Positive Strategies for Tough Kid Behaviors

Presented March 24, 2015

Dr. William Jensen’s
POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR TOUGH KID BEHAVIORS

- Introduce the Tough Kid Series
- Definition of a Tough Kid and Their Behaviors
- Why We Have Tough Kids
- Motivation and Tough Kids

Tough Kid Series
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Components shown:
- Facilitator’s Guide
- DVDs
- Role-Play Booklet
- Comic
- Social Game Card
- Scooter and Black Hole Card
- Reward Poster
- Group Rules Poster
- Power Poster
- Power Card

Consumable materials may be reordered or printed from the Reproducibles CD.

But Is It Evidence Based?


Tough Kids: Practical Behavior Management

Tough Kids—Who Are They?
Tough Kids Are One of the Reasons Teachers Leave Teaching

“I Quit”

Student Intervention Needs Triangle

Tough Kid Definition

- Behavior Excesses
  - Noncompliance
  - Aggressive
  - Argumentative
  - Destroys Property
- Behavior Deficits
  - Contingency Governed – Not Rule Governed
  - Poor Social Skills
  - Academic Deficits

Of Course I Can Read
Assumptions for Tough Kids

Assumption 1: Tough Kids are managed, not cured
Assumption 2: There are multiple causes for Tough Kids
Assumption 3: Positives work best with Tough Kids
Assumption 4: Mystery assumption?
(You have to like the kids and their behaviors)

What Children Grow Out of and Do Not Grow Out Of

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Stable and Social Behaviors

School and Age 10 Behaviors

Tough Kids: Why Do We Have Them? Causes

There Are Multiple Causes for Tough Kids. Not Just One Cause
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Contributing (Risk) Factors to Tough Kids

- Parent Background
- Parenting Style
- Divorce
- Supervision
- Association With Peer Group
- Social Class/Socioeconomic Disadvantage
- Onset/Chronicity
- Types of Behavior Overt vs. Covert
- Family Size/Birth Order
- School Experience and Failure
- Genetics

From: Gelfand, Jenson, & Drew (1997) Understanding childhood behavior disorders, Harcourt & Brace

Nine Temperament Characteristics
Three Categories of Temperament

- **Easy (40%)**: Friendly, Adapts Well, Pleasant Mood, Cyclic, Accepts Frustration
- **Slow to Warm Up (15%)**: Mild Intensity, Adapts Over Time
- **Difficult (10%)**: Unpleasant, Crying, Irregular, Reacts Poorly to Change
- **No Category (35%)**

- Easy Temp-18% School Problems
- Difficult-70% School Problems

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Why Does This Happen?

Masai Warriors

Masai Infants

5 Months Later

97% Cattle Died

Only 2 out of 10 of the Easy Temperament Infants Survived

All 10 out of 10 Difficult Infants Survived

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- Temperament and infant mortality among the Masai of East Africa.
- deVries MW
- Abstract

On the basis of Western studies suggesting that infants with difficult temperaments are at greater risk for behavioral and physical disorders, the author postulated that Masai infants with difficult temperaments would be at greater risk in the harsh environment created by the sub-Saharan drought in 1974, which disrupted the life of the Masai people of East Africa and resulted in increased infant mortality. Two groups of infants with difficult and easy temperaments were defined and followed. Contrary to expectations, mortality was greater for the infants with easy temperaments. The infant’s contribution, child-rearing orientation, and feeding practices were factors influencing survival.
Coercive Control

- Would You Like To?          Ignores You
- Come On Please...          Delays
- You Had Better-Yells!      Excuses, Argues
- You Had Better-Ultimate!!! Tantrums, Aggression
- Ok, Ok-Withdraws Request   Stops Tantrum
- 60% of Requests Are Withdrawn
- Pain Stops-Request Withdrawn
- Randomly Rewarded
- Reinforces Micro-Bursts of Aggressive Behavior
- Impedes Social Skills Development
- Reduces Academic Learning

Coercion/Pain Control

Antecedent Control

- Using a Question Format
- Distance from Child
- Eye Contact
- Two Requests
- Loudness of Request
- Enough Time
- Nonverbal Instead of Emotional
- Describe Behavior
- Reinforce Compliance
Other Signal Words

- Student’s Name: This is an **instruction**.....

- Student’s Name: This is a **direction**......

Precision Requests

- Least Restrictive Behavior Intervention
  LRBI Utah State Office of Education
What Motivates Him?

Incentives for Tough Kids:
Motivation

Incentives and Motivation

- There are several terms used to describe incentives—the most common are rewards and reinforcers.
- Motivation is viewed as lack of an incentive or drive to do something.
- Real question is: Won’t do; Can’t do; or a little of both.
- No-motivation is like heavy metal poisoning—it builds up “little by little” like eating too much tuna fish.
- Academic failures build up little by little and never leave the system, causing the death of motivation.

Assessing or Finding Incentives

Golden Rule: Can’t take too much time, can’t cost too much money, can’t be too complicated.

- Ask Them
- Keep Track of What They Ask For
- Watch What They Like to Do
- Think Like a “Kid,” Not Like an Adult
- Let Them Sample Things (Preferences Sampling)
Effective Incentive Formula

- I = Immediately
- F = Frequently
- E = Eye Contact
- E = Enthusiasm
- D = Describe the Behavior
- A = Anticipation
- V(2) = Variety and Variability (not fixed)

**Mystery Motivators**

1. Give 2 or 3 per week
2. Make them random
3. Sometimes back to back
4. 50% a Bonus for perfect performance
5. Never let them color in a square if they
   don’t earn it
6. Only Positive Comments in the Comment Section

**Changeable Mystery Motivators**
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Individual Contracts
Homework
Group Projects
Not Being Tardy
Social Skills Training
Group Rules
Not Engaging in Inappropriate Behavior
Test Results
Completing Difficult Tasks
Making Others

Reward Spinner - Learned in a Grocery Store

1. Hawaii
2. Generic Yogurt
3. (Other categories)

Lenny and Squiggy

Graphs and charts showing data over time.
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