



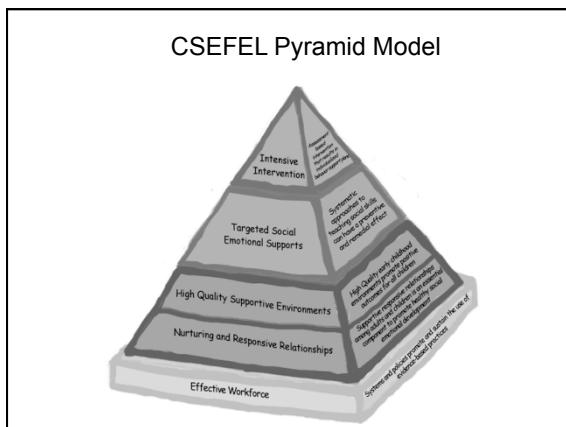
Agenda

- I. Introduction and Logistics
- II. Emotional Literacy with Infants and Toddlers
- III. Ways that Infants and Toddlers Communicate Unmet Needs and Distress
- IV. Examining Aggressive and Withdrawing Behaviors More Closely
- V. Enlisting the Help of Parents/Families
- VI. Using a Program Process to Develop a Support Plan









Emotional Literacy...

....is the ability to identify, understand and express emotion in a healthy way.

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Strategies to Develop Emotional Literacy in Infants and Toddlers

I. Using the adult/child relationship to expand an individual child's awareness of his emotions or feelings:

- Verbally acknowledging and labeling emotions expressed by children in care
- Assisting infants and toddlers with regulating their emotions
- Talking about the fact that feelings can change
- Using questions about feelings and wishes to see if a child can respond

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Strategies to Develop Emotional Literacy in Infants and Toddlers

II. Finding opportunity in the group setting to talk about feelings:

- Taking advantage of teachable moments when children experience difficulties with peers and need adult support to resolve them
- Staying close to support children in difficult encounters with other children

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Strategies to Develop Emotional Literacy in Infants and Toddlers

II. Group setting (cont.):

- Showing positive feelings for both children in conflict
- Letting children know through your calm approach that conflict is to be expected and that it can be resolved with help
- Helping children learn to put into words how they think others are feeling and to express empathy for those feelings
- Encouraging negotiating so that each child feels that she/he has been heard and that their feelings have been taken into consideration
- Clarifying rules



Strategies to Develop Emotional Literacy in Infants and Toddlers

III. Using enriching language tools:

- Choosing books, music, finger plays with a rich vocabulary of feeling words
- Using puppetry or felt board stories that retell common social experiences and that emphasize the feeling vocabulary and conflict resolution
- Reading stories about characters that children can identify with who express a range of feelings
- Encouraging toddlers to draw pictures of their difficult or scary emotions



Strategies to Develop Emotional Literacy in Infants and Toddlers

IV. Modeling Positive Relationships

- Between adults in the care setting
- With other children



Using Books to Support Social Emotional Literacy in Infants and Toddlers

- Think about how you would children's books in your work
- Make a list of the feeling words in the book or feeling words you would use to enhance the book for infants and toddlers



Social Emotional Wellness

The ability to:

- Experience, regulate and express emotions
- Form close and secure interpersonal relationships
- Explore and learn from the environment



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CSEFEL Definition of Challenging Behavior

What we are referring to when we say “challenging behavior:”

- Any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults
- Behaviors that are not responsive to the use of developmentally appropriate guidance procedures



Communication Expresses...

- What the infant or toddler is experiencing
- What it is like to be in that child's body
- What it is like to be in that child's world



Infants Communicate in Many Ways

- Gazing or gaze aversion
- Yawning
- Expressions
 - Pushing out of the lips
 - Wrinkling the brow
 - Lip grimace; lip compression
 - Smiling
 - Tongue show
 - Brow raising
 - Dull look
- Vocalization
 - Giggling
 - Crying
 - Squealing



Infants Communicate in Many Ways (continued)

- Movements
 - Pulling away
 - Joining of hands
 - Arching back, stiffening
 - Clinging posture
 - Lowering the head
 - Hand to eye
 - Hand halt
 - Hand to ear
 - Hand to mouth
 - Hand to stomach
 - Reaching for caregiver



Expression of Emotion



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- Intensity
- Frequency
- Duration



Continuum of Emotional Expression

Social withdrawing.....Aggression

Two different and extreme forms of emotional expression



Acting-Out Behaviors

- Fussing
- Inconsolable crying
- Frequent or intense tantrums
- Pushing
- Hitting
- Biting
- Frequent throwing of things or knocking things down or destroying property
- Persistent refusal to allow or participate in activities
- Harm to self or others



Social Withdrawing Behaviors

- Pulling away while being held
- Rarely cooing
- Rarely babbling or talking
- Looking sad
- Not showing preference for caregiver
- Not making eye contact
- Whining
- Being overly compliant or avoidant with the caregiver
- Diminished efforts to use communications skills that have previously been used



Focusing on the Child

- Makes us more likely to be able to respond with empathy to her needs
- Helps us be more intentional about problem solving
- Will assist us in restoring the child's sense of well being
- Will enable the child to spend his emotional energy on development
- Will help us keep our own emotions in check



Responding to Distress

- Acknowledge distress
- Offer comfort
- Use words
- Be attuned (in sync) to child's individual needs
- Help the baby/toddler achieve the understood intention
- Be developmentally appropriate



Hypotheses

- What happened that caused the child to react with challenging behavior?
- What was the child experiencing or feeling?
- What has caused the shift in the child's pattern of behavior?
 - What happened before the behavior?
 - With whom did the behavior occur?





Reasons for Challenging Behavior

- Developmental surge
- Medical reasons
- Biological differences
- Social emotional environment
- Discontinuity between care program and home
- Lack of skill in communicating and interacting with others
- A combination of more than one above



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clip 3.2



clip 3.3

Reflection – Self Awareness

- What is this child's behavior bringing up for me as her caregiver?
- What emotions do I experience when I care for this child?
- What can I do for myself to address my emotional response to this child?



Primary Characteristics of a Program Process

- Reflective, rather than reactive
- Focus is on assisting child in getting needs met rather than eliminating the challenging behavior
- Goal is to help the child with developmental appropriate self-regulation so that developmental momentum is not slowed down or disrupted



Program Protocol

- Outlines clear steps in developing plan to address the behavior
- Identifies role/participants on the team
- Lays out how progress will be reviewed, how changes, if any, will be made in the plan
- Stipulates how decisions will be made about ending or modifying the intervention



Sample Protocol for Addressing Challenging Behavior in Infants and Toddlers

1. Observe and document
2. Assemble a staff team or reflective supervision meeting to review detailed questions about the meaning of the child's behavior.



Additional Protocol Components

3. Meet with the family to share information, deepen understanding and collaborate on strategies.
4. Determine a consistent plan for intervention.
5. Continue observation and documentation to provide data for evaluating improvement and ensuring the consistency of the plan.



Questions to Ask About the Meaning of the Behavior

- What is the child experiencing?
- What is the child's perspective on the situation?
- What strengths can be observed in the child's development or behavior patterns.
- What, when, where, how and with whom is the undesirable behavior occurring?



Questions to Ask About the Meaning of the Behavior (continued)

- What is the child communicating that he wants or needs?
- What is the purpose of the child's behavior?
- What is the meaning of the child's behavior?
- What do I want the child to do?





Parent Interview Questions

- What is your infant's or toddler's challenging behavior like for you?
- What have you done in response to his behavior?
- How do you feel when he acts this way?
- When and where does the infant or toddler behave in this way and what has typically happened before or after?
- Is this behavior new or has the infant or toddler been acting this way for some time?



Parent Interview Questions (continued)

- Does the child act this way with others (e.g. father, grandmother or others) and what does that person say about the behavior?
- How do you think the infant or toddler feels when he is engaging in this behavior? Why do you think he feels that way?
- Do you have any ideas about why the infant or toddler is acting this way?



Parent Interview Questions (continued)

- Have there been any changes at home that might help us understand how the infant or toddler feels?
- How have these changes affected your relationship with the infant or toddler?
- How has the behavior affected your relationship with the infant or toddler?



Potential Team Members

- Parents/Family Members
- Teacher(s), Home Visitors
- Assisting Teacher/Paraprofessional
- Therapists
- Administrative Staff
- Mental Health Consultant
- Others



Additional Protocol Components

6. Consult with a mental health professional if the child is not responding and the intensity, frequency, and duration of the behavior is not improving.
7. Determine whether further referral to a community resource is necessary through discussion with family, the supervisor, and the mental health consultant.



What Goes Into a Support Plan?

- Hypothesis
- Prevention strategies
- Action plan for changes
- Responses to behaviors
- Timeframe and method for evaluating changes in the challenging behavior



Case Study Instructions

- Read child descriptions
- Discuss the descriptions with the group
- Use the Infant-Toddler Behavior Review to organize the information from the child descriptions and the observations
- Develop the hypothesis and consider possibilities for intervention
- Develop an Action Plan and Support Plan



Major Messages to Take Home

- It is important to understand that behavioral problems in infants and toddlers are very often the child's way of communicating emotional distress.
- A collaborative, reflective process leading to an understanding of the meaning of the individual infant's or toddler's challenging behavior followed by a plan of action is an effective intervention.
- A partnership with parents or other primary caregivers is an essential element of any effective intervention for infants or toddlers.
- A formal protocol to resolve challenging behavior in infants and toddlers is a necessity.



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