstract thought development, thinking about future self, needs freedom for reflection, can organize and plan ahead, understands bigger social issues.

Age: 15-18 years

- **Physical:** Completing puberty, tires easily, increased appetite, participates in fads (e.g., clothing or music), testing with riskier behaviors (e.g., alcohol or sex).
- **Social/Emotional:** Very critical of adults and parents, strong personal moral code (sense of right and wrong), continued desire for independence, desires status in social group, wants to be recognized as unique, developing romantic relationships, still sensitive to criticism and appearance.
- **Cognitive:** Future oriented, self directed, developed abstract thought, well developed community awareness and activism.

Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior in Children and Youth

Handling a child or youth's challenging behavior can be difficult. No one can provide you with a formula that will work in every situation, but here are some ideas that have proven to work in different situations. Keep in mind:

- It is not your job to discipline the child.
- You play an important role in encouraging and reinforcing positive behaviors. Model and teach the child/youth how to communicate needs in a positive, acceptable way.
- You are not alone. Do not hesitate to ask your supervisor for help whenever you are unsure of the appropriate action.

Good practices to support positive interactions

Treat children and youth as individuals. Get to know them and don't presume they are all alike. For example, don't make assumptions based on appearance. Find out what is important to the child or youth you are mentoring so you can better relate.

Clearly state expectations and limits. This will help to prevent misunderstandings later.

Listen fully to the child/youth and limit your interruptions. Show through your body language that you are listening (eye contact, interested facial expression, etc.).

Validate their feelings and experience. This does not mean approval or agreement, but it shows you sympathize and take them seriously. For example, "I understand what you are saying. You feel angry because..."

Empathize. You can imagine how a child or youth feels and encourage them to talk about it. Be sensitive to their needs and be aware of how they react to you.

Model appropriate behavior. Children and youth are picking up cues from you; model the behaviors you expect from them. For example, apologize when you make a mistake or hurt someone accidentally. Be respectful and ask for respect in return.

Reinforce desirable behavior. A smile, gesture, or a brief word is often all that is needed to encourage that behavior.

Allow the child/youth to be "experts" sometimes. For example, ask for advice about something you are genuinely unsure of (e.g. "how does that gadget work?").

Allow the child/youth to "save face." For example, when s/he makes a mistake and feels bad about it already, let it pass without a "hope you learned your lesson" speech.

Help children and youth find ways to make a meaningful contribution to their community. For example, encourage them to get involved in a service learning project with you or with their peers (e.g. community gardening or mural painting, park restoration, etc.).

Help them set personal goals where they can take safe risks and achieve success. This builds self confidence and develops new interests.

Keep your commitments and never break a promise. This is especially important when working with children and youth who do not have reliable adults in their lives.

When a Challenging Behavior Occurs

Strategies for all ages

Use non-verbal cues.

- When: You can see a situation is going to arise. Before responding verbally, it may be possible to eliminate it by making your disapproval clear. Eye contact, complete with a frown, may send the message without embarrassing the child/youth. Often, positioning yourself near the child/youth will discourage the unwelcome behavior.
- Example: The youth begins to respond defensively when you ask him/her to help clean up. Simply raising your eyebrows without a verbal response may be enough to gain compliance.

Give choices within limits.

- When: The child/youth is not doing what's expected and the situation has not escalated.
- Example: "You can clean up your snack on your own or I can help you." "You can tell your mom about the fight by yourself, John or I accompany you. What would you like to do?"

Redirect and substitute an acceptable choice for the unacceptable one.

- When: The child/youth is doing something they shouldn't (e.g., running around the room or playing loud music). Sometimes problems result from dissatisfaction or boredom. If possible, consider a change of activity.)
- Example: "Please remember to walk in the classroom. Would you help me to set up chairs?" "You are welcome to listen to music at our agreed upon level. Are you ready to start the game?"

Use cool-off periods.

- When: The child/youth is too silly or angry.
- Example: "Let's take two minutes to listen to some music (or read, run around, etc.)." After two minutes give a clear reason why you had the break. Positively state the desired behavior and have the child/youth restate desired behavior."

Observe and clarify. Provide your observation in a calm and nonjudgmental way and ask for clarification and/or suggestions.

- When: The child/youth is having trouble cooperating or challenging behavior continues.
- Example: "You just poked two other students on your way over to my desk. I'm wondering if you are feeling angry. What happened before class? What else could you do besides poke people?" Encourage child/youth to consider ideas to resolve the situation.

Allow for natural consequences. State consequences up-front in nonjudgmental way and then let the child/youth experience them.

- When: The child/youth is testing limits (not safety related).
- Example: "We won't have time to play an extra game today because you didn't get cleaned up on time, but let's try again next week!" "Wow, since you broke the door knob, you are going to have to learn how to fix it." "By preparing your backpack so well, you found your assignments quickly."

Talk with teacher, program staff, or parent (if appropriate).

- When: Lower levels of responses have not worked or when the child/youth continue to defy authority. Do not use this as a threat.
- Example: "It seems that we are continuing to have this problem and I am out of ideas. Let's go and talk with your teacher to see if she has some suggestions that might help us."

Strategies that may work better with different age groups

Use a secret signal or a "code" to prompt child.

- Age: 3-9 years old
- When: The child has trouble with self-control or needs special reassurance. Use a wink of an eye or thumbs up.
- Example: The youth is picking up the supplies after an activity and you give a thumbs up sign.

Smoothing helps you to validate the child's feelings while encouraging him/her to complete the task.

- Age: 3-9 years old, or older youth if they are acting younger than their age
- When: You have only a small amount of time or child is uncooperative.
- Example: "I know you are tired, but let's get through this last 5 minutes and we can rest!"

Use a special activity.

- Age: 3-9
- When: The child is cranky or argumentative.
- Example: Read a favorite book together.

This for that. Offer a positive consequence for the desirable behavior.

- Age: 6-11 years
- When: The child/youth is not doing what's expected.
- Example: "If you can help me out, I'll help you with your clean-up."

Friendly challenge

- Age: 6-11 years old.
- When: The child/youth is not cooperating or losing interest in the task. Use light-hearted competition with caution; some children/youth will perceive this as an opportunity to fail.
- Example: "Do you think you can clean up (complete the paragraph, finish the chapter) in five minutes? Ready? Go!"

Give Information to help child understand what s/he should be doing in a nonjudgmental way.

- Age: 7-12 years old
- When: The child/youth is not doing what is expected.
- Example: "When you hold a large bowl, you need to use two hands." Or "When we listen to music inside it needs to be at volume level 13 or lower."

State and Detach

- Age: 12-18 years old
- When: The youth is resisting necessary rules. State the expectations, stay out of any arguments, restate expectations, and then disengage. Help the youth understand the consequences of their decisions.
- Example: "Chewing tobacco is not allowed here. Throw it out and then we can discuss what the next steps will be. I will be waiting over here."

Strategies for Children and Youth with Additional Needs

Many of the common strategies for managing challenging behavior also work with children and youth with special needs. However, some children and youth have behavioral disorders that stem from mental illnesses, others from physical or learning challenges, and these may require additional support. Here are a few tips for assisting these children and youth:

- **Identify triggers.** Ask the teacher or supervisor what strategies work with this individual, and what “triggers” challenging behavior. Remember to always focus on the person first, and then the special need, so that the need does not define the person (e.g. rather than referring to a student as “autistic”, say a “student with autism”; a child has special needs, not a special needs child).
- **Request background information.** Ask the child/youth what you need to know and how you can be more helpful.
- **State expectations.** Be very clear and consistent with your expectations. For example, telling a child to “pay attention” does not always work; younger children will not know what that means. Instead, give specifics: “Please show you are listening by looking at ___.”
- **Keep it simple.** Only use 2-3 directions at a time. Consider “chunking” or breaking tasks up into smaller, more manageable pieces.
- **Try something else.** If it seems that you have to keep repeating yourself, be patient, or try another approach. For instance, instead of making a verbal request, jointly put together a written “to do” list or make stick figures engaged in the activities.
- **Use the child/youth’s strengths.** Note different learning approaches or the way the child/youth connects. For example, for the physical (kinesthetic) learner have something available to touch (e.g., a stress ball, pipe cleaners to twist).
- **Note positive behaviors.** Give lots of positive reinforcement. For example, “You remembered that we push in our chairs before we leave the room. Thank you.”
- **Breathe.** Don’t take things too personally.

Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior CHILDREN UNDER AGE 12

As you work with children, you may find yourself in situations like the ones described below. This exercise is designed to help you mentally prepare for those situations.

Instructions: Read the situations and suggested strategies (ideas) and discuss with your group.

- Jot down some ideas on how you might handle the behavior using the strategy suggested. What specifically would you say to the child/youth? Practice saying it aloud. How does it feel?
- If you have another strategy you feel would work better, note some ideas and be ready to discuss.

1. Sam. You are having lunch in the school cafeteria with Sam (6 years old), but he has a hard time sitting still. Now he has gone under the table to “look for gum”.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: REDIRECT. Substitute acceptable choice for unacceptable behavior.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Sam. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Sam? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

2. Kayla. You are helping Kayla (10 years old) with a school project, due tomorrow. She is having a hard time staying “on task” and keeps getting up and walking away even though you keep trying to bring her back.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: FRIENDLY CHALLENGE. Appeal to a sense of competition with a dare.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Kayla. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Kayla? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

3. Demarco. Demarco (8 years old) doesn’t want to get off the computer when his time is up. He is totally involved in a game he is playing, but other kids are waiting to use the computer.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: THIS FOR THAT. Offer a positive consequence for the desirable behavior.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Demarco. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Demarco? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

4. Madison. You are supposed to help Madison (9 years old) practice her reading for 20 minutes today. She finds all kinds of reasons to stall until the 20 minutes are nearly up.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: GIVE CHOICES. Suggest some options and let the child decide.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Madison. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Madison? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

5. Zak. Zak (4 years old) has a hard time with transitions. He gets involved in an activity and gets very upset when he is told it is time to stop.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: THIS FOR THAT. Offer a positive consequence for the desirable behavior.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Zak. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Zak? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior

YOUTH AGE 12 AND UP

As you work with youth, you may find yourself in situations like the ones described below. This exercise is designed to help you mentally prepare for those situations.

Instructions: Read the situations and suggested strategies (ideas) and discuss with your group.

- Jot down some ideas on how you might handle the behavior using the strategy suggested. What specifically would you say to the child/youth? Practice saying it aloud. How does it feel?
- If you have another strategy you feel would work better, note some ideas and be ready to discuss.

1. Brandon. Brandon (12 years old) is a youth you mentor and you meet twice week. You are trying to develop a relationship with him but he is constantly “texting” and checking his phone during your time together.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: GIVE CHOICES. Suggest some options and let the youth decide.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Brandon. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Brandon? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

2. Maya. Maya (16 years old) is a youth you mentor and she is supposed to meet with you for at least one hour a week. She often shows up late, cutting into your time together, and sometimes she doesn't show up at all.

Strategy Suggestion: STATE AND DETACH. State your expectations, stay out of any arguments, restate expectations, and then disengage.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Maya. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Maya? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

3. LaTonya. LaTonya (14 years old) is usually in a good mood when you meet but today she comes in angry. When you ask what is wrong, she starts swearing at you.

Strategy Suggestion: OBSERVE AND CLARIFY. Provide an observation in a nonjudgmental way and ask for clarification or suggestions.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to LaTonya. _____

b. Is there another strategy you might try with LaTonya? _____

c. If yes, what specifically will you say? _____

Positive Reinforcement Works!

We believe every child wants to:

Feel successful
 Be included
 Be accepted
 Be loved
 Feel important
 Contribute in a meaningful way

Children communicate for different reasons:

Need for peer attention
 Need for adult attention
 Peer avoidance
 Adult avoidance
 Academic avoidance
 Sensory fulfillment

Catch Them! Remember to catch students when they are displaying appropriate, positive behaviors! Everyone likes to be acknowledged for doing a good job!

LITTLE THINGS THAT CAN HELP INCREASE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR:

- Greet each student
- Call each student by name
- Use eye contact
- Focus on successes
- Use 5 positives to each negative!**
- Give clear expectations
- Model what the expectations looks like
- ☺ SMILE!

TO AVOID A CONFLICT CYCLE, USE:

Empathy - Understand feelings and actions

Genuineness - Be consistent, dependable, and real

Positive Regard - Conveying caring and interest

Concreteness - Using specific clear language

Unconditional Acceptance - Approving the person, not the behavior

Provided by Friends Foster Grandparent Program, Concord, New Hampshire (April 2011)

Recommended Resources on Challenging Behaviors

Techniques and Strategies for Managing Challenging Behaviors

If you serve in a classroom, these are some techniques you may see the teacher use to influence behavior, from The Virginia Department of Education's Training and Technical Assistance Center at Old Dominion University:

http://www.ttac.odu.edu/Articles/influence_tech.html

If you serve young children, you may find this article helpful. "What We Say to Children: The First Step to Managing Challenging Behaviors" was written by Tom Udell, Pam Deardorff and Gary Glasenapp for The Teaching Research Institute and The Oregon Inclusion Center's Early Childhood Newsletter (winter 1998): <http://www.tr.wou.edu/train/winter98.htm>

The Circle of Parents program is aimed at parents but they do have short tip sheets in English and Spanish for different behavior challenges that volunteers may find enlightening. See "The Power of Choice" and "Say What You Mean, Mean What You Say":

http://www.circleofparents.org/parent_resources/index.shtml

General Child/Youth Development

The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets describe qualities and positive experiences for children and youth, by age group, including suggested activities that adults can do to help build them: <http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets>.

Conflict Resolution

Books:

- Raising a Thinking Child: Help your Young Child to Resolve Everyday Conflicts and Get Along with Others. Myrna B. Shure with Theresa Foy DiGeronimo. New York : H. Holt, 1994.
- Raising a thinking preteen: the "I can problem solve" program for 8- to 12- year-olds. Myrna B. Shure with Roberta Israeloff. New York : Henry Holt, 2000.

Health Issues, Self Esteem and Body Image

KidsHealth provides information and advice on a wide range of physical, emotional, and behavioral issues that affect children and teens, including nutrition and fitness, self-destructive or risky behavior, anxiety, stress, and cyberbullying. KidsHealth is part of The Nemours Foundation's Center for Children's Health Media: <http://kidshealth.org/>

The Palo Alto Medical Foundation for Health Care, Research and Education is a not-for-profit health care organization based in Northern California. Their website provides health education aimed at parents and teens on a variety of topics; this page has information on self esteem and body image in adolescents, and includes additional recommended websites:

<http://www.pamf.org/parents/general/selfesteem.html>

Mental Health

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), provides information and resources on child and adolescent mental health for the general public and health professionals: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/index.shtml>

The mission of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on communities: www.samhsa.gov. SAMHSA provides resources to educate and raise awareness about children's mental health: <http://www.samhsa.gov/children/>, including resources on challenging behavior in early childhood: http://www.samhsa.gov/children/earlychildhood_challengingbehavior.aspx.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is a mental health advocacy organization that provides easy-to-understand information about mental illnesses, treatments, programs, and support groups: www.nami.org.

Bullying

StopBullying.gov provides information from various government agencies on how children and youth, parents, educators, and others in the community can prevent or stop bullying. Age-appropriate information is presented for these different groups. The website is managed by the Department of Health and Human Services in cooperation with the Department of Education and Department of Justice: www.Bullyinginfo.org.

Programs and Resources

FindYouthInfo.gov was created by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), which is composed of representatives from 12 Federal agencies that support programs and services focusing on youth. The website provides information, strategies, tools, and resources: www.findyouthinfo.org

Training Feedback Survey

Please help us improve our training sessions by providing feedback on the training you attended. Thank you!

Training/Session Name: _____ Date: _____

Lead Facilitator: _____

Program you serve with: Foster Grandparent RSVP Other: _____

Please rate this session using the following scale:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. The subject matter was presented effectively.					
2. The facilitator was knowledgeable.					
3. The facilitator responded to questions.					
4. There were enough opportunities for discussion.					
5. The written materials are useful.					
6. The session met my expectations.					
7. As a result of this training, I gained new knowledge applicable to my volunteer assignment.					
8. I plan to apply what I learned at this session.					

9. What did you like best about this session?

10. What would have improved this session?

Thank You! Your feedback will help us to improve our training!