

Responding to Your Kids' Challenging Behaviors at Home



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Our children's misbehaviors can be addressed through preventive strategies, modifying the environment, and by teaching them alternative behaviors. When trying to resolve a child's challenging behavior, parents can try the following approach:

Identify the problem and agree on what behavior is going to be addressed.

Brainstorm solutions to understand what function the behavior is serving.

Make a plan involving an acceptable solution that allows the child to achieve the function being served by the challenging behavior. That is, if the function is also acceptable.

Implement the plan consistently and across settings.

Evaluate the outcome to determine next steps.

Develop alternative solutions for various family

members or situations.

During the brainstorming session, you can:

Describe what the behavior looks like or sounds like (i.e. frequency, duration, intensity).

Determine when does the behavior occur and what happens right before the behavior. (What sets off the behavior?)

What happens right after the behavior? (What is the child achieving from the behavior?)

Is there a function for the behavior or is the child trying to communicate something, avoid something, get attention, or express anger and frustration?

Work toward developing acceptable alternatives that achieve the function.

Remember, any challenging behavior that persists over time is “working” and rewarding to your child. Relish the serenity you have achieved with quality family play!

Ruth

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