

WEST VIRGINIA

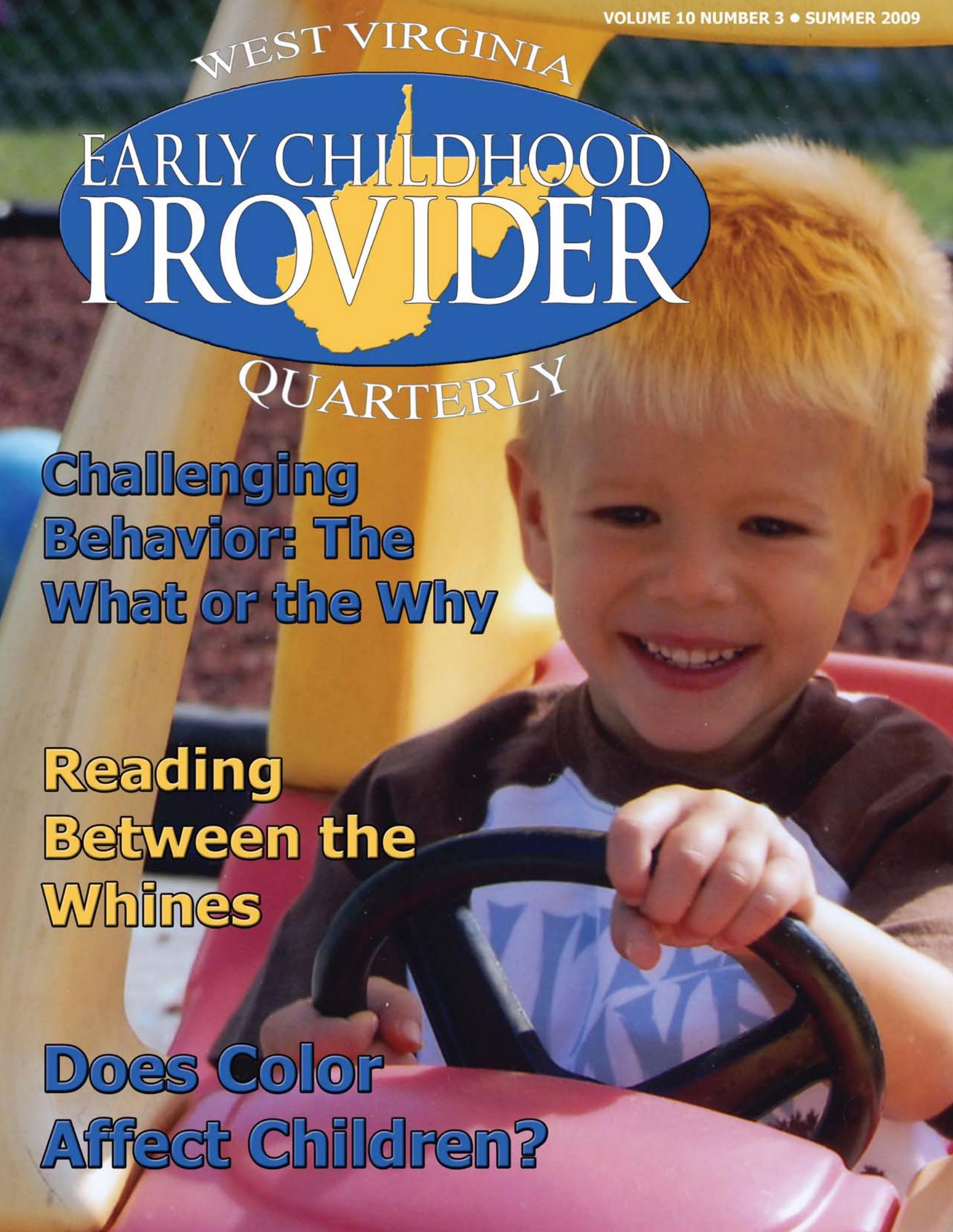
# EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDER

QUARTERLY

**Challenging  
Behavior: The  
What or the Why**

**Reading  
Between the  
Whines**

**Does Color  
Affect Children?**



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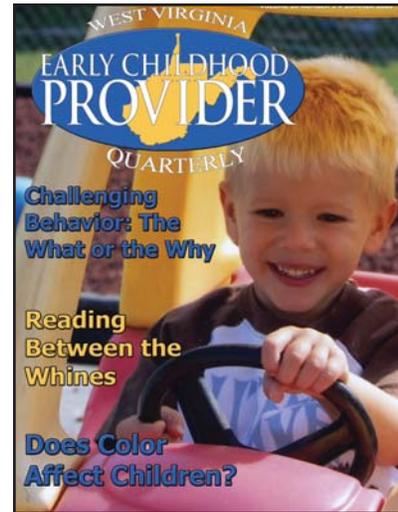
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# Celebrating Success: Implementing Assistive Technology in the Classroom

Submitted by Jessi Wright, Jamie Hayhurst-Marshall, and Hannah Godbey, WVATS

During the 2007-2008 school year, the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) began a new initiative for the school year promoting access to and acquisition of assistive technology for students with disabilities in public schools.

The program collaborated with and provided public school teachers and personnel the opportunity to apply for mini-grants of up to \$750 to fund new projects to improve outcomes for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans.

Projects were expected to deliver outcomes by implementing assistive technology in one of the following areas: developing innovative or creative uses of assistive technology for supporting inclusive educational environments; inventing/creating or modifying assistive technology to improve educational outcomes for students; improving social outcomes for students, including recreation, art or other extracurricular activities; and implementing strategies to support assistive technology following the students through transitions during school and from school to adult life. Recipients were expected to collaborate with WVATS project staff to collect data about the project and to submit a final written report.

Applications were reviewed by WVATS staff and advisory council. Selection was based on a required detailed description of the purpose

of the project (goals/objectives), required materials, implementation activities, projected outcomes and an evaluation process/procedure(s).

Six projects were selected for funding. Educators began their projects October 1, 2007, and completed data collection on May 15, 2008. The following descriptions and final outcomes are for four representative projects as submitted by project leaders.

**“Creating a Sensory Integration Room for Students of All Abilities”** was awarded \$750 to increase the personal awareness and social participation of students experiencing difficulties with sensory perceptions through creation of a sensory integration room. School staff identified students who might benefit from these services and purchased appropriate equipment. Staff developed individualized “Sensory Integration Plans” for each student to address individual sensory needs and identified the most appropriate time(s) during the day for use of the room. Through providing appropriate sensory input to replace self-stimulatory (repetitive body movements or repetitive movement of objects) and other inappropriate classroom behaviors associated with sensory deficit, the project leader anticipated the Sensory Integrated Room would allow students to focus more effectively on learning and play in the classroom. Staff used the awarded funds to purchase:

- wall element mountains – tool used to encourage motor planning, eye-foot or eye-hand coordination and visual processing
- a rain stick – clear, plastic tube containing plastic beads, which can be used as a reinforcement to perform gross and fine motor tasks; the sound from the product is relaxing to some individuals
- a cuddle swing – therapeutic swing used to increase calming and organizing input by providing deep touch pressure and vestibular stimulation
- cloud nine – soft, foam chunk filled product that can be used to increase safety, work on balance and coordination, or encourage motor planning
- a tube swing kit – includes a tube swing with a heavy duty tube and a tube swing harness; the device is designed for flexion and contraction exercises as well as providing proprioceptive and vestibular stimulation
- a resistance tunnel - used to develop body awareness and motor planning via varying degrees of resistance and deep-touch input

Outcomes: Eighteen students from grades 2-8 participated in the project with five teachers. An occupational

therapist assisted in assessing the needs of participants and developing their Sensory Integration Plans. Over a period of six months, each student used the Sensory Integration Room for approximately 30 minutes a day. After students completed the assigned sensory activities, staff observed and documented the students' behavior. These students had exhibited transition difficulties, sensory input avoidances, poor motor planning and coordination, limited attendance skills, and self-stimulatory behaviors. Following use of the "sensory plans," the project leader reported data indicating significant improvements in the students' classroom participation.

A specific example was a child diagnosed with autism, who before implementing the "sensory plan" was on a shortened school week schedule due to violent behaviors. Baseline data reported that the child had 68 aggressive behaviors in a one day period; within four months of the implementation of this project, the aggressions had decreased to approximately three per day. The project leader plans to continue to expand this sensory area by adding more equipment and materials. She also plans to implement an additional room in another school in a different part of the county.

**"Kid Connections"** proposed engaging "students in skill based cooperative and differentiated learning through use of assistive technology and problem solving support in an inclusive group setting to create positive peer relations and empathy toward one another." The project purchased Boardmaker software, a digital camera package, and other

supplies for communication activities with the \$535 awarded. Students from the general education classroom visited the self-contained special education classroom at designated times and participated in a character building/civic literacy activity that incorporated assistive technology and provided socialization opportunities for the students.

Outcomes: Over the course of nine months, students from the general education classrooms visited the special education classroom each Friday to complete cooperative learning and character building activities with the students in special education classrooms related to the curriculum in general education. The general students learned sign language and how to implement the assistive device created by the project leader to communicate with a nonverbal student. Student reflection assignments indicate the general education students enjoyed participating in the project. The assistive technology devices used in this project included a word ring, a signing and reading board using sign language, as well as modified and teacher-created books to improve communication skills and social skills. A student who was nonverbal took the devices to the general education classroom to communicate with peers, increasing rates of conversation initiation.

**"Communicate!"** was designed to facilitate communication in a preschool special needs class. The project was awarded \$315 to purchase Boardmaker software to provide a method of communication for children with limited verbal communication skills. Boardmaker is a graphic

database containing over 3,000 Picture Communication Symbols in clip art form. The project leader planned to involve eighteen students by creating communication boards and schedules for the students to use in the classroom and throughout the building with other children and adults. By implementing "Communicate!" the project team anticipated an improvement in communication skills and a decrease in inappropriate behaviors.

Outcomes: Boardmaker was used by the project team to create daily schedules, communication boards, and behavior charts. The communication tools were incorporated into the daily classroom routine of the morning and afternoon preschool classes, each consisting of eight students. The project leader reported a decrease in tantrums and an increase in the length of time children attended to activities; parents also reported some children using pictures in the home to request desired objects. Several of the students from this project were identified as candidates for voice output communication devices, many of which use Boardmaker pictures. The project will continue as designed and also begin to incorporate these devices.

**"Sensory Solutions and Auditory Processing"** was awarded \$416 to purchase technology to enhance pre-reading skills, social interaction, and inclusion opportunities for children in grades K-5, specifically those in a self-contained special education classroom. The project leader purchased:

- Infrared Music Maker - dual cassette recorder/player,

programmable CD player and AM-FM stereo designed to support phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, ELL, ELD and other language learning programs; dual infrared transmitters for wireless listening and a full-function remote for classroom flexibility

- Infrared Headphones (6 sets) – for use with the Infrared Music Maker
- Soundtracks for sensory solutions and auditory processing

The program design had four steps: 1) introducing technology to one student who exhibited difficulty working in close proximity to peers, 2) including two other students diagnosed with autism, 3) incorporating three general education students and 4) taking the technology to a general education classroom to facilitate inclusion opportunities for children assigned to the self-contained classroom.

**Outcomes:** The headphones were used for reading and math instruction, as well as to allow students to complete tasks without auditory distractions. One child, who was unable to tolerate the presence of peers, gradually accepted peers into her proximity while she wore the headphones and then progressed to accepting peers without wearing headphones. An unanticipated but positive outcome of this project was an increase in the amount of time students' maintained their attention on a desired activity using the headphones. The project leader was particularly pleased with the inclusion

success and the acceptance of special education students by general education students.

During school-wide testing, the project leader worked with a small group of students who were not participating in the testing. These students had taken the alternate assessment the previous week or were not scheduled for testing (only third and fourth grade students are tested). The group consisted of two students who were diagnosed with autism and one student who was labeled mentally impaired. The students participated in an activity using the purchased equipment, a rhyming activity CD, and picture cards. The project leader reviewed the picture cards and answers with the group, then instructed the students to use the headphones to complete several cards independently. This method of instruction allowed the students to practice listening skills and independent answering. The project leader reported that her students possess excellent imitation skills and often mimic other students. These acts of imitation are sometimes mistaken for independent correct answers. The headphones allowed the educator to independently assess each student's knowledge. She said, "When I test them independently or in small groups with this equipment, the results are very different from the success that the general education teachers think they see in group settings."

### **Conclusions**

- Over 180 students, with and without disabilities, received exposure to assistive technology due to the funds provided for these assistive technology projects

- Sixteen educators participated in incorporating assistive technology in the public school environment
- Of the six funded projects, three directly targeted increasing inclusion opportunities for students with IEPs

WVATS continued the Request for Proposal (RFP) initiative for the 2008-2009 school year. Staff reviewed the application requirements and modified the process to include outcomes from recipients on whether the projects were worthy of sustainability and if so, how sustainment could be achieved. WVATS received 14 applications and awarded eight new projects for the 2008-2009 school year. To ensure projects are following guidelines and providing the required feedback, WVATS staff is more involved in the project implementation and data collection process.

This project was funded by the US Department of Education RSA. WVATS is an interagency collaboration between the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED).

For more information, contact West Virginia Assistive Technology System at [wvats@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:wvats@hsc.wvu.edu) or (304) 293-4692.

# ACDS: What Is It?

Submitted by Sherri Barrett, ACDS Coordinator

The Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist (ACDS) program is a training program for professionals working with children from birth to eight years old. The ACDS program is based on a professional partnership between early care and education providers and their employers. Articulation agreements are in place with several colleges and universities throughout the state so that upon completion of the program, graduates who enroll in qualified degree programs may receive credit for the courses they took while in the ACDS program.

Just like apprenticeships for plumbers and carpenters, ACDS is a teaching program where apprentices “learn by doing”. An apprentice must be a high school graduate or possess a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and work at least 20 hours per week in early care and education. The curriculum is based on a blending of classroom work and on-the-job training hours, which provide professional growth for providers. ACDS is a two-year program with four semesters. Students attend class for 15 weeks each semester, one evening each week, and complete between 3200 – 4000 hours of on-the-job training. Once the apprentice has completed these hours, he or she will receive a Department of Labor certificate. Apprentices will learn practical experiences in:

- Child observation
- Classroom management
- Family partnership
- Staff communication
- Child advocacy
- Community involvement
- Physical development
- First aid, health and safety
- Diversity and ethics
- Social/Emotional development
- Behavior guidance
- Language development
- Cognitive development



The program began in West Virginia in 1989 and has since been adopted in more than 30 states across the country. Today, the registered West Virginia Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist is a statewide project. The program has received national recognition and is expanding nationwide as a model for childcare providers.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherrie Barrett at 1-866-982-2237 or 304-523-0433, ext. 404 or Enola Foust at 304-972-6400. Be sure to check out the ACDS website at [wvacds.org](http://wvacds.org).



# What is Behavior?

Submitted by Nicholas, Preston and Tucker County Starting Points Centers

The word “behavior” is defined in the dictionary as:

- the manner of conducting oneself
- anything that an organism does involving action and response to stimulation
- the response of an individual, group, or species to its environment
- the way in which something functions or operates

In other words, behavior is the way people adapt to their environment. There has always been a question as to which is more important – heredity or environment when it comes to a child’s behavior. Research shows parents are a child’s first teacher and role model and that they provide the first experiences children have.

Parents know their children better than anyone else. That is why it is so important for early childhood educators to work with parents to promote appropriate behavior. A child can learn many things in childcare or preschool, but the experiences and reactions they get from their parents will influence the child’s behavior more than anything. Communication between all those involved is a key component when dealing with behavior.

Guiding the behavior of young children involves establishing mutual respect and expecting cooperation. Effective discipline is positive and child-focused. It encourages self-control and appropriate behavior. Through effective discipline, children can learn to make positive choices, learn problem solving skills, and learn values of respect and responsibility.

There are several common sense

techniques for effectively guiding the behavior of young children.

#### **Always focus on the behavior:**

Praise and reinforce, let children know which behaviors are appropriate and acceptable, as well as inappropriate and unacceptable.

**Routines and rules:** Children need routines to guide them and rules that are fair and consistently enforced. Children should be told in words they understand and the reason for each rule.

**Be consistent:** Set guidelines and limits and always stick to them.

**Environment structure:** Children are naturally curious. Adults need to child proof the environment to allow children to explore without getting hurt.

**Choices:** Allow children to make choices. Give children the responsi-

bility for their own behavior.

**Observe:** Supervise children carefully; head off inappropriate behavior by redirecting the child to another activity or area. Interrupt or stop behavior that is harmful or unfair to protect a child or the environment.

**Treat children with “unconditional positive regard”:** Children deserve love and respect, even when they misbehave. Controlling behavior is a learning process for children. Adults can teach appropriate behavior by calling attention to positive behavior. Let children know you do not approve of inappropriate behavior, but you will always approve of and love them.

Be a good listener, read a book to a child every day, praise a child for his progress and communicate with the child. The precious time you give a child is usually the answer to a child’s behavior.

# Challenging Behavior: The What or the Why, That is the Question

Submitted by Jim Harris, Oasis Behavioral Health

A few years ago I was presenting at an early childhood conference, and at the end I asked if anyone had any questions. As any speaker knows, this is the time when you earn your fee.

As quick as the hands shot-up, I fired out my best responses by quoting books, research, and clinical cases with a sense of ease. Then I called on one lady in the front who appeared to be a seasoned veteran of early childhood education. She introduced herself as a director of a childcare center that couldn't afford to send all her staff to the conference. In a matter-of-fact manner, she asked if she could take back just one thing about behavior from my workshop to her staff, what it would be. Like any good "question dodger" I quickly praised her question, giving me some time to think. I stood and asked myself what I thought was the most important concept for people to understand about the behavior of children. Finally, it hit me! With a look of surprise and excitement in my voice, I said, "All behavior is purposeful".

To my relief, she smiled and pleasantly nodded at my answer. As I processed the day, I continually came back to the importance of the ques-

tion that she had asked me. The concept of all behavior being purposeful was by no means my own creation. It has been a staple of behavioral therapy since the 1950s, but for some reason it had new life when talking about challenging behavior and children. From that day, I have committed that any time I have the opportunity to share information with a group of people who work with children, I must share with them the understanding that all behavior is purposeful, and within that understanding is the strategies to help children grow and succeed.

Unfortunately, the area of child behavioral intervention is flooded with quick fix strategies and philosophies. These approaches lack effectiveness and can create a culture of pessimism. Everyone seems to be in

search of the newest and best books, trainings, or videos to eliminate challenging behaviors. Let me be perfectly clear in stating that there are no simple answers, no perfect programs, and no magical pills. So now you might be saying, "So Jim, if simple answers don't work, what do we do?" In the absence of a more elegant answer, the truth is that addressing challenging behavior is hard work. It requires a commitment, an analytical mind, and compassion that some people are not willing to apply. For those who are willing, this article is a good place to start.

The first step to better understanding the purpose perspective of behavior is to adjust how you view it. Behavior has two main components: form and function. The form is the



behavior itself. Examples of this would be hitting, kicking, biting, yelling, etc. This is where most flawed behavior management techniques focus attention. Examples of these interventions are what are commonly referred to as “cookie cutter strategies”. These are canned strategies that provide the professional with a protocol for dealing with specific behaviors. For example, there would be a specific step, process, and dialogue in response to a child who bites. This would be a great idea if all children bit for the same reason, which I’m sure you know is not the case. I have seen entire books written in this format that are quite popular. These “form specific” approaches ignore the more critical aspect of behavior--the function.

The function is the purpose or intent of the behavior. This is where we find the purpose that I talked about earlier. In the purpose or function is where effective strategies and plans are to be found. Function-based strategies go to the root of the behavior and seek to identify more appropriate means for the child to communicate his or her needs and purpose.

The two basic functions of behavior are to avoid or obtain. The common focus of functions are attention, activities, items, or stimulation. An example of an obtaining function would be a child who hits to get a

toy. An example of an avoiding function would be a child who runs out of the room when overwhelmed with sensory information. A key thing to remember is that the same function can be expressed for several behaviors. Take, for example, the child who hits, bites, or runs away to avoid stimulation. It is also true that the same form can have several functions. A child may bite three times in a day for three different reasons.

This is where the hard work comes in. It is much easier to just say “he is a hitter” and create a stop hitting strategy. But your plan is likely to have two side effects. First, it stifles the behavioral communication of the child. Second, it provides the child with no replacement strategies, therefore increasing the likelihood of the hitting or other similar behavior in the future. The work of identifying the function includes observation, hypothesizing, collaborating, and creating function based plans that are regularly revised. But it is critical to keep in mind that the team and plans have to be driven by the idea that all behavior is purposeful and the strategy lies in the purpose/function.

So, how do you learn to develop purpose/function driven behavior plans that will encourage behavioral communication of the children you work with? The first step is to commit to the idea that all behavior is purpose-



ful. Although this sounds like an easy commitment, it will be challenging when you run into that one child that seem to act out for “no reason”. This is a time that you have to seek support and commit to the goal of finding purpose and not default to simple excuses. The second step is to learn about functional assessment. There are a variety of ways to do this. You can go to staff developments, read books, search the Internet, or find a mentor. I would suggest doing them all to really grasp the idea of functional assessment from all angles. A couple of my favorite books on the subject are *Challenging Behavior in Children: Understanding, Preventing, and Responding Effectively* by Kaiser and Rasminsky and *Functional Assessment and Program Development for Problem Behavior: A Practical Handbook (2 ed)* by O’Neill, Horner, Albin, Stoney, and Sprague. My favorite websites on the topic can be found at



[www.delicious.com/jfharris](http://www.delicious.com/jfharris). While you are exploring these resources and going to trainings, it is critical to have a mentor or peer to process the information with. This will help you to find the real application of the processes. After you have acquainted yourself with the process you need to practice using the tools of behavior planning such as behavioral observation forms, parental interviews, and cheat sheets. You are more than welcome to e-mail me at [jim.harris@psychoasis.com](mailto:jim.harris@psychoasis.com), and I will send you examples of behavioral observation forms and cheat sheets that I have created.

When you start doing observations, do not start with the most complicated case. Start with some simple cases that seem more obvious to get a feel for the process. If you overwhelm yourself early in the process, you are much less likely to continue

to try the approach.

As you do more and more observations and develop more plans, you will notice a shift in your perspective. You will move from a mindset of what you should do with children to how you should see children. You will automatically start to search for the function of the behavior, seeing the form as simply a means to an end for the child, a simple process of cause and effect. You will likely seek more and more information about the conditions that increase challenging behavior (i.e. trauma, mental health disorders, learning disabilities, developmental delays, etc.). You will notice an improved sense of calm as you approach challenging behavior because of your improved focus and understanding.

Simple answers will become increasingly amusing to you as you roll-up

your sleeves to get to the heart of the matter. The questions you ask when talking about children will start to change. You will learn to not take the behavior of the child personally and no longer say things like “He just wants to ruin my day”. Don’t get me wrong, you will still have your days of being baffled and frustrated by the crazy things that children do, but they will be fewer and further between. You will now have tools to approach the situation with a realistic understanding of how to use them and their effectiveness.

Make no mistake about it, the approach I have presented in this article is challenging. It is an approach that will test your dedication and intellect. It is a deviation from common practices, which always come with challenges, but I promise you that it offers much more promising results. It is an approach that will help you see the developmental needs of each child and create strategies that will benefit him or her for years to come.

Are you ready for the challenge? If so, let’s get to work. As Thomas Edison said many years ago, “Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.”



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# Does **Color** Really Affect Children?

Learn about the characteristics of each color and how colors affect moods and behaviors

Submitted by Janelle St. Martin, WeSign2

Let's observe two different classrooms during story time.

In the first room, the children are sitting and listening to the story, but Mr. Wiggle Worm seems to have come and set up residence in the children. Mary is turned backward in her chair. Tommy is looking over at Joe. Soon Tommy is touching Joe, then Joe will start touching Tommy back, and then the arguing begins. Before long, the teacher must stop to separate Tommy and Joe.

In the second classroom, the children are sitting and listening to the same story, but Mr. Wiggle Worm does not seem to live here. Mary is facing forward. Tommy and Joe are getting along. The teacher does not have to stop reading in order to correct behaviors.

What is the difference in the two rooms? The first is painted red, orange, and yellow and is filled with red carpet, red chairs, and red tabletops. The second is painted blue and green, with accents of yellow and red, and contains green carpet, blue chairs, and blue tabletops.

Did you know there is a reason why many sports teams use red in their uniforms? Red is the ultimate color for physical action, conquest, and vitality. Red helps the wearer to be assertive in social situations. Red invigorates, helps to build self-confidence, and attracts attention. Red stimulates physical activity and helps overweight children lose weight. Red helps to revitalize!

If you have an especially shy child, try having him wear red. Maybe Johnny is a sweet child, but today he is in a grumpy mood. What color is he wearing? Did his mom dress him all in black?

Can color really do these things? Color will not work the same with everyone, and some days the affect will be different. Some children are more sensitive to color than others.

Each color is known to have certain characteristics. See if any of these apply to people you know (children, spouse, friend, or even yourself).

## **RED**

Characteristics: Vigorous, assertive, passionate, direct, ambitious, aggressive, exhausting, blunt, and impatient

Many times when children wear red their personalities are fully animated.

## **ORANGE**

Characteristics: Brave, generous, proud, persistent, reckless, overbearing, extravagant, stubborn, and insensitive

Orange is the color of sociability, and a fun nature. It stimulates a sense of humor and helps us look on the "bright" side of things. Orange and red, together, help to increase the appetite. (Why do you think so many restaurants are decorated with oranges and reds?)

**YELLOW**

Characteristics: Alert, swift, focused, honest, witty, adaptable, evasive, hasty, obsessive, fickle, and sarcastic

Yellow can help give a positive attitude, find solutions to problems, and stimulate learning. (Why do you think highlighters were first made in yellow?)

**GREEN**

Characteristics: Fruitful, tolerant, talented, generous, loving, bitter, suspicious, envious, greedy, and jealous

Green is the color of will power and self-determination. It helps to overcome opposition, and helps children to achieve things. Green also has balancing properties.

**BLUE**

Characteristics: Harmonious, virtuous, reflective, faithful, wise, prudent, intellectual, memory, repressed, unresponsive, dishonest, stubborn, distant, and forgetful

Children that like blue have a desire to learn and please others. They are considerate and caring toward others. Blue can help children express a serene, peaceful nature. Blue relaxes the entire body and has an equalizing effect on the energy level.

Blue also helps to build self-confidence and is an appetite suppressant. (How many restaurants are decorated in blue?)

**PURPLE**

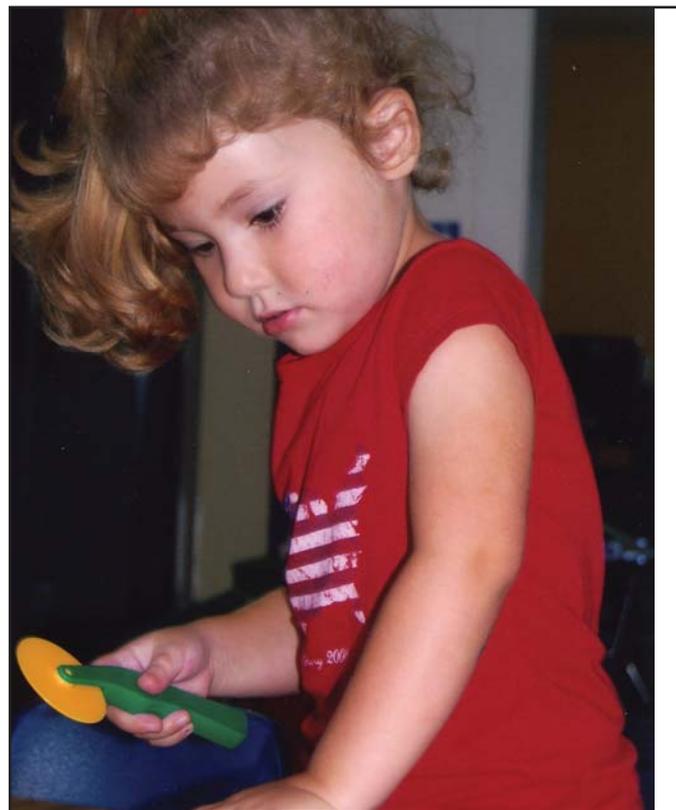
Characteristics: Serenity, nobility, important, mystical, aloofness, haughty, merciless, and deluded

Children who like purple tend to stand out as unique, super-sensitive, highly imaginative individuals.

**BROWN**

Characteristics: Studious, dedicated, comforting, practical, dutiful, nit-picking, stubborn, and despondent

Brown is a service-oriented color. Notice a big service-oriented organization whose trucks are brown.



As you read through these, did you see any that apply to you or ones you know? Remember, children change their favorite color often and sometimes those changes may go along with their mood.

Here are some ways you can use color when working with children:

- Use a red or orange plate or placemat with a child that does not like to eat.
- Use blue with a child who wants to eat too much, or for yourself to help curb that appetite.
- To help children with spelling words use different colors for each letter, start with green and end with red.
- To get children ready to face a project use red.

Be creative when incorporating color into your daily life and into those of the children you work with. Color your world!!

# Reading Between the Whines

## *Using Literacy to Shape Challenging Behaviors*

Submitted by Shannon Taylor, Behavior Consultant, Link Child Care Resource and Referral

I have always loved books. And more importantly, I have always loved stories. In fact, I love stories so much that I firmly believe it is possible to use literature and children's emerging literacy skills to shape challenging behaviors. Literacy refers to a child's ability to learn language: to read, speak, and write. Literacy begins at birth when an infant and parent make their very first eye contact...this is the beginning of learning to communicate.

Children learn to be literate by observing and interacting with others. This is why people so often say literacy is a social process. When working with young children, it's important to familiarize oneself with the developmental milestones of emerging literacy. Understanding milestones gives one a starting point when dealing with challenging behaviors. In other words, if a person has a clear understanding of the behaviors a child should be exhibiting, he or she will be more likely to better identify when that same child exhibits a behavior that is concerning.

Children use language skills in a variety of ways and for a number of reasons: to make a request; to complain about something; to say hello or goodbye; to respond to a communication; to get information; to think, plan, and solve problems; and to share feelings, ideas, and interests. However, when a child has limits on his or her communication, it is only natural for that child to "act out" to try to get

needs met. Keeping this in mind, it is now important to prep the environment to enhance literacy experiences.

Literacy involves learned skills that don't just "happen."



Teachers must plan literacy opportunities intentionally throughout the day and throughout the curriculum, taking care that the experiences are meaningful to the children and not just to the teacher. Every single area of the classroom should be utilized when prepping the environment for literacy: library, writing, blocks, music, art, dramatic play, and even the outside play area. It is important to use all areas of the classroom for literacy (not just the reading area) because it will help make stories more meaningful and memorable. When stories are meaningful, children are more likely to hang on to the message being presented to them.

Remember, teachable moments cannot happen in the heat of the moment. If a topic-specific story (i.e. biting) is being used to reshape a behavior, the message will more likely get through if it is presented during a neutral time when all involved parties are calm and not reeling from a recent upsetting incident. Using all areas of the classroom enlarges your neutral territory and ensures that the story is also

memorable, thus creating a more long-lasting effect.

Some questions to consider when preparing to adapt a classroom: What materials might staff add to the environment? How might children use them? How might the children respond? Once these questions have been given thorough consideration and every area of the classroom has been adapted to facilitate the children's emerging literacy skills, it is time to set this plan into action. Start by using a variety of techniques along with children's literature to accomplish this task and to teach expected behaviors:

- With familiar stories have the children fill in important words or phrases.
- Have the children act out the stories as they are read.
- Hang copies of notable characters or scenes on a clothesline to help tell the story.
- Retell the story in other areas of the room.
- Tell the story using magnetic pictures on cookie sheets.
- Use flannel boards or story aprons.
- Tell the story using characters on Popsicle sticks.
- Ask open-ended questions about the story.

By all means, do not be afraid to use folktales, fairy tales, and fables. These traditional stories go along way with making a big impression on little hearts and often have a "moral" that children will remember!

Additionally, comprehension is essential to future reading success

and should be a central part of enhancing literacy experiences for young children. Retelling a story reinforces its message and gets children thinking about the story.

It helps a great deal to use props when retelling a story. Props provide excellent visual cues, provide a concrete reference for story details, help organize thoughts about what to say and do, and help children play the roles of different characters. It is important to remember that children will get more out of a story if they are involved than if they just sit and listen. This is especially important with stories that contain "life lessons."

When focusing on enhancing comprehension, be sure to employ a variety of creative teaching strategies in every area of the classroom:

- Talking, singing, and playing with language (for example, making up songs about the day's activities).
- Reading aloud in all areas, not just the library area.
- Retelling stories using different methods each time.
- Encouraging children to write their own stories.
- Playing games related to the story.
- Doing studies on the story topics that are covered.
- Creating story circles in which one child starts a story (either real or made-up) then stops to allow the child next to him to add to it, continuing around the circle until everyone has a turn or the story ends.
- Having children make their own books.
- Providing a space for children to

sign in as parents are signing in for the day.

- Using visual comparisons (big, bigger, biggest) throughout the day.
- Giving fun homework, for example, "How did you get your name?"

Once some creative techniques are in place, it is also important to focus on facilitating conversations because communication is an essential part of literacy. In order to communicate, everyone has to have a clear understanding of the rules. Help children learn the strategies required for successful conversations...turn taking, listening, and responding. Be sure to share your favorite suggestions with families on ways to engage children in conversations outside of the classroom: chatting during dinner, talking in the car, and sharing thoughts and ideas during bath time.

It is critical to remember that oral language is the foundation of reading and writing skills and it is never too early to start talking and reading to a child. Additionally, children need opportunities to experiment with language throughout the day, as well as the direct support of teachers who will listen and allow them to experiment and respond. When children have these opportunities and supports in place, their need to act out is dramatically decreased because they have so many other positive means by which to express themselves.

# T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA

## FACT SHEET



### WHAT WE ARE



The T.E.A.C.H. (**T**eacher **E**ducation **A**nd **C**ompensation **H**elps) Early Childhood® Project gives scholarships to complete course work in early childhood education and increases compensation. In 1990, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) began the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project as the first program of its kind in the country. River Valley Child Development Services (RVCDS), located in Huntington, WV, began operating T.E.A.C.H. WEST VIRGINIA in December, 2008.

### WHY ARE WE NEEDED?



The most critical indicator of quality care is the level of education of the caregivers. 61% of early childhood caregivers in West Virginia have no degree beyond a high school diploma or G.E.D. and zero to one year of experience. Also, WV ranks 47th in the nation for level of pay for early childhood teachers, which is a major cause for high teacher turnover in the child care field.

### HOW WE HELP



T.E.A.C.H. WEST VIRGINIA assists teachers in returning to school to receive a higher education and require that participants agree to remain in child care for a year following completion of the scholarship contract. T.E.A.C.H. WV provides 75% tuition payment for nine credit hours, a \$50 travel stipend per semester, 90% book reimbursement, paid release time and a \$300 bonus. The sponsoring child care center is responsible for 10% of tuition payment for nine credit hours, providing release time and a \$300 bonus or 2% raise. The recipient is responsible for 15% of tuition payment for nine credit hours, 10% of the cost of books and a one year commitment to their sponsoring center following completion of the scholarship contract.

### WHO CAN APPLY AND HOW?



An applicant must be a WV resident who is a current, **or** potential, Pre-K teacher working at least 30 hours per week in a licensed child care center. The applicant must be enrolled in, **or** would like to be enrolled in, the Early Childhood Education program at a participating college or university for their Associate Degree or Bachelor's Degree. The interested teacher can apply by one of the following ways: calling/e-mailing for an application to be mailed or download an application from [www.wvearlychildhood.org/teach.asp](http://www.wvearlychildhood.org/teach.asp). *Please see contact information below for phone/e-mail and mailing address for returning completed application.*

### PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS



Currently, T.E.A.C.H. WEST VIRGINIA has partnerships with the following community colleges and universities in the state of West Virginia: Marshall Community and Technical College, Marshall University, Pierpont Community and Technical College and West Virginia University. MCTC and MU have an articulation agreement between the Associate and Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, as does PCTC and WVU.

### FUNDERS



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WEST VIRGINIA, the participant and their sponsoring center each pay a portion of the cost. Funding for the T.E.A.C.H. portions comes from grants from Pew Charitable Trust and WV Department of Health and Human Resources.

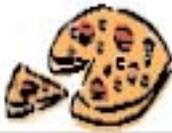
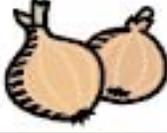


raising  
readers

# Grocery Bingo

Instructions: Find and mark the item from any square to get a "bingo" across any row, across any column, diagonally -- or fill the entire table!

**BONUS:** Can you find something in the store that starts with: Q, U, X or Z?

<p>Bananas</p> 	<p>Doughnuts</p> 	<p>Cheese</p> 	<p>Toothpaste</p> 	<p>Bread</p> 
<p>Cereal</p> 	<p>Pizza</p> 	<p>Juice</p> 	<p>Apple</p> 	<p>Sugar</p> 
<p>Waffles</p> 	<p>Garbage Bags</p> 	<p>Milk</p> 	<p>Spaghetti</p> 	<p>Yogurt</p> 
<p>Fish</p> 	<p>Onion</p> 	<p>Ketchup</p> 	<p>Vegetable Soup</p> 	<p>Nuts</p> 
<p>Raisins</p> 	<p>Laundry Detergent</p> 	<p>Ice Cream</p> 	<p>Honey</p> 	<p>Eggs</p> 

We hope you enjoyed Grocery Bingo!

Send this original card (no copies, please) to Debbie Oleksa at West Virginia Public Broadcasting,  
191 Scott Avenue, Morgantown, WV, 26508, to receive a free book and activity sheet.

West Virginia Public Broadcasting does not share this information with any other person or organization.

Parent/Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child/Class Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# More Reading Fun at Home!

Play these games any time, anywhere. More activities and games are at the Raising Readers Web site called PBS Kids Island at [www.readytolearnreading.org](http://www.readytolearnreading.org). Moms and Dads can play too!

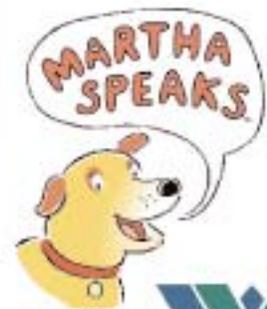
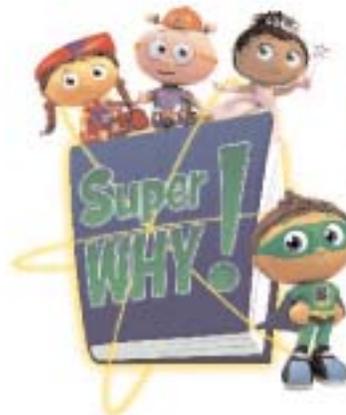
**Rhyme Time** -- Pick an object (tree, car, wall) – and see who can come up with the most words that rhyme with that word.

**Letter Hunt** -- Pick a letter, any letter! For 10 minutes hunt for items that have that letter in its word. Say the word out loud to hear how the letter (especially vowels) sounds differently depending on where it is in the word.

Example: Tom picked the letter O. While helping his mom put groceries away he hunted for his letter. He found "oatmeal," "Cheerios," "Oreo cookies," "toothpaste," "popsicles," and "noodles."

That's a lot of O's.

Did you notice all the different O sounds?



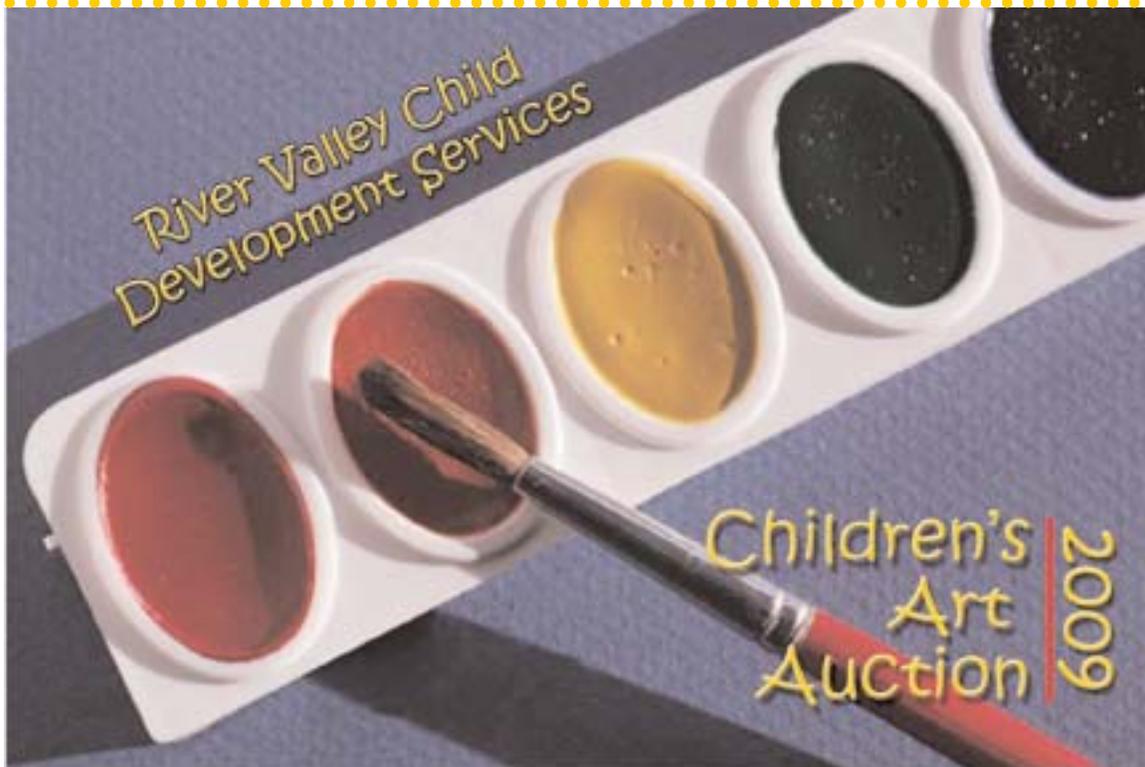
**Two Words Become One** -- A compound word is a word made up of two smaller words. For example "toothbrush" is made up of the words "tooth" and "brush." There are lots of compound words in your home. See if you can find items around the house that are compound words. Here are some words to get you started: shoelace, sunglasses, baseball, popcorn, and earring. Can you find the two words in birthday, policeman, lighthouse, daytime, bedroom, and peppermint? Talk with your child about the different meanings of the words when they are by themselves (tooth, brush) and when they are put together (toothbrush).

**Watch West Virginia PBS children's shows** -- Not only are these shows fun, they help your kids become better readers. Check your local schedule today and tune in.



Place  
First Class  
Postage  
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Here

ATTN: Debbie Oleksa  
West Virginia Public Broadcasting  
Raising Readers Initiative  
191 Scott Avenue  
Morgantown, WV 26508



Featuring art from Norma Gray Early Learning, Enterprise Child Development Center, the School Age Connections Program, and local artists. Plus holiday wreaths, trees and more.

Friday, November 6, 2009

At the Joan C. Edwards Performing Arts Center

Art Viewing 6:30-7 p.m.

Auction 7-9 p.m.

**Sponsored by Marshall University College of Fine Arts**

If you would like to place an ad in our program or donate items, please contact Suzi Brodof at 304-523-3417 ext. 208.

If you are a local artist and would like to donate to a great cause, please contact Suzi Brodof at 304-523-3417 ext. 208.

All donations are tax deductible

# Social Skills Help Ease Transition Fears

Submitted by Barbara Tucker, West Virginia Early Childhood Transition Steering Committee



**“One of the most important things parents, caregivers and loved ones can do is build a positive relationship with a child.”**

Behavior is communication. Young children feel the same emotions adults do. Children become irate, sad, perturbed, nervous, happy, or embarrassed; however, unlike adults, they often do not have the words to talk about how they are feeling. Instead, preschoolers, at times, act out these emotions in very physical and inappropriate ways.

Two important developmental skills for children to continue to develop as they transition from preschool to kindergarten are social skills and emotional maturity. One of the most important things parents, caregivers and loved ones can do is build a positive relationship with a child. Children need to know someone cares about them. Children’s literature can strengthen a loving bond between a child and significant adult, while promoting social and emotional skills.

Recognizing and naming their own feelings help young children communicate and learn self-control, as well as empathy for the feelings of others. There are children’s books written about a wide range of emotions such as happiness, anger, sadness, fear and caring.

A sense of responsibility comes with a preschooler’s growing knowledge that they can do things all by themselves. “I did it myself!” This confidence helps build the groundwork for the lifelong skill of self-direction.

Interacting with peers and making special friendships are essential aspects of social development and key to school success. Accepting differences is the root of getting along with others. Respect for variations in the appearances, thoughts and behavior of others is an essential part of functioning in our diverse society.

As children transition from one program to another, books are an effective tool to strengthen a child’s social and emotional school readiness. Resources and strategies to support a child’s social-emotional development can be found at The Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning website: [www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/practicalstrategies.html](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/practicalstrategies.html).

Source: The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation

# Do you know a child who is not \*moving \*hearing \*seeing \* learning or \*talking like others their age?

By 3 months,  
Does your baby...

- grasp rattle or finger?
- hold up his/her head well?
- make cooing sounds?
- smile when talked to?

By 6 months,  
Does your baby...

- play with own hands/feet?
- roll over?
- turn his/her head towards sound?
- holds head up/looks around without support?

By 9 months,  
Does your baby...

- sit alone or with minimal support?
- pick up small objects with thumb and fingers?
- move toy from hand to hand?

By 12 months,  
Does your baby...

- wave goodbye?
- play with toys in different ways?
- feed self with finger foods?
- begin to pull up and stand?
- begin to take steps?

By 18 months,  
Does your baby...

- cling to caretaker in new situations?
- try to talk and repeat words?
- walk without support?

By 24 months,  
Does your baby...

- point to body parts?
- walk, run, climb without help?
- get along with other children?
- use 2 or 3 word sentences?

If you are concerned about your child's development, get help early.

**Every child deserves a great start.**

WV Birth to Three supports families to help their children grow and learn.

To learn more about the  
WV Birth to Three services  
in your area, please call:

**1-866-321-4728**

Or visit [www.wvdhhr.org/birth23](http://www.wvdhhr.org/birth23)



WV Birth to Three services and supports are provided under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and administered through the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health.

# Discipline to Teach, Not Punish

Submitted by Deborah Somuano, United Way Success by Six

Use discipline as an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior. Never hit or shake a child.

When you think of discipline, what comes to mind? The understanding of the word “discipline” can vary. Many parents and providers equate that word to punishment or reacting to bad behavior, often meaning spankings, sitting in the corner or being grounded.

Now providers are asked to think of discipline as a way of teaching, instead of a way of punishing. As teachers and providers, the goal should be to train and equip children to go into the world and live a productive, successful life, and be a positive influence to others.

Teaching children good behaviors is more than telling them what to do. Good, consistent discipline will help a child: learn to control feelings and actions; respect her parents, family

members, adults and friends; and learn how to solve problems without anger or hurt.

Discipline is giving children the tools to succeed in life; building the right relationship with a child, not just using right methods. This helps children develop inner control that last a lifetime.

Here are some ideas that have proven to be useful with children.

- Create predictable routines and rules. Children develop a sense of safety and trust when they have a routine they can depend on. Once children are old enough (between the ages of 3 and 5), they begin to understand that actions have consequences. When the rules and the consequences are the same every time, children will understand them better.
- Discipline is grounded on a healthy relationship between the adult and the child. To know how to discipline the children you care for, you must first know them. Connected providers know what

behavior is appropriate to expect and how to convey those expectations. Connected children know what behavior providers expect and make an effort to behave that way.

- Know age-appropriate behavior. Learn what behavior is typical for a child at each stage of development in order to recognize true misbehavior. Remember, children are not adults so don't expect them to know something they have not being taught.
- Turn the child's attention to a different activity. Many times misbehavior is a result of boredom. Very young children are naturally curious, which can cause them to get into things they should not. Instead of getting into a battle with children, simply interest them in a different activity.
- Don't label children as “good” or “bad.” Instead label the “behavior.” Make it clear to the child that you love him, but that you are unhappy with his actions. Do not say “You are good/bad girl/boy.” Say, “It is good when you play without hitting your friends.”
- Encourage good behavior. Words, smiles, and hugs are very powerful tools in teaching children good behavior. Always give more attention to good behavior rather than bad behavior. If a child needs your



attention, he may think the best way to get it is by acting out. For a child, sometimes negative attention is better than no attention at all.

- Teach children to make up for what was done wrong. For example, a child should help in picking up his toys or cleaning up the mess he has made. This teaches responsibility for his actions.
- Teach children to express his/her feelings in “good” ways. Show them how to use words, rather than just their hands. For example, say, “Tell your friend you don’t like it when she pulls your toys away.” Teach children how to count to 10 or jump up and down when he feels angry, instead of hitting someone.

The next time everyday pressures build up, try these simple steps to teach good behavior:

- Take a deep breath. Calm down and evaluate the situation. Remember, never yell at, hit or shake a child. Shaking can cause death. Explain to the child what he has done wrong. Let him know what is expected and tell the child what to do in clear words.
- Attach a limit to an unwanted behavior. If a child refuses to share a toy, show him how to take turns with the toy. If he doesn’t listen, remove the toy.
- Consistency is the key! Do what you say you are going to do and do it every time. Children need

limits and need to know you will stick to them.

- Hug and recognize a child for a good behavior. This encourages good behavior.
- Remember you are the adult. Take a break, but don’t take your anger out on the child.

### **The Source of Child’s Behavior**

What makes a child respond the way he does? A big part of the answer is in his temperament or his inborn personal style. From birth, a child has a unique set of emotional and behavioral responses to the world around him. This style is unlike any other child’s responses and determines how a child learns to behave in different situations.

Around one year of age, children begin to learn to control their own behavior. You may begin to notice that the group of one year olds shows awareness that some things are unacceptable. You can help children develop control of their impulses and temperament. Begin with a loving, accepting attitude toward the children. They may have a different personal style than you. You may have to be very patient in learning what motivates some of the children in your care. Try to avoid using negative labels and emphasize what is positive. For example, consider a child persistent, rather than stubborn.

Practice patience by responding to a child’s cues. Model self-control for the child, remaining calm and controlling your anger. Provide firm and consistent limits and show the child



how much you love him.

Remember to protect every child’s brain. Falls or shaking a baby can cause permanent damage. When a baby is shaken, its weak neck muscles cannot support its large head. This shaking causes the brain to hit against the inside of the skull, causing bruising and bleeding on the brain. Damage to the brain can cause learning problems, developmental delays, blindness, or even death.

Always hold the baby’s head and neck when you move his body. Never leave a baby alone on any surface above the floor.

For more information please visit: Better Brains for Babies [www.bbb-georgia.org](http://www.bbb-georgia.org) and The National Center for Shaking Baby Syndrome [www.dontshake.com](http://www.dontshake.com).

## Sharing Corner:

# Question: What resources are available to help children who have a family member in the military that has been deployed?

Submitted by Glenna Bailey, West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources



**Answer:** Deployment of military personnel can be a difficult and trying time for families. This can be especially difficult for young children who may not understand the specifics of what's going on, but can still suffer the stress and anxiety of separation. Parents and other caregivers, such as childcare providers, can help provide the child with reassurance and a sense of security to help them cope with their emotions during this time.

Even the youngest babies can be affected by an absent parent. Because infancy is a time of developing strong bonds and trust with caregivers, a missing parent can cause babies to feel less secure. It is important for parents and childcare providers to not only provide support to children during this time, but to also be watchful of signs the child is having difficulty coping. Because

children express their feelings through their behavior, one of the most common things seen is a change in behavior. These changes may be regression to early behavior such a thumb sucking, the need for a security blanket or behavior that is clingy. These children may also demonstrate “acting out” or aggressive, angry behavior. They may have trouble sleeping or experience nightmares. It is important that parents and caregivers be alert to these changes and provide the empathy and support needed to help children feel safe, secure and comforted.

It is very important that the parent at home and the childcare provider have open lines of communication during this time. Children who are displaying signs of distress need the efforts of all caregivers to provide care and comfort. There should be regular reports back and forth about

how the child is coping and areas that need to be addressed. Parents and providers can help young children keep up their regular routines to help them feel more secure and provide them with lots of love, hugs and attention to let them know they have not been forgotten.

Caregivers can also help the child feel connected to the deployed parent by providing the child with pictures and mementos that can be posted at home and at childcare. “Hug pillows” can be made from a tee shirt or another piece of clothing belonging to the parent. Engaging the child in creative activities can help the child express his feelings in a controlled way. This can be accomplished by painting or drawing pictures, reading and discussing stories about children in similar circumstances, and making cards to be sent to the deployed parent.

There are numerous resources available to parents and childcare providers that can assist not only the child but the family. The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), in cooperation with the Department of Defense, offers assistance to military families in helping them find and afford child care to suit their unique needs. This includes the program *Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood*, which offers qualified service members a subsidy to assist with the costs of childcare outside of military bases.

The Sesame Workshop, along with several corporate partners, offers a free program called *Talk, Listen, Connect*, which is designed to support military families with children between the ages of two and five who are experiencing deployment, multiple deployments or a parent returning home with a combat-related injury. Their Web site offers free downloads of videos, songs, posters, activities, and a facilitator's guide. Free copies of the program on DVD may also be ordered.

Zero to Three offers several free resources available on their Web site. These include DVDs, flyers, brochures, articles and a wonderful activity book called "Over There", which has versions for fathers or mothers that have been deployed.

Operation Military Kids is a project of the Army designed to work with communities to support children and youth who are impacted by deployment. Through a network of community partners, OMK provides youth program opportunities for school age, middle school, and

teenage youth and connects them to support resources where they live. According to Richard Switzer, Youth Programs Specialist for the West Virginia branch of OMK, there are a variety of programs available to assist the military children in our state. These include Hero Packs (backpacks filled by non-military youth with mementos and items designed to help connect children with their deployed parent), Mobile Technology Lab (used to facilitate connections between deployed soldiers and their children), and Speak Out for Military Kids (a youth-led, adult supported project that generates community awareness of issues faced by children of military families). In addition, OMK of West Virginia offers Ready, Set, Go! training. These workshops are designed to develop local support networks of youth workers, educators, counselors and community service agencies. The training offers an insight into military culture and the deployment cycle and suggests ways to understand the needs of and provide support to military children and their families through community resources.

According to Mr. Switzer, there are also Family Assistance Centers (FACs) throughout West Virginia. These FACs are established for large scale mobilizations and deployments to provide support and assistance to all military members and their families, regardless of service component or status. There are four in West Virginia that serve as central points for information and referral. The specialists at each location also provide monthly outreach calls to families of deployed service members.

## Resources

### West Virginia Family

#### Assistance Centers (FACs):

Charleston: 1-866-986-4326

Eleanor: 1-877-277-9503

Glen Jean: 1-866-379-6837

Kingwood: 1-866-219-7339

### Websites

WV Operation Military Kids, 304-561-6828 or 1-866-731-5733, [www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)

NACCRRA-[www.naccrra.org](http://www.naccrra.org)

Military OneSource-[www.military-onesource.com](http://www.military-onesource.com) (source for free Sesame Street DVDs)

Sesame Workshop-<http://archive.sesameworkshop.org/tlc/>

National Guard-[www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org)

Military Homefront-[www.military-homefront.org](http://www.military-homefront.org)

Military Child Education Coalition - [www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org)

Military Baby- [www.armystudyguide.com/militarybaby/](http://www.armystudyguide.com/militarybaby/)

Child Care Aware-[www.child-careaware.org/en/subscriptions/areyouaware/article.php?id=41](http://www.child-careaware.org/en/subscriptions/areyouaware/article.php?id=41)

### Books

"While You Are Away"  
by Eileen Spinelli

"A Year Without Dad"  
by Jodi Brunson

"Daddy, You're my Hero!"  
by Michelle Ferguson-Cohon

"I Miss You!: A Military Kid's Book About Deployment"  
by Beth Andrews

# The Power of Synergy

Submitted by Jeanette Barker, President Elect/Political Advocate,  
West Virginia Childcare Centers United

West Virginia Childcare Centers United (WVCCU), a non-profit professional childcare provider organization, was created from two former organizations – the West Virginia Association of Child Care Centers and Directors on a Mission. The strength of the group is the synergistic relationships of all childcare center staff, community leaders, families, and the leadership of WVCCU. Together we are able to influence legislation affecting the early care and education community to ensure quality and success in West Virginia’s childcare programs.

The organization is dedicated to improving the quality of childcare in West Virginia. We believe in promoting our mission through networking, advocacy and education. We work diligently to support quality, affordability, and availability of childcare in West Virginia.

To enforce our goal of being a united voice for childcare centers, WVCCU hired a lobbyist, Bill Perry, to represent our interests in the state and local legislative arenas. Since that time, WVCCU has demonstrated more success in raising the awareness of several key industry issues and is particularly proud of its contributions toward the passage of Senate Bill 498.

The Bill has two primary components: 1) the development of a quality rating scale (QRIS) for West Virginia early care and education providers; and 2) continued successful collaboration between local boards of education and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources relative to providing services for the state’s four-year-old students. The QRIS component of the bill provides for a voluntary tiered rating structure for providers, which shows unprecedented promise for raising the level of quality of care throughout the state in the early childhood programs.

Currently, West Virginia is nationally recognized as one of the top five states providing public pre-kindergarten services to four year olds. Implementation of the second component of the bill will protect the interests of public and private pre-kindergarten providers throughout the state by ensuring them a seat at the “planning table” for developing county educational plans. Without the passage of Senate Bill 498, more and more childcare centers would surely have joined with the 90 centers statewide that have closed since implementing public pre-k.

The WVCCU plans to continue its organized efforts to maximize existing resources and seek out new and innovative resources for enhancing the quality and availability of early care and education services for all children and families in West Virginia.

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# Parent Blocks

## NEWSLETTER



"Providing resources to parents throughout West Virginia"  
Volume 6, Issue 3, Summer 2009

## Six Ways Working Moms Can Bond with Infants

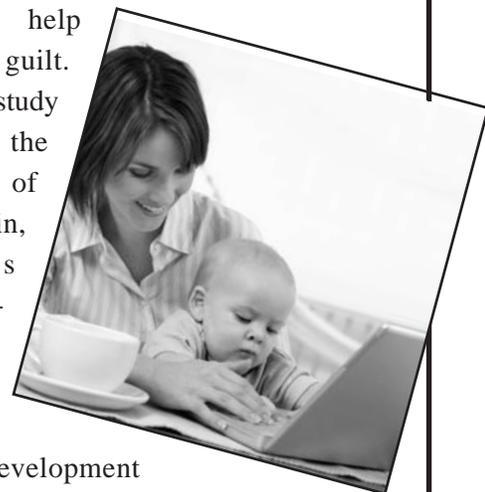
With the current state of the economy, most moms have no other choice but to return to work while their children are still infants. For most moms, this decision is not easy; it wasn't for me. I gave birth to my first child, a beautiful daughter, Brooklyn Grace, in November 2008. I returned to work six weeks later, and leaving her for eight hours each day with a caregiver, even though the caregiver is my mother, was emotionally challenging for me.

WV Parent Blocks Newsletter is a project of West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources, a collaborative project of West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources/Bureau for Children and Families/Division of Early Care and Education; WV Head Start State Collaboration Office; Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/West Virginia Birth to Three; and West Virginia Department of Education/Office of Special Education and is supported and administered by River Valley Child Development Services.

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We working moms feel guilty about the time we spend away from our infants at work, and we desperately hope that the time spent away from them will not negatively affect the bond between them and us. A recent research

finding might help assuage the guilt. According to a study completed at the University of Texas at Austin, researchers "found no differences in children's social and



intellectual development during the first three years of life between those whose mothers spent a lot of time with them in infancy and those whose mothers spent less time because they worked outside the home" (Child Health News, 2005). That's a relief for working moms!

Dr. Aletha Huston, director of a study on working moms and their infants concerning time spent in childcare, states that "Quality of time, not quantity, is important for infant development" (Schenck, 2006). Research reports that

*continued on the following page*

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working moms are more interactive with their infants compared to stay-at-home moms (Working Families, 2009). As this is the case, we working moms need to make the most of the time we spend with our infants. Although completing daily chores and activities and bonding with infants at the same time is not always easy, it can be done. Here are some examples.

**1. Exercising:** Put your baby in a swing or bouncer in front of the treadmill so you have eye contact with the baby. Instead of rocking out with your I-Pod, entertain your infant. Sing to her; recite the alphabet; or share a funny poem like “I love you more than chocolate, I love you more than cake, I love you more than candy, Oh, my goodness sakes.” To make it even more entertaining, incorporate movements with your hands.

**2. Cooking:** Place your little one in a bouncer or swing at a safe distance from anything hot, but still in viewing distance. Talk to your child about your day while preparing dinner. Try reading the recipe out loud or telling your child the names of the foods you are preparing. Show her the colorful fruits and vegetables.

**3. Dressing:** With your baby sitting close, give a running narrative about what you are doing like “I’m washing my face with warm, soapy water. Now I’m brushing my hair.” You can also talk about what color outfit you are putting on her or how good the lotion smells.

**4. Checking e-mail:** Set your infant on your lap and read your mail to her in funny voices.

**5. Reading:** Read her a book (even the one you are reading), the newspaper, or your grocery list. She is hearing your voice and memorizing your face. Warner writes about reading to infants and states, “mothers who started reading to their children at an early age had toddlers with better language comprehension; larger, more expressive vocabularies; and higher cognitive scores by age two” (2006).

**6. Eating lunch:** If you are fortunate enough to work close to the childcare provider, skip lunch with your colleagues and eat with your infant. My daughter giggles with delight when I walk through the front door with my lunch in a brown bag.

Working moms and child care providers must communicate their needs to one another. Chances are many moms are struggling with the same issue of infant bonding time. After building positive relationships between child care providers and mothers, the child care centers could offer special times when working moms could visit their infants and provide bonding activities such as eating or reading together.

These six activities take a significant amount of time out of the day so working moms must budget time carefully and not waste valuable bonding opportunities. As long as we are interacting with our

infants, we are building bonds. After all, even stay-at-home moms aren’t with their babies every minute of the day; they are busy doing chores (Schenck, 2006). Working moms have to be creative and multitask. Including your child in these six daily routines works. Working moms, we don’t have to feel guilty anymore!

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- Submitted by Shelly Ratliff, Visiting Instructor of Education, Glenville State College*

# Time-In: Positive Interactions and Feedback

Time-out has become an extremely popular discipline technique. However, what determines the effectiveness of time-out or almost any other discipline technique is time-in. Time-in refers to the positive interactions and feedback children receive when they are not misbehaving. The quality of time-in is a critical ingredient in determining the parent-child relationship. Children often see their parents as the people who set limits for them and punish them when they misbehave. It is also important for children to view their parents as people who offer a lot of positive attention. The following suggestions can help improve time-in.



winks. Young children respond especially well to physical affection.

- Catch them being good. It is important that parents monitor their children's activities frequently. This will give parents a chance to observe more of their children's appropriate behaviors. The goal is to catch children being good.
- Don't wait for a special occasion. Parents should offer their children a lot of praise when they are behaving "ok". Parents should not wait until their children do something extraordinary to offer praise.
- Be specific. When parents praise their children, it is often a good idea to tell them exactly why they are being praised. For example, "You did a great job of not interrupting me while I was speaking on the telephone. Thanks."
- Provide physical attention. In addition to verbal praise, parents should offer a lot of physical attention. For example, hugs, smiles, kisses, pats on the back, or
- Give immediate feedback. It is important to give children positive feedback immediately. Parents shouldn't wait until sometime after the good behavior occurs to offer the praise.
- Avoid backhanded compliments. It is important to avoid using backhanded compliments. For example, it is not a good idea to say something like "That's good; why can't you do that more often?"
- Use third-handed compliments. Third-handed compliments can be very effective. Third-handed compliments occur when one person tells another person about children's good behavior in the children's presence. For example, when one parent comes home from work, the other parent talks about the child's good behavior that occurred that day.
- Plan parent-child activities. The use of a parent-child activity can be used to reward children's good behavior. For example, going to the park or playing a game. The use of parent-child activities is often preferable to the use of material rewards.
- Notice good behavior instead of just bad behavior. The most important point is for parents to let their children know that they notice their good behavior as well as their misbehavior. It is the balance between time-in and time-out that is critical in changing children's behavior.

*Written by Kristin Zolten, M.A. & Nicholas Long, Ph.D.,  
Department of Pediatrics, University of Arkansas for  
Medical Sciences.*

# Family Food Shopping: Spend Less, Get More

You probably have your own ways to stretch your food dollar. That's great. Healthful eating doesn't cost more. It might even cost less!

## Deciding What To Buy

**Buy a variety of foods from the Food Guide Pyramid.** Grains, cereals, breads, pasta, and rice tend to cost less than other foods. Your family needs the most servings from the bread and cereal group each day, too.

**Choose smaller amounts of more costly protein foods.** Beans cost less than other foods from the Meat Group.

**Go easy on foods you buy from the Pyramid "tip" – sweets, fats, and oils.**

**Buy the amount you need, not more.** Then you won't throw food away.

## Figuring Out Food Costs

**Check unit prices on store shelves –** usually below the food. They show the price per ounce, pound, quart, or some other amount. Unit prices let you compare brands and sizes to get the best buy.

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<b>Unit Price</b>	<b>YOU PAY</b>	
<b>\$1.33</b>	<b>\$3.99</b>	
PER QUART		

## Finding More Ways To Spend Less

**Buy foods from bulk bins –** if you can. They usually cost less because you don't pay for packaging and handling. And you only buy how much you need.

**Use coupons and sales for foods you really want.** A food isn't a bargain if no one eats it!

**Check the price of foods in different forms.** Foods may cost more if they're partly prepared. You decide if you want to pay more to save time in the kitchen.



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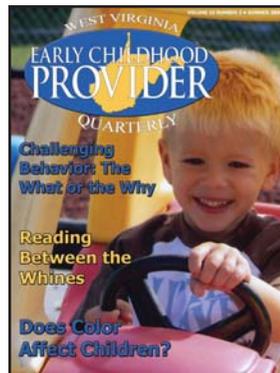
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