

# **WHY CHILDREN ACT OUT *THE PURPOSE OF BEHAVIOR***

**INDEPENDENT STUDY  
*A SIX CREDIT CLASS***

Course # ED448t/ED558t

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**DR. MICHAEL SEDLER**

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**Phone (509) 443-1605; Fax 509 443 0111**

**THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE**

## **Please use the checklist/syllabus in the manual.**

**PLEASE SEND ASSIGNMENTS ELECTRONICALLY (AS AN ATTACHMENT).** It is best to send in no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time and I will send you back comments. Send them in numerical order (#1, #2, #3...). You may send work in Microsoft Word, in a Google Doc (but give permission for review), zip folder, a converted Pages file, etc.

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course, and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class! If working in a group, put all names on each paper, except the integration paper which must be individually authored. See \*\* at bottom of page.

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography with phone numbers of publishing companies. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Master's Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in-services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you, once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months. If you would like individual feedback on assignments, please indicate this when turning in your work.

Sincerely,

Michael Sedler (509) 443-1605; fax 509 443 0111

E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net) Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

P.O. BOX 30310 - Spokane, WA. – 99223

\*\* For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

## **MICHAEL SEDLER**

(509) 443-1605 (w); (509) 939-6302 (c); Fax 509 443 0111

email: mike@communicationplus.net or michael@michaelsedler.com

website: www.michaelsedler.com

### **Education**

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

### **Work Experience**

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration-behavior consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K -12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

### **Other Experiences**

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3rd runner-up Miss America 2012

### **Author**

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective. Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions. **(Over 300,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly.*** (October, 2016. Revell Books, \$5.99) (updated/edited version of "Stop The Runaway Conversation.") Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective. Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell Books is a division of Baker Publishing Group.

Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)). \*\*Clock hours available for partial course completion.

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students (SS401p/SS501p)**

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach (SS401q/SS501q)**

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning (SS401v/SS501v)**

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students (ED404d/ED504d)**

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES**: (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough (ED437q/ED537q)**

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators (ED409r/ED509r)**

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. Gang Attitudes And Actions (SS406k/SS506k)**

This class will help each person to identify gangs and intervention strategies for your community/school.

**4. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions (SS409f/SS509f)**

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**5. Mental Health Issues and Students (HE402n/HE502n)**

Understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**6. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools (ED434y/ED534y)**

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**7. Organizational Teaching Skills (ED429w/ED529w)**

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**8. School Violence (SS406m/SS506m)**

Each person will learn indicators and interventions for potential violent situations.

**9. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students (HE401m/HE501m)**

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**10. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline (ED419g/ED519g)**

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**11. Youth Suicide (SS404u/SS504u)**

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**

**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

## **1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

## **2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

## **3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching in each person.

## **4. The Impact Of Trauma and Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Strategies to support children who have experienced traumatic situations in life.

## **5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

## **6- CREDIT COST: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours (6 quarter = 4 semester)**

**REGISTRATION**: Call The Heritage Institute--1 (800) 445-1305; 1 (360) 341-3020  
*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS**: Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.

**Email address**: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)    **Website**: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

**\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credit once clock hours have been earned for a class.**

**COURSE TITLE: WHY CHILDREN ACT OUT: The Purpose Of Behavior**

**No. OF CREDITS: 6 QUARTER CREDITS**  
[semester equivalent = 4 credits]

**CLOCK HRS: 60**  
**PDU: 60**  
**CEUs: 6.0 (60 hours)**

**INSTRUCTOR: MICHAEL SEDLER, D. Min., M.S.W.**  
Box 30310  
Spokane, WA. 99223  
509/443-1605; Fax number- 509 443 0111  
[mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net) [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

### **ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST**

The assignment checklist will help you plan your schedule of work for this course. Check off items completed so that you can better monitor your progress. While you have six-months to complete your work, many will find a shorter time period convenient. **Please email no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time for comments. Do NOT send further work until you receive comments from the instructor. Grades will be submitted once all assignments and the integration paper have been sent to instructor.** If involved in a group, all work should be sent through the Group Leader.

***For Washington Clock Hours, Oregon Professional Development Units, or Continuing Education Credits, please complete the first 7 assignments.***

\_\_\_ **Assignment #1:** Fill out introductory page, answer all the questions. **Send to instructor prior to starting class.**

\_\_\_ **Assignment #2:** Read the entire course manual.

\_\_\_ **Assignment #3:** Complete all worksheets within the packet and **send only designated ones to the instructor.**

\_\_\_ **Assignment #4:** Read a chosen book and **write a 2 page summary, send to instructor.** If taking this course in a group, each person should read a book. Only one person needs to write a summary.

\_\_\_ **Assignment #5:** After reading "Function of Behavior" article-located at end of manual, **write a 2-page summary, send to instructor.**

\_\_\_ **Assignment #6:** Observe another classroom/group setting (or observe behavior in a community setting) and discuss the areas of behavior observed and suspected function of various behaviors. **Write a 2-page summary, send to instructor.**

\_\_\_ **Assignment #7:** Share your findings with another educator and get feedback on your function assumptions.

***This completes the assignments required for Washington Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or CEUs. Continue to next section for additional assignments required for University Quarter Credit***

### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED for 400 or 500 LEVEL UNIVERSITY CREDIT.**

If completing this course during the summer or you are not currently in an education setting, apply your ideas with youth from your neighborhood, a parks department facility, with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session, students from past years, or use one of your own children or relatives. For further ideas, contact instructor.

\_\_\_ **Assignment #8:** Choose one behavior observed in Assignment #6 and develop an intervention plan for reducing this behavior. Be sure to integrate ideas from the manual into your paper. You may want to use the "Teacher Interview" form (p. 43) at the end of this manual as a helpful guideline. **Write a 2-page summary, send to instructor.**

\_\_\_ **Assignment #9:** Go on-line and read 2 articles that focus on acting out behaviors and intervention approaches. Share your learning with another person. **Summarize your reading and conversation in a 2 page summary, send to instructor**

\_\_\_ **Assignment #10:** You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

Assignment #A: **(SEND commentary to Instructor)**

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
  - Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
  - Write a 2 page commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
  - Include any student feedback on your lesson.
- (The following is encouraged but not required):**
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by also contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library located at <http://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library>

OR

Assignment #B: **(SEND lesson and summary to Instructor)**

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
  - Write a 2 page summary concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.
- (The following is encouraged but not required):**
- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog <http://www.hol.edu/blog> prior to writing your article.
  - Please email a copy to [Rebecca Blankinship \(rebecca@hol.edu\)](mailto:Rebecca.Blankinship@hol.edu) THI blog curator and media specialist.
  - Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
  - Subject line to read: (Course Name, Blog)

Send to Instructor: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

## 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT

\_\_\_ **Assignment #11:** In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one** of the following:

- Choose another book from the bibliography and **write a 2 page summary, send to instructor.**
- Create a PowerPoint presentation for your staff. Save this as a PDF and **send to instructor.**
- Another assignment of your own design, with the instructor's prior approval.

## 400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT

### Integration Paper

\_\_\_ **Assignment #12:** Write a 2-3 page Integration Paper answering these specific questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:

**Mike Sedler, M.S.W.**, brings over 30 year of educational experience as an administrator, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration Paper portion (and other designated assignments) which must be individually authored and submitted. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor. **If you do not receive a confirmation email back after sending your paperwork via email, please re-send or contact the instructor to confirm it has been received. It seems that occasionally things get lost in cyber- space. Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. ☺ Thank you.**

Over the years, I have had countless people ask me about specific student behaviors and the impact upon a class, the general environment or the milieu. Within this conversation, we typically discussed the concept of the function of the behavior or the purpose of the behavior. In other words, why did the person act out in the way he/she is acting out?

In this class, we will investigate the underlying reasons that motivate an individual to utilize various behaviors. You will find these reasons applicable in the classroom, in your home, and in your own personal life. In addition, we will discuss interventions for these behaviors that will not only reduce the acting out concerns, but assist individuals in developing more effective coping skills in their lives.

As you read through the manual and work through this course, observe and evaluate the behaviors around you in life. While this class will cover the most common functions or purposes of behavior, you may see others demonstrated in everyday life.

Thank you for taking this course and enjoy the learning that will take place.



## **INTRODUCTORY PAGE**

### **Evaluating Why Children Act Out SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

1. When you think of behavior, what is the most common reason that people act the way they do? What is it they want?

2. Can you think of any other reasons that people act or respond the way they do?

3. When you look at your life and your actions, how do you want people to respond to you when--

You are agitated or angry?

You are anxious or overwhelmed?

You are hurt, sad, or melancholy?

4. As you look at your home setting, school setting, or some other familiar environment, do you feel that your general responses assist people in working through their emotions? Why or why not?

5. Share a few ideas that you hope to take away from this class.

**Please send this page to your instructor by scanning it, faxing it, or via postal mail.**

# **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF BEHAVIOR**

## ***EXPLAINING DEVIANT BEHAVIORS***

**THEOLOGICAL MODEL-** in 1487, a published document by two monks (at the request of the Pope) gave the explanation for inappropriate and bizarre behavior as due to demonic involvement. And, even to this day, there are those who believe “mental health” concerns are solely “spiritual issues.”

**INTRAPSYCHIC MODEL-** Freud was one of the first to relate mental illness to the brain (1895). Behavior doesn’t just happen and may not be due to outside influences. The concept of the Unconscious (hidden feelings), the Id (internal desires to do certain things), the Superego (value system as to what one should do), and the Ego (executive function—blending the id and superego) explain many behavior patterns. Psychoanalytic theory was formed to assist in understanding the psychic systems, the outside environment and behaviors.

**BEHAVIORAL MODEL-** a questioning of the intrapsychic model began with people such as Skinner, Pavlov, Watson, and Hall. While the brain was still viewed as the site of behaviors and behavioral problems, it became more important to understand how individuals responded to specific inputs in the environment. Concepts such as operant conditioning, modeling, and cognitive behavioral therapy were developed.

**INTERPERSONAL MODEL-** a shift occurred from looking at what happens within the brain and more to how people related and interact with one another. Harry Stack Sullivan was an early proponent of this model. Interactions between children and parents (or significant adults such as teachers), siblings, peers, etc. were studied. Patterns of behavior and relationship were evaluated.

**SYSTEM MODEL-** this is different from other models as it focuses not on the individual, but on the systems that impact the individual (family, community, groups).

**BIOLOGICAL MODEL-** many behaviors reflect structural, physiological, or chemical difficulties within the brain. Some behaviors are explained by malfunctions of basic brain functions while others are due to deficiencies of specific chemicals within the brain.

## **Erik Erikson's Eight Stages of Social-Emotional Development**

- 1. Learning Basic Trust Versus Basic Mistrust [hope] (birth to two yrs)**  
If the child is nurtured and loved, he/she develops a sense of trust and security. If badly handled, it leads to insecurity and mistrust.
- 2. Learning Autonomy Versus Shame [will] (2 to 3 yrs)**  
The well parented child emerges sure of him/herself, a sense of control and proud of self. If shame is evident, the child needs constant prodding and re-assurance.
- 3. Learning Initiative Versus Guilt [purpose] (3 to 5 yrs)**  
The “play age” for children, the healthy developing child broadens skills, develops fantasy thinking, cooperates with others, learns to lead and follow. If immobilized by guilt, he/she is fearful, a fringe member of groups, and depends too much on adults.
- 4. Learning Industry Versus Inferiority [competence] (6 to 12 yrs)**  
The child learns to master formal skills such as relating to peers, free play to structured play (rules), and academics. This child is trusting, full of initiative, and autonomous. The mistrusting child doubts the future, feels defeated and inferior.
- 5. Learning Identity Versus Identity Diffusion [fidelity] (13 to 18 yrs)**  
Who am I? Even the most adjusted child will battle with this question. The mature child addresses issues of achievement, sexual identity, leadership, and a set of ideals. When Identity Diffusion occurs, delinquency, inadequacy, inferiority, and patterns of negative interactions occur.
- 6. Learning Intimacy Versus Isolation [love] (18 to 35 yrs)**  
Successful young adults experience true intimacy—with a partner, with friends, with family. Others may feel alone, isolated, abandoned, and lacking in emotional support.
- 7. Learning Generativity Versus Self-Absorption [care] (35 to 55/65 yrs)**  
In adulthood, the person can create or generate their own ideas leading to productivity. The alternative is selfish, internal absorption without looking to outside oneself.
- 8. Learning Integrity Versus Despair [wisdom] (55/65 to death)**  
If the prior seven stages are adequately met, the mature adult develops trust, independence and integrity. He/she lacks any sense of overwhelming guilt, regret, or pessimism.

## JUST FOR YOU

Choose one of the stages described in “Erickson’s Eight Stages” that you have gone through, are going through, or (hopefully) will go through. Share your personal thoughts about the chosen stage.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## **THE MANY ASPECTS OF CHILDREN**

**(SEND to INSTRUCTOR, question at end of worksheet)**

Temperament impacts children and can be a major contributor to success in life. As we look at these traits, think about your own personal temperament. What happens if your temperament clashes with a student or another adult? This can create difficulties in understanding the person as well as expressing empathy and compassion. Recognizing the differences does not take away the challenge, but it does help us be more careful in our approaches and attitude.

### **1. Activity Level: Active or Quiet?**

Is the child calm or in motion? Is he on the go all day? Does she fidget, squirm, unable to relax.

IDEAS: a) Use of activities, allow movement, avoid rigid rules or comments, make a game out of the situation. B) Allow extra time to think, to organize. May need time to process and respond. Simple tasks may take a little longer.

### **2. Intensity of Emotion: High or Moderate Intensity?**

Does the world know when the child is happy or upset? Does she respond intensely to situations? Do you have to guess what he is thinking or feeling?

IDEAS: a) avoid responding with similar intensity, use stop (take a moment)-space (give the child some space)-regroup (allow the child to regroup without pressure)-redo (allow the child to start over) method, teach alternative responses. B) offer a guess as to feelings/thinking, avoid bombarding with questions, use of silence.

### **3. Adaptability: Flexible or Unyielding?**

Can the child go with the flow? Can her routines be changed without complaint or backlash? Is he dependent upon routines and schedules?

IDEAS: a) use of schedules, encourage task completion, avoid ongoing reminders, be positive. B) pre-plan and pre-teach prior to the activity, warnings.

### **4. Distractibility: Easily Distracted or Focused?**

Can the child shut out noises and extraneous activities surrounding him? Or is she easily sidetracked by every bird, noise, and breath that is heard?

IDEAS: a) gain attention before explaining areas, keep instructions short and simple, have another student available to support or guide. B) watch for hyper-vigilance which may lead to inflexibility and perfectionism.

### **5. Mood: Optimists or Pessimist?**

Does the child laugh and smile easily and frequently? Is she generally joyful and pleasant? Or is he more pessimistic—crying, whining, complaining?

IDEAS: a) watch for the Pollyanna attitude and tendency to want to please you, encourage the positive aspects through creativity, use group work as a way to “infect” other students. B) use of positive imagery through books, movies, and stories is helpful. Pair up with optimist, encourage ongoing introspection.

### **6. Situational Approachability: Approaches or Withdraw?**

Is the child eager for new challenges, willing to meet new people, curious about life? Or, is she cautious and slow to feel comfortable with new people and activities?

IDEAS: a) encourage positive social skills by giving them new opportunities, watch for the “social butterfly” issue and keep him focused, help her to stick with projects. B) avoid labeling words—change shy to thoughtful, quiet to focused, hyper to active. Learn to appreciate strengths of this child and teach them what their strengths are in life.

### **7. Persistence: Prevailing or Despairing?**

When the going gets tough, does she appear impatient and frustrated—and then give up? Or does he keep trying no matter how long it takes or the task difficulty?

IDEAS: a) avoid giving direct commands as they will often attempt to push through them, offer choices and options, avoid the word “no” as they will reject it. B) watch for too much compliance, unwillingness to be challenged, or inability to finish task. Encourage and believe in the success of this child.

**Think of a child that fits into one of these areas. Write out a few ideas you have used or could use for him/her. (send to instructor)**

## **TIPS FOR TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**

1. **Questions, Questions, Questions.** At the heart of critical thinking is the concept of “asking questions.” Is intellectual curiosity fostered and allowed? Model for students the types of questions that lead to higher level thinking and understanding.
2. **Start With A Prompt And Help Them Unpack It.** Pose a provocative question, build the argument, and help the students analyze it. We must teach them how to move toward critical thinking.
3. **Provide Tools For Entering The Conversation.** Give your students a list of sentence/conversation starters to use until they think of their own. “I agree/disagree because...”, “Can you clarify what you mean by...”, “I can connect with your comment because...”
4. **Model Your Expectations.** If you have a behavioral expectation, model it, explain it, and practice it. Use of YouTube samples can be a great way to teach effective/ineffective patterns.
5. **Encourage Constructive Controversy.** Lively discussion usually involves some sort of disagreements and differing perspectives. Model and discuss appropriate ways to disagree. Make sure to emphasize facts, personal opinion, reasoning, and hearing another side.
6. **Choose Content Areas Initially.** Choose topics that are relevant and significant to the students. Educate them on the topic via articles, books, internet research, speakers, or photos. After you have worked on this process a few times, allow them to choose their own topics.
7. **Assess Their Reasoning Through Different Methods.** Challenge them to communicate back to you on their thinking. This may be done through speaking, writing, drawing, or an activity. During quiz and test time, avoid solely using “True/False”, “Fill in blank”, “Multiple Choice”, or “Matching” type problems.
8. **Let Students Evaluate Each Other.** Set up strategies for students to learn from students. Encourage them to teach one another, to ask questions of one another,

and to work together. Once again, we must teach these skills to students, but the reward and pay off are huge.

9. **Step Back.** Let go of the reins at times and let the students take over. Remove yourself from the equation and force them to step up.

Select one or two areas that you do well within your setting. Write out examples of each one.

Select one area you wish to improve upon. Write out a few ideas to implement in the future.



## HOW WELL DO WE RECOGNIZE TROUBLED CHILDREN

(The Big Book of Personality Tests by Salvatore Didato)

Children are sensitive to how a teacher views or judges their behavior. A teacher's attitude—what the teacher believes to be “good” or “bad” behavior—can have a bearing on the development of the personality of a student. A classic study done more than fifty years ago found that there were great incongruities between how a teacher and parents defined “serious” behavior problems and how child experts (psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, and social workers) did.

Rank certain behaviors as indicators of future maladjustment. Rank the behaviors in terms of their relative seriousness, with “1” being extremely serious and “10” being not serious. Only use a number one time so you will have rankings from 1, 2, 3...10. Place your rankings in the column marked “Your Response.” **The scoring section on the next page will explain how to determine your score.**

Your Response	Experts	Difference	
_____	_____	_____	Unsocial, withdrawn
_____	_____	_____	Suspicious
_____	_____	_____	Unhappy, depressed
_____	_____	_____	Resentful
_____	_____	_____	Fearful
_____	_____	_____	Cruel
_____	_____	_____	Easily discouraged
_____	_____	_____	Suggestible
_____	_____	_____	Overly critical of others
_____	_____	_____	Sensitive

YOUR SCORE \_\_\_\_\_

## **SCORING**

The behavior patterns you just ranked were taken from a list of fifty characteristics rated by child experts. The order in which the items appear concurs with the manner in which they were ranked, with “unsocial” being the most problematic behavior a child can exhibit. To tally your score, write the number “1” through “10” down the Expert column, beginning with “1” in the first row and ending with “10” in the last. Then, for each item, calculate the difference between your ranking and that of the experts, and place that number in the “Difference” column. Add up all the numbers in the “Difference” column—the sum of the numbers is your score. The lowest score is a 0 and highest is a 50. A score of 25 is average. The closer to “0”, the more you agree with the experts as to what constitutes deviant behavior.

## **EXPLANATION**

Unfortunately, adults who are responsible for healthy mental outlooks in children are often not fully aware of the more important signals of trouble ahead. All ten behaviors in our quiz are, to some degree, reflections of some concerns about the child, but those that fall among the first three or four ranks are the most serious. In all fairness, it must be said that what teachers consider to be a serious problem is an action which upsets the teacher, the school, and the classroom routines, not necessarily that which behaviorists use as predictors of behavior problems.

Current surveys show that all three groups (teachers, parents, experts) are now more concerned about behaviors like withdrawal, unhappiness, depression, and fearfulness. The most encouraging result of these studies is that, compared to fifty years ago, more highly trained teachers and better informed parents are beginning to focus more accurately on deviant behavior patterns.

(This article is a good resource for educators and parents)

## **Young Kids Acting Out in School: The Top 3 Issues Parents Worry about Most**

By [Dr. Joan Simeo Munson](#)

If you're the parent of a young child who acts out at school, you've probably asked yourself, "If my child is out of control now, how will I be able to deal with him when he's ten—or a teenager?" Once a toddler or kindergartner becomes known as a child who "plays too rough" or "always has to have his way," parents often find that invitations to playdates and birthday parties begin to dry up. Instead of hoping your child will be well-liked at school, you might be saying to yourself, "If only Ben could find just one friend to play with—and maintain that friendship for longer than a day!"

"If my child is out of control now, how will I be able to deal with him when he's ten—or a teenager?"

Let me start by saying that many of the difficult behaviors your young child displays—including pushing, hitting, and refusing to share and take turns—are perfectly normal for their developmental level. While you still need to address those issues, I think it's helpful to understand that they are very common amongst young kids—and you are certainly not alone in what you are dealing with. I personally believe that one of the keys to helping your young child improve their behavior at school lies in having them work on this same behavior at home. The good news is that as a parent, you are in the best position to coach, teach and hold them accountable for their behavior.

In my experience, of all the issues parents have concerns about when it comes to young kids at school, these three tend to be the most common—and the ones parents worry about most:

### **"My Child is Overly Aggressive."**

Nobody wants their child to hit, yell, or play too roughly with others, but it's important to realize that this is typical in young children—in part because most toddlers and kindergartners still lack adequate verbal skills to deal with their emotions. For a young child, reasoning through a situation when they are upset can be very challenging, if not altogether impossible. And for many kids, hitting, pushing and yelling are the best problem solving skills they have at their fingertips. This is not to say you should excuse aggressive behavior, or that you can't coach your child to behave appropriately on their own eventually. While it's important to recognize that what your child is doing is normal, you also need to use rules and consequences to clearly teach them how to stop behaving too aggressively.

**What Parents Can Do:** It's up to you to let your child know that their actions will no longer be tolerated. When things are calm, get down on their level, look them in the eye and say, "Hitting, biting, kicking and pushing are wrong and they hurt people." Be sure to tell them what their consequence will be: "If I see you hurting anyone, or if the teacher tells me you hit someone again at pre-school today, your consequence will be no television when you get home." Keep the consequences short term and give them to your child as soon as possible after they have behaved inappropriately. Try to have your child spend time with someone close to his age. Watch them closely so that you can see when your child is starting to become upset and coach him in that moment to use his words. Consequences alone will not change his behavior—but using consequences to require your child to practice the skills he needs to develop will change behaviors.

I also believe it's important to coach your little one to find his voice instead of lashing out at others. Keep in mind that this will require practice and lots of repetition. You can start by teaching your

toddler, pre-schooler or kindergartner a saying to use at school or home when they are angry and frustrated. In place of pushing, for example, tell your child to say something like, “I don’t like that!” or “I’m not going to play with you if you take my toys!” Another good thing to do is show your child how to walk away when he is angry or upset. Be sure to role play this with him, and switch roles so he can see how each side might react.

I also recommend that parents work with their child’s teachers as much as possible: let them know you are doing your best to curb aggressive behavior at home. Oftentimes, the teacher will have helpful suggestions for you to try, as well. The important thing is that you get on the same page and try to work together with the school as much as possible.

### **“My Child Won’t Share or Take Turns.”**

Ahhh, sharing. This is one of the toughest things you’ll deal with when it comes to young kids, both at home and at school. It’s important for you to remember that your child is at a developmental level that makes sharing extremely difficult. Since sharing with others and taking turns is not a behavior that comes naturally to young children, it’s your job to teach your kids why it is so important. After all, learning how to share is central to a child’s ability to make and keep friends. Keep in mind that you can’t force your kids to share any more than you can force them to eat their broccoli—but through practice, they can learn to do it.

**What Parents Can Do:** Bear in mind that there are some things your child will not want to (and shouldn’t have to) share: A special treat given to them by their Grandma; a new toy from their birthday party; their favorite stuffed animal or security blanket. It’s okay to say, “I know that’s special to you and you don’t want to share it.” And after all, you probably wouldn’t want to “share” the ring your parents gave you when you graduated from high school, or that brand new pair of dress shoes you just bought.

Of course, there are times when your child needs to share: if they’re hoarding a package of crayons while their best friend is sitting empty-handed, for example, it’s time to intervene. Teach a little empathy by saying, “Jamie, how would you feel if Sarah had all the crayons and wouldn’t give you any? Can you think of how to share your crayons?” Some kids may realize this seems selfish, while others may hold on to those crayons all the more tightly! Feel free to give your child a choice here: “Jamie, you can give Sarah five crayons.” If your child refuses to let go of the crayons, tell her that you will give her ten seconds to release the crayons or you will put her in time-out. The same thinking applies when it’s time to take turns. “Jamie, it’s Sarah’s turn to pick a video next. You chose last time.” If a tantrum ensues, your child should face a consequence such as a time-out—or you can leave the play date altogether.

If you hear that your child is having a tough time sharing or taking turns at school, again, let your child’s teacher know that you are working on this specific issue at home, and ask for advice. By the way, I would not give your child a consequence for this when they come home—let the teacher handle it in the classroom. What I would suggest is that you talk to your child in a calm moment about sharing and taking turns. You can say something like, “You know, part of being a good friend is learning how to share. Sometimes it’s a hard thing to do, but taking turns is a big part of playing with someone else and making new friends.” You might also tell them about a time when you had a difficult time taking turns as a child, and how you learned to deal with it. Kids love to hear stories about their parents when they were kids; I’ve found that telling them about your experiences can be very effective in helping them understand the situation and improve their behavior.

I also cannot stress this enough: when you see your child sharing or taking turns nicely, be sure to compliment them and reinforce why it's important: "I noticed how nicely you were sharing with Connor the other day. It shows that you're really trying hard to be a good friend. I'm really proud of you." That positive reinforcement makes all the difference in the world—especially with young kids.

### **"My Child has a Hard Time Making—and Keeping—Friends."**

Many parents tell me that their kids have difficulties making and keeping friends. Sadly, a child who is demanding or argumentative with other kids often finds himself feeling isolated as a result. And that's really the natural consequence for this type of behavior—soon, other children just won't want to play with him anymore.

Kids are aggressive or bossy for many reasons: some get anxious when in groups, while others have not learned proper boundaries or social skills at home. In either case, it's a good idea to step in and help your child change their behavior as soon as possible.

**What Parents Can Do:** Start by being honest about what social skills your child lacks, and then make a commitment to help them work through those issues. Many parents tell me that their child observes few boundaries with other kids at school: their child will jump into the middle of games and try to take over, knock down the other students' Lego buildings, or grab toys from classmates. While again, this type of behavior is normal for this age group, it's not something you want to go unchecked.

I believe this problem can be resolved in large part by creating better boundaries at home. What that means is, try not to give in if your child whines or pleads, and set firm rules for them. When your child takes over a family dinner conversation or their sibling's game, remind them that someone else was talking, or that now it's their brother's turn to do the puzzle. And follow through on the consequences you have laid out for them. You can say, "You know the consequence for ruining your sister's game when she has a friend over. You need to go to your room for a time-out and stay there for five minutes."

I know that parents can become exhausted when dealing with young kids who act out; let's face it, it's hard work! But I want to be clear here: it may seem like a small thing in the moment when you fail to be consistent, but consider this: each time you give in when your child acts out, you are setting the stage for future acting out throughout their development. And when you don't expect them to behave properly within their own relationships at home, the truth is that you are also hindering their ability to act appropriately with their friends at school.

### **Coaching Your Young Child toward Better Behavior**

If you have a young child who acts out at school, realize that he may need some extra coaching as he tries to change his behavior. I recommend that you start by explaining to him what type of behavior you expect him to have. In a calm moment, you can say, "I expect that when you are here at home or with friends at school you will practice sharing, you will not hit, and you will not be bossy."

Rewarding your child for good behavior is also key. I always suggest that parents use a chart at home when they are trying to help improve their child's behavior, because it is an excellent motivator. The chart might have sections at the top that say, "Plays Nicely with Little Sister"; "Shares and Takes Turns" or "Uses an Inside Voice." Sit down with your child and show the chart to him—you can even create it together. Be sure to tell him, "If you can do these things, you will get a sticker for your chart each day. When you reach 10 stickers, you'll get a special surprise." When your child is able to accomplish these goals, make sure you tell him what a great job he did. Point out specifics like, "I really liked watching you and Gracie take turns with the paints. It seems like you are working

hard!” Kids love it when you are aware that they are attempting to change their behavior, and they will try all the harder if they know you’re watching.

If your young child continues to act out with kids at school, let him experience the consequences the teacher doles out, but continue to coach him at home in ways to be less aggressive or bossy. You can also ask his teacher to maintain a “good school behavior chart” –you can even give your child extra points on his chart at home for good behavior there.

Finally, many parents tell me that they often feel their child has been labeled “difficult” by the school which can make the whole family feel like outcasts. If this is your experience, know that it’s never too late to try to improve the situation. Call a meeting with your child’s teacher and state what you are doing for him at home. Let the school know about any outside help your child may be receiving, such as counseling or tutoring. While you can’t control what a teacher thinks of your child, you can at least feel good knowing you are doing everything in your power to help the situation; in my experience that makes all the difference. As a parent, it’s not always easy to help our young children change their behavior, but I believe it’s one of the most important and worthwhile things we will ever do.

## **FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF NEGATIVE THINKING**

### **1. Focusing on the Negative—**

This happens when individuals focus entirely on a single negative aspect of an experience. Or, they devalue or dismiss positive experiences.

Intervention: Acknowledge their perspective. Evaluate if things have ever been better or more successful. Look for patterns in the situation. Ask the person how it would be different if the situation was changed. Stay upbeat and positive in your communication. Be careful that they don't infect you with pessimism.

### **2. All or Nothing Thinking—**

Things are looked at as either black or white. This person looks at extremes.

Intervention: Look at options and possibilities. Encourage the person to stay away from words like 'never' or 'nothing.' Use "what if" or "what else" questions. "What if this situation were different?" or "What else could we do in this situation?" Establish a relationship with them and model "gray thinking."

### **3. Overgeneralization and Labeling—**

A single action or event leads to a continuous pattern of thinking.

Intervention: Ask if the person has enough information. Ask if different information would change their perspective. Have them evaluate the way they were when they were younger and how they are now. Is the person open to people changing? Give personal examples of labeling or of how you changed.

### **4. Personalization and Blame—**

This occurs when a person unrealistically holds oneself, someone else, or something else responsible for an event.

Intervention: Avoid trying to rationalize with them. Attempt to understand their guilt or blame game approach. See if the person thinks "they might be wrong." It may help to go back through the situation and analyze it.

## **PESSIMISTIC VS. OPTIMISTIC THINKING IN CHILDREN**

Send to Instructor (question at end)

After receiving a good grade, the optimist says, "I am smart." The pessimist says, "It was an easy test." After receiving a poor grade, the optimist says, "I need to study harder." The pessimist says, "I'm stupid."

### **Pessimistic Thinking**

"I can't control what I do"

"I have doubts about my abilities"

"When I misbehave, people don't like me"

"I think other people judge me"

"I am not capable of doing better"

"All of my problems are their fault"

"Things will never get better"

"People are out to get me"

"It is my fault that things are going bad"

"If everyone would just leave me alone..."

### **Optimistic Thinking**

"I am in charge of my behavior"

"I am capable of succeeding"

"When I misbehave, it causes problems for people"

"Lots of people like me"

"If I put my mind to it, I can accomplish many things"

"I have control over my attitude about life situations"

"Things can and will get better"

"I need to do a better job of working with a variety of people"

"I am doing the best I can under the current situation"

"I am really fortunate to have people who care about me"

What if we change Children to Educator? Do you have an optimistic outlook on life?

"These kids will never change", "They are doing this on purpose", "I can't wait for the year to be over", "The other students don't act like this", "This is too much work and not enough reward", "Why am I the only one who puts time and energy into this situation?"

**Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Spend a few minutes thinking this over.**

**Send One page summary to Instructor**



### **How Do You View Life—half full or half empty?**

**(Answer key at bottom of this page)**

1. I almost always check my bill and count my change in a restaurant. T or F
2. I rarely open a conversation with strangers. T or F
3. At work, I usually feel timid when with my superiors (supervisors). T or F
4. I believe my previous hardships have made me a better person. T or F
5. I've almost never been accused of being aggressive or too assertive. T or F
6. I get the blues more often than most of my friends. T or F
7. I don't gamble at all, or only for penny-ante type stakes. T or F
8. I've never arrived late for a scheduled airplane flight. T or F
9. I'd rather keep my present job than take a risky one that pays 25% more. T or F
10. I dwell on unpleasant experiences for a long time. T or F
11. I do more listening than talking when with friends. T or F
12. I worry more about little things than most of my friends. T or F

**SCORING:** To tally your score, give yourself one (1) point for each “T” response.

**A score of 0-4 points:** You're a true optimist. You expect the best from others and from life, and often, you receive. Every cloud does have a silver lining.

**A score of 5-9 points:** You strike an average balance between pessimism and optimism. Your outlook on life probably changes daily depending on various influences, like your mood or the weather.

**A score of 10-12 points:** You are thoroughly entrenched in pessimism. You probably go through life expecting more than your fair share of disappointment.

## **THE BLAME GAME**

Type 1: These people are strictly focused on their own anxiety. They are attempting to feel better, aren't sure what to do, and are barely aware of you and your reactions. You can sense their agitation and tentativeness.

Type 2: These people are also attempting to reduce their anxiety, but are very aware of you. They diminish their fear and frustrations by projecting on you. Their mood rises as they push you down. They want to overpower you.

### **COPING STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Stay as calm as you can.** These people generate a lot of tension. Remain centered and balanced in your personal convictions and understanding of situations. *Focus on your breathing, body language, and words. It is important to model effective responses and interactions. They will take their cues from you and often react to your actions.*
- 2. Speak slowly and clearly.** The normal tendency is to gear up in our speech patterns as we become upset or defensive. *Avoid falling into the trap of "verbal sparring" with this person. Watch out as your adrenaline and anxiety will increase as the interaction begins to go sideways.*
- 3. Be patient.** Though difficult to do when being attacked, the blamer needs to be heard. But, interestingly, they often have little to say. *Listen to what they say, then ask questions, and then more questions. Clarification is the key in this instance. Make sure you really understand what the person is saying and that you aren't making assumptions as to their intent.*
- 4. Pay attention to your internal reactions.** Watch your self-talk and internal thinking process. *This is not your issue, it is their issue. However, if you become defensive and upset, it becomes your issue. Help them work through the situation without you becoming part of the problem.*
- 5. Initially, let them control the agenda.** But, you control the pacing and tempo. *Don't let it turn into a runaway conversation. Slow it down. There is no rush. Slowing it down allows you a chance to think and make positive choices.*

**6. Treat them with kindness and understanding.** This person has a sense of paranoia and is waiting for you to attack. *Don't play their game by attacking, blaming, and defending. Be compassionate and sensitive to their needs. Your personal approach and demeanor may assist them in de-escalating and making an effective decision.*

**7. It is okay to ask for clarification and examples.** You may ask for something, place a demand upon them. *Put the responsibility back on them. They should talk and explain more than you. You will not convince them of something through your skills as an orator. They will need to gain their own insights...just make sure you are not in the way by becoming an adversary.*

## **COMMON FUNCTIONS OF BEHAVIOR**

A behavior typically serves some kind of purpose or function for the person. The more it is repeated, the greater the function it serves. When the word “function” is used, it means “the why” of the behavior. Behavior can serve more than one function. For example, a child may get angry to avoid having to clean up his room and then get angry to get the attention of the adults.

While we may have an idea as to the function of the behavior, we don’t always react in the most effective manner. The most common approaches to behavior is lecture (which gives attention), time-out (which feeds avoidance and escape), and strong emotions (which increases the power and control aspect).

While there are many reasons that children act out or utilize mal-adaptive behaviors, the list below shares the most common reasons. It is not exhaustive and there is some overlap in the purposes. However, you will see some distinct differences in each category and recognize these as you think about various individuals in life.

### ***1. Social Attention- to gain the attention of others***

This type of behavior is common for children who have either received minimal attention from others or who have been given immediate attention and feel they are the center of the world. For example, the child may act out to get the adults to focus on him instead of carrying out a conversation with other adults.

### ***2. Tangibles or Activities- to obtain items or access to things***

Some behaviors occur so the person can obtain a tangible item or gain access to specific events, activities, or situations. For example, a child may yell until they get a certain item or get to go to an event.

### ***3. Escape or Avoidance- to get away from something or someone***

The behavior is used so the child no longer has to be connected to the person or event. For example, a student acts out so they can avoid doing school work or to not have to be in class.

#### ***4. Revenge- to hurt someone who has hurt you***

The behavior is used to get back at a person for creating pain and harm. For example, one adolescent pushes another because they were called a name.

#### ***5. Power and Control- to be in charge and feel a sense of being in charge***

When the child takes over, there is a feeling of being important and being independent. For example, one child tells another child to give him some of his dessert. While we term this “bullying”, it does not explain the function of the behavior.

#### ***6. Lack of Understanding- to express frustration or anxiety***

When a person does not understand, he/she may become frustrated and act out as a sign of internal anxiety. For example, since the student doesn't understand the math assignment, he/she rips up the paper and yells at the teacher.

**Think of various children or adults that may fit into each area. Write their initials or names under each area that pertains to them. This will be used for the next assignment.**

## **THE FUNCTION OF BEHAVIOR---INTERVENTION IDEAS**

Using the people that were written down on the previous worksheet, evaluate the following interventions and whether they might be useful in working with your chosen person(s).

### ***Social Attention***

Avoid lectures, reprimands, or repeating long explanations. Remember that many of the individuals that are “attention addicted” are not stellar students, have a low self-image, and have not received healthy attention in their early formative years. Responding to them as a “nagging parent” or “over-emotional or emotionally distant adult” will only create more anxiety and a greater need for social support.

- Beat them to the punch- since you know they desire attention from others, connect with them first. Check in with them before class starts, find them in the hallway or at lunch, make a point to create a security within them.
- Social connections (hit and run; touch and go; driveby)- don’t linger with your connections. They may be short and sweet. It may be a smile, a thumbs up, pat on the back, or quick positive statement. Say things and then walk by their desk. Connect with them and move quickly to another student, then come back and check in with them.
- Give responsibility- find a place the student to feel a part of the class. Allow them to clean up the counter, alphabetize books, assist in organizing papers.
- Use of subtle recognition- it doesn’t have to be recognition in front of the class or blatant statements for others to hear. It can be a quick “nice job”, “way to go”, or “glad you are here” type of comments.

### ***Tangibles or Activities***

Avoid using threats or “drawing a line in the sand.” It will only encourage them to find a way over, around, or through the issue. Some of these children have such strong obsessive needs or interests that they will do almost anything to accomplish their goal.

- Attempt to understand what they truly want- this may be done by simply asking them this question “what is it you want right now?” This will help you to find a way to meet their need.
- Make a game plan with the student to assist them in reaching their goal- be careful to not be too inflexible during this time. We are hoping to shape the behavior and may need to have some short term concessions in order to obtain long term gains.

- Help the person receive some type of preferred reinforcement in appropriate ways- develop a reinforcement plan for them so they can accomplish short term rewards.

### ***Escape or Avoidance***

Avoid too much pressure. Anxiety will increase and they will have a ‘fight or flight’ reaction (usually flight). Many of these individuals are simply looking for a way out as academics or social situations are too overwhelming for them.

- Use positive communication and encouragement- avoid focusing on the task or activity that is being avoided. Instead find a way to relate to them emotionally.
- Clearly explain expectations with a supportive approach- it is good to set guidelines for the student, but be sure it isn’t a “lose-lose” proposition for them. “Get your work done or you lose recess” will not co-opt them toward success. You may need a softer approach such as “How many problems do you think is fair for you to complete before you go out to recess?”
- Share strategies for them if they get overwhelmed- allow them to take a break and decompress. Slow down the intensity so the student isn’t feeling pressure and overwhelmed.
- Give options that allows some type of escape or avoidance in an appropriate manner-is it okay for them to escape or avoid? Why not? We do it all the time in life. Teach the child appropriate ways to escape or take a time out. This might be sitting quietly, going for a walk, reading a book, etc. One student I am currently working with chooses to go across the hall to a small room for 5 minutes when feeling overwhelmed. This “escape/avoidance” approach is much better than him running off, throwing objects, or yelling which were his previously chosen methods.

### ***Revenge***

Avoid lectures and logical approaches. Minimize the focus on “being sorry” or “apologizing.” This is an emotional issue...one that we all have been in before.

- Help re-build the relationships. The involved parties are upset at one another and they need to re-work their emotional connections. Avoid trying to force them to apologize or say they are sorry since they probably are upset and truly don’t mean it.
- Use a team approach or activities. Involve them in a supervised task or activity that will allow them to work together, but not be together. For example, they could help sort and alphabetize books, hand out papers, organize the games, to name a few. They can do this separately, but still be considered working together. When done, let them know how much help they were, offer some reinforcement and see if they would be willing to do it again sometime. This gives them a sense of mutual success.

- Find a way to focus children on cooperative activities. Similar to the above ideas, you can engage the students in a cooperative play time or work time. This might include them being on the same team in basketball or soccer. It could be them working together on a project (with several others) in the classroom. Similar to the above ideas, these should be supervised.

### ***Power and Control***

Avoid arguing and entering into a power struggle. While often seen as manipulative, oppositional-defiant, stubborn, or rebellious, these individuals may be using these behaviors as a defense mechanism for low self-esteem, hurt, and rejection.

- Choices and options are a key component to working with these students. Find a way to empower them by giving them personal responsibility in the decision making. However, there are times that the choices should be specific (do you want to do your math or your reading?) as opposed to general (do you want to do your work now?)
- Emphasize their independence and ability to “make their own decisions”. Often times, students don’t recognize the many opportunities given to them to make their own decisions. It is important to point this out to students throughout the day. “Please notice that you are being given the choice of where you sit during this class.”
- Be clear on boundaries and consequences. It may be helpful to make a list of positive consequences and negative consequences. These can be posted on the wall of the classroom to assist in visual reminders.

### ***Lack of Understanding***

Avoid making complicated statements or demands. These children have challenges understanding social rules, social skills, and daily interaction skills. They mis-read their environment and the motives of others.

- Be clear in explanations, checking for comprehension. Once a direction or guidance is given, you may want to have the child repeat it back to you or to summarize it.
- Use of examples via role play, books, life stories. It is often easier to see skills and deficits in others rather than yourself. By using books, stories, videos, etc., the child can visually see what others are doing correctly or incorrectly. This makes learning much easier.
- Have them practice various skills prior to utilizing them. Pre-teaching the skill is critical if we expect the child to successfully demonstrate it. Share the skill with the child (Tell); model it for them (Show); and then have them practice it with



you (Practice). This “tell-show-practice” model will assist children in their learning.

- Social modeling from others may be of assistance. The use of other students allows the child to learn from peers and to demonstrate successful learning.

**Choose one specific person and write a one page intervention plan for this individual. This does not need to be sent to the instructor, but please implement the plan with the person.**

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT STAGES

### Concerns and Supportive Ideas for Parents and Teachers

**Four Years Old-** enjoys playmates; imaginary friends; curious about body parts; forms of modesty occur; use of security objects (blankets, toy). 95% are bowel trained; 90% are dry in daytime; 75% dry at night. Speech is usually understandable; has skills to dress/undress; expresses personal preferences; engages in conversational give and take.

**Ideas:** introduce concept of friends, have planned activities, teach strategies of sharing, involve them in household activities (cooking, cleaning), limit television and video time to encourage parallel play.

**Five Years Old-** full-time school may begin for this child. They have many self-care skills (dressing, feeding, washing); able to follow directions; pay attention for short periods of time; able to play in small groups; tolerates frustration and failure; accepts adult supervision; tells stories (some real/some imaginary); recognizes words, colors, shapes.

**Ideas:** listen to the child, read regularly to the child and have them recognize words, use of activities and crafts are helpful, community trips to the park, zoo, and library, praise them for their imagination, model diversity, respect, and tolerance.

**Six to Seven Years Old-** need for adult/parent approval; shows increase in physical dexterity and activity; may act out by lying, stealing, or being aggressive; eager to learn; very active; desire for more responsibility; looks for recognition of accomplishments; develops attachments to teachers; shows academic growth and curiosity.

**Ideas:** be encouraging and supportive, establish clear guidelines and rules, spend time in teaching activities/rules, build internal self-esteem by asking questions, encourage reading and writing, introduce new ideas and topics, discuss current events and life issues.

**Eight to Ten Years Old-** active; friendly; accepts moderate responsibility; wants to be group member; want best friend; very social; beginning to align with peers; wants to be included; enjoys doing things with others; learning independent skills; able to work alone; can read for pleasure; sense of humor; concerned about right and wrong.

**Ideas:** enhance the learning by allowing creativity, offer opportunities to work in groups, allow child to develop guidelines/rules, teach money skills, discuss decisions and rationale, encourage independence, may be sensitive and emotional.

**Eleven to Thirteen Years Old-** dramatic changes physically and emotionally; bounces between childhood and adolescents; peers more important than family; changes in

likes/dislikes (clothing, foods, friends); increase in social life; personal rights become important; pushes the rules/boundaries, energetic, enjoys sense of success, have “the talk.”

**Ideas:** lock them up for 10 years (just kidding, sort of). Know about development, help them understand, talk to them, show ongoing praise/approval, encourage reasonable independence/friendships/ outside interests, minimize critiques/nagging/negative comments.

**Fourteen to Sixteen Years Old-** The five I’s—impulsive, intense, idealistic, immediate, indestructible; question authority; friends, clothing, music rule; the six M’s—moody, messy, monosyllabic, mouthy, money-oriented, ME-centered; shows ethics and morals; pushes limits.

**Ideas:** praise and encourage, avoid too many questions, set up time to communicate, find interest in their world, respect reasonable privacy, know about teen years, listen and listen some more, know their friends, have “the talk” again.

**Seventeen to Eighteen Years Old-** separation and strong independence; general peer group replaced by select friends; realistic educational and vocational goals occur; self-confident; feels responsible for areas of life; willing to share thoughtful opinion; some experimental aspects to life may occur (drugs, sex, society rules); desires trust and support.

**Ideas:** avoid being over-protective, allow for appropriate independence, establish appropriate home/school rules, ask opinions, show genuine support and interest, spend time together, discuss future (beyond just next year), allow for financial independence (checkbook, earning money, etc.).

**Answers are located at the bottom of this page. Please cover them up until you answer each question.**

### **MY RESPONSE TO CONFRONTATION**

This quiz measures susceptibility to confrontations. It is based on research done at Kent State University in Ohio. Respond "True" or "False" to the items below.

1. Arguing calmly over controversial issues sharpens one's logic.      True              False
2. When I argue I am usually concerned about whether the other person will think I'm too dogmatic.  
   True              False
3. I feel a sense of energy and enthusiasm when I confront someone.      True              False
4. It upsets me to argue.              True              False
5. I enjoy using a good argument to put strongly opinionated people in their place.  
   True              False
6. I generally lose more quarrels than I win.      True              False
7. I find people who always agree with others to be somewhat dull.      True              False
8. I get nervous around argumentative people.      True              False
9. I don't have much respect for a person who won't fight for what he/she believes in.  
   True              False
10. When others are in a ruckus, I often play the role of pacifier.      True      False
11. I feel compelled to speak up for a point that I feel is valid.      True      False
12. I prefer being with people who don't disagree with me.      True              False

**SCORING:** To tally your score, give yourself 1 point for each response that matches yours. The higher your score, the more you tend to present yourself (on tests at least) as willing to confront.

1.True 2.False 3.True 4.False 5.True 6.False 7.True 8.False 9.True 10.False 11.True 12.False

**A score of 0-4:** You are a peace-maker who likes harmony. Other people's strong emotions often upset you. You may suppress your true feeling too much.

**A score of 5-7:** You are about average in your susceptibility to arguments. You don't mind conflicts once in a while, even when they reach the point of anger, but for the most part you know when to back off.

**A score of 8-12:** You enjoy a good argument and feel comfortable challenging others. A major barrier is dealing with someone similar to yourself as neither will back off. Learning to listen and let go may help avoid meaningless scuffles and marred relationships.

## **FIGHTING PROCRASTINATION** (Now or Later)

*Procrastination is the thief of time—Edward Young*

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PROCRASTINATION:

- 1) Low self-confidence- inadequate and feeling incapable
- 2) I'm too busy- a feeling of being overwhelmed
- 3) Stubbornness- "I'll do it when I want to (or when I am ready)
- 4) Manipulation- "they can't start without me." Delaying on purpose
- 5) Coping with pressure- easier to make excuses and delay day to day tasks

### FOUR SURFACE REASONS FOR PROCRASTINATION:

- 1) Difficult- the task seems too hard
- 2) Time Consuming- the task will take up large blocks of time
- 3) Lack of knowledge or skills- no one wants to make a mistake
- 4) Fears- everyone will see you don't know what you are doing

### FOUR DEEPER REASONS FOR PROCRASTINATION:

- 1) Perfectionism- they place high standards on the work and can't meet the expectations. This creates frustration and dis-satisfaction. "If I can't do it right, I won't do it at all."

#### ***Personal Interventions:***

- a) Understand about success and failure.
- b) Speak re-assurance to oneself.
- c) Look at the success within the work.

- 2) Anger/Hostility- if we are upset with others, we withhold our best work.

#### ***Personal Interventions:***

- a) Evaluate whether "not working" is helping or hindering you.
- b) How important is your success and how important is hurting the other person?

- 3) Low Frustration Tolerance- easily overwhelmed with life circumstances. This person may feel like a victim much of the time.

#### ***Personal Interventions:***

- a) Get assistance from others to evaluate your expectations.
- b) Increase organizational skills to achieve a pattern of completion.
- c) Make a list of wants and needs...evaluate your desires in life.

- 4) Self-Doubt- this happens when we minimize our own skills and abilities. We dis-credit success with "luck" and become uncomfortable with success.

#### ***Personal Interventions:***

- a) Practice receiving compliments.
- b) Analyze why you are uncomfortable with success.
- c) Speak positive words to yourself.

## **RATIONALIZATIONS**

1. "I'm more productive when I work under pressure."
2. "I really don't want to get this task done."
3. "It is okay if it isn't done. The world will keep going."
4. "It is easier to do this job when I am in the mood."
5. "I have waited until the last minute before and I got everything done."
6. "I don't know how and need to wait for someone to help me."

Others \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRACTICE FOR SUCCESS**

Think of one area you are procrastinating in and write it on the line below. Write out reasons for the delay and then ideas against the delays.

"I'm delaying on \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

Reasons for Delay

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Arguments against Delay

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

## **TOOLS TO REDUCE PROCRASTINATION**

- Make the task look small and easy in your mind
- Do only a small part of the task at a time
- Work on something for a short amount of time (like 5 minutes)
- Advertise your plan to complete something
- Modify your environment for success
- Plan for tomorrow
- Expect backsliding and mistakes

## **THE USE OF ONE-LINERS ☺**

These are one-line approaches one may use when a student states a defensive or argumentative phrase. It will reduce power struggles and give you time to evaluate the function of behavior.

**I HATE THIS!** (student statement)

--What do you mean by “this?” (adult statement)

--How does “hate” feel for you?

--What can we do to make it better for you?”

**I DON'T WANT TO.**

--I know you don't, but let's see how we can make this work.

--I feel like that sometimes too. But, I need you to...

**I CAN'T DO IT!**

--Let's focus on what you can do.

--What can I do to help?

--Can you think of anyone who might be able to help you do it?

**I DON'T KNOW.**

--Take a guess.

--What do you know?

**WHY?**

--Good question. Let me explain...

--Why what? (after they answer, go to the above response)

--I am not going there. (Repeat the request)

## **THIS IS STUPID!**

--I believe you think this is stupid.

--What do you mean by “stupid?”

## **IT’S NOT FAIR.**

--What do you mean by “fair?”

--Let me tell you why it’s fair...

--I agree. It’s not fair that you...

## **YOU ALWAYS BLAME ME (ALWAYS PICK ON ME).**

--How should I handle the situation when you...?

--Should I blame (pick on) someone else?

--You keep track of how often I blame you unfairly and I will keep track of how often you...?  
Then we can compare notes.

## **WHO CARES?**

-- Are you asking me for an answer?

-- Actually, I know a number of people who do. Shall I name them?

-- Are you saying you do or don’t care?

## **WHATEVER**

-- (Silence) Whatever, what?

-- I’m glad it doesn’t matter to you (then repeat your statement “that we need to finish math before recess)

-- Thanks for being so cooperative and agreeing. It makes this easier.



## **STRATEGIES FOR PROBLEM PERSONALITIES**

### **1. KEEP YOUR COOL**

Benefit: Maintain self-control. Avoid escalation of problem

HOW: Slow down. Relax. Don't be in such a rush to deal with the situation. Evaluate the situation.

### **2. SHIFT FROM BEING REACTIVE TO PROACTIVE**

Benefit: Minimize mis-interpretation. Focus on problem solving.

HOW: Avoid personalizing the situation. Find a place of empathy.

### **3. PICK YOUR BATTLES**

Benefit: Save time, energy and grief. Avoid unnecessary problems.

HOW: Is the issue worth the struggles that will ensue? Will your intervention make a difference? By personal evaluation, one will decide whether it is worth the power approach.

### **4. PUT THE SPOTLIGHT ON THEM**

Benefit: Equalizes the power in communication. Puts responsibility back on them.

HOW: The other person will blame you. Take appropriate responsibility, but not more than is necessary. Use probing, constructive, and positive statements.

### **5. USE APPROPRIATE HUMOR**

Benefit: Disarms unreasonable and difficult behavior.

HOW: Minimize sarcasm. Keep things light and positive. Smile and be warm in your interactions.

### **6. CHANGE FROM FOLLOWING TO LEADING**

Benefit: Leverage direction and flow of communication

HOW: Ask direct questions, use summarizing, paraphrasing, and other communication skills.

The following two forms may be used to gain further insight into student behavior. The first one can be used in an “interview” format with a student or changed so the student can fill it out him/herself. The second form may be filled out by an educator or parent.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment**  
**Student-Assisted Interview Form**

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent (student): \_\_\_\_\_

1. Tell me about things that you like/ dislike at school.

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2. Tell me about things that seem to be going well or not so well at school.

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3. Tell me about the subject or class you like most or least. Why?

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4. Tell me about when you seem to have the most or least problems (where you are; what time of day; who else is around you).

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5. Tell me what happens when you [target behavior]. What does the teacher say or do? What do the other students say or do?

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6. Do you remember what were you thinking right before you [target behavior]?

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**Functional Behavioral Assessment**  
**Teacher Interview Form**

Interviewer(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Student(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent(s) \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe the behavior of concern

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2. a. How often does the behavior occur?

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b. How long does it last?

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c. How intense is the behavior?

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3. What is happening when the behavior occurs?

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4. When/where is the behavior most/least likely to occur?

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5. With whom is the behavior most/least likely to occur?

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6. What conditions are most likely to precipitate ("set off") the behavior?

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7. How can you tell the behavior is about to start?

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8. What usually happens after the behavior? Describe what happens according to adult(s), peers, and student responses.

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9. What is the likely function (intent) of the behavior; that is, why do you think the student behaves this way? What does the student get or avoid?

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10. What behavior(s) might serve the same function (see question 9) for the student that is appropriate within the social/environmental context?

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11. What other information might contribute to creating an effective behavioral intervention plan (e.g., under what conditions does the behavior not occur?)

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12. Who should be involved in the planning and implementation of the behavioral intervention plan?

**Just for you:** Think of one student and go through this form (teacher interview form). See if this helps to develop approaches and strategies.

## **Read this article and write a 2 page summary. Send to Instructor**

### **The Function of Behavior by Aware Parenting**

Tantrums, whining, not listening, bedtime battles, power struggles, refusing to do work. It's enough to drive parents or educators crazy. So why do kids really misbehave? To answer that question, we must first understand the root cause of those annoying, frustrating, maddening behaviors.

Children (and adults, for that matter) have a need for belonging and significance. It's just the way we're wired. Belonging refers to the emotional connection and positive attention we need with one another. Significance refers to one's sense of autonomy, capability, and need to make contributions in meaningful ways. Think of "significance" as a form of possessing personal power. Without both of these innate needs being met, children will misbehave.

#### **'I need more of your time and attention'**

When a child doesn't feel a strong sense of belonging, she will act out in ways that she (mistakenly) believes will give her the emotional connection and positive attention she craves. For example, a toddler who isn't getting enough positive attention from mom and dad will act out with attention-seeking behaviors like whining, clinging or acting helpless. In the child's mind, she thinks, "if I cling or whine, that's a great way to get their attention." The toddler really wants positive attention and emotional connection from mom and dad, but will use negative attention-seeking behaviors to achieve her goal. We see this same behavior in a classroom where a child will whine and complain about others so as to gain more time with the teacher.

#### **'I need some power of my own'**

A young child may feel stripped of his significance because mom and/or dad do things for the child that he is capable of doing for himself. How can a child ever feel capable if mom/dad do everything for him? Or, perhaps they call all the shots and make all the decisions — robbing him of having some control over his life. These parent behaviors (which are natural and extremely common) strip the child of his sense of significance or personal power. This is common in a school where students are told what to do, when to do it, and how to do it.

If his hard-wired need to feel capable, important and to have some say over his own life isn't met, he'll fight back with power-seeking behaviors like tantrums, talking back, not listening, and other power struggles occasionally leading to defiance in tweens and teens. The child really wants positive power, but the negative power-seeking behaviors are the toddlers' or teenagers' way of saying, "you aren't the boss of me! I need some power of my own!"

A child's misbehavior is a message that's telling us he needs to feel a greater sense of belonging and/or significance. It allows us to be proactive and implement strategies that will positively and proactively fill that need. However, without knowledge of WHY children misbehave and WHAT strategies to use to address and correct the misbehaviors, adults naturally rely on their instincts and some of the "popular" techniques they've read or heard about. This can lead to an escalation of the misbehaviors and seldom corrects them permanently.

#### **How do adults make misbehaviors worse?**

Adults unknowingly encourage and escalate misbehavior in two ways — their personality and their choice of discipline strategies.

An adult's personality style can certainly escalate misbehaviors. For example, a parent with a "controlling" personality typically communicates with children by doing a lot of ordering, correcting and directing — "get your shoes on, brush your teeth, turn off the TV now — it's time to eat." No one likes to be told what to do, when or how to do it — including children! The more we order, correct and direct, the more likely our kids will "dig in their heels" and engage us in power struggles. It's their way of saying, "you're not the boss of me."

An educator with a "pleasing" personality style may invite helplessness from children because as soon as the child says "NO" to the request, the pleasing educator avoids conflict and does the task for the child or allows them to avoid it.

The good news is that once adults understand their personality style and how it impacts behavior, they can choose more effective ways to communicate and to correct behavior.

### **Why 'time out' is a waste of time...**

Time Out is one of the most widely used strategies for disciplining children. It is hailed by parents, educators, pediatricians and many parenting experts as the go-to strategy for correcting behavior. "Time Out" is defined as sending a child to his room or to a designated Time Out spot for a period of time so the child can "think about his behavior" or "learn a lesson for next time." Whether a school calls it a "quiet room", "calm down room", or "thinking room", it doesn't change the fact that these goals are not accomplished with Time Out.

The nanny shows frequently use Time Out as the go-to discipline strategy for correcting behavior and week after week, you can watch the same scenario unfold ... parent or nanny takes the child to the "naughty chair" or time out spot — the child gets right up — parent/nanny escorts child back to the naughty chair — child gets right up. And the power struggle continues. The parent is determined to keep the child in Time Out. The child is determined to stay out of time out! It becomes the "parent's job" to monitor the child to be sure he remains in Time Out.

Beyond the age of three (or younger), children understand that they are "independent beings" and using "Time Out" only intensifies the power struggle. When we attempt to "control a child" by forcing him to stay in Time Out, he will instinctively fight back by refusing to stay in Time Out or throwing a tantrum to prove that "you're not the boss of me!"

Children who are less headstrong may do as they are told and remain in "Time Out" for the prescribed time, but it begs the question ... what are they learning from this punishment? Are they sitting in "Time Out" thinking about their misbehavior and about how they'll make a better choice next time? Probably not! Most likely they are brooding over how unfair the adults are for sending them to "Time Out"! Perhaps they are planning their revenge on the sibling, classmate, or peer that got them in trouble!

Most often, Time Out becomes a battle of wills between the adult and child. Most importantly, it doesn't teach the child to make a better choice in the future which is what we are ultimately after in the first place

### **What can we do instead?**

There are many positive strategies that we teach to correct behavior that are more effective than Time Out.

One of the strategies recommended is the use of EFFECTIVE consequences. An effective consequence is one in which the child learns to make a better choice for the future AND the adult isn't the bad guy!

### **The 5 R's**

For consequences to do their job — to teach our kids and keep you from being the bad guy, they should include the 5 R's:

R: Respectful — Our goal is not to make the child suffer — but to have him learn to make a better choice in the future. When adults inflict blame, shame or pain as part of a “punishment”, the child is focused on “self-protection,” not learning for the future. An effective consequence is respectful to the child.

R: Related to the Misbehavior — For children to learn for the future, the consequence has to “make sense” to the child and should be related to the misbehavior. For example, the consequence for throwing puzzle pieces around the room is to lose the privilege of playing with the puzzle for the day. The consequence for not turning off the video game when asked is to lose video/gaming privileges for the day/week.

R: Reasonable in duration based on the child's age. Typically, the shorter the better. The goal is to get the child to recognize there was an issue, not to have them gain an epiphany or revelation at that moment.

R: Revealed in Advance: The consequence must clear to the child. In advance, consequences should be discussed with the child...both the positive and negative consequences that occur from our behavior. When you remind them that behavior brings about a consequence, they already have many ideas in mind as to what might occur as a reaction to their behavior.

R: Repeated Back to You: To ensure that the child is perfectly clear on what's expected and the consequence for not following your rule, ask him to repeat it back to you. For example, “Just so we're on the same page, can you repeat back to me our rule for turning off the video game when asked and the consequence if you choose not to do that?” Once the child repeats it back to you — you have a verbal agreement! (For young children — use very simple language, but as long as they are verbal — they can repeat back to you.)

### **Put the monkey where it belongs!**

Now the monkey is on the child's back — not yours. He knows the rule; he knows the consequence for not following the rule and it's up to him. He can choose the appropriate behavior or he can choose the consequence.

If you follow the process of the 5 R's, your child will most likely make the appropriate choice. If not, that's fine too — it will be a learning experience for him. No need to rant and rave and offer a lot of “I told you so's” — that only escalates a power struggle and boom ... you're the bad guy again!

And, don't give in! Instead, very calmly say, “I see you choose to lose your video/gaming privileges for the day. You'll have a chance to try again tomorrow.” “I see you choose to not go out to recess. Once you are able to talk this over with me, you can regain this time.”

Experiencing consequences (if they include the 5 R's) is a wonderful way for kids to learn to make better choices in the future, and everyone can feel good about the process.

## **WHY CHILDREN ACT OUT** **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

You may choose any book on the bibliography or a book of your own to read.

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**Wolfgang, Charles.** *Solving Discipline and Classroom Management Problems*. Wiley Press, 2008. A general guide for specific ideas in presenting rules and guidelines to students (grades P – 12). [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com) 877 762 2974.

**The following two books are written by your instructor and contain a faith based perspective and biblical references.** These are available on line or through bookstores.

*What To Do When Words Get Ugly*. Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2016 (edited/revised edition). Examines the topic of gossip and how it impacts people. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665

*When to Speak Up and When to Shut Up*. Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2006. Communication book discussing conflict and encouragement. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665 **(over 300,000 copies sold).**

Both books are available in CD format as audio books.