Helping Teens Develop Responsible Behavior and Problem Solving Skills
(I Shouldn’t Have to Tell ‘em That - II)

Executive Functioning Deficits that Create Behavioral Challenges for Children and Teens
AGENDA

• Review Main Points of First Session
• Application to Teens
• Motives of Teen Behavior and Executive Function Deficits
• How to Work Through Problems Empathetically While Keeping Teen Responsible
• Discuss Examples Applying these Principles
Challenging Behaviors

Procrastination
Inattention
Lack of Follow Through
Poor Organizational Skills
Oppositional-Defiance
Lack of Flexibility
Behavioral Meltdowns
New Perspective?

• Executive functions are learned skills. Deficits are skill deficits.
• Children and teens would do well if they thought they could
• We all want attention and to be rewarded
• Is the “payoff” worth the child or teen’s investment?
• Behavioral meltdowns and tirades are not fun for anyone
Diagnosis and Behavioral Challenges

LD

AD-HD

Executive Function Deficits

Opp Defiant Disorder
Executive Abilities and ADHD

• RESPONSE INHIBITION
  • Switching Attention
  • Initiation of Behavior (procrastination)

• WORKING MEMORY

• INTERNALIZED SPEECH
  • Intrinsic Motivation

• EMOTIONAL CONTROL

• CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING
5 techniques

Response Inhibition
4 techniques

Working Memory
4 procedures

Internal Speech
Cognitive-Behavioral > Thought Distortions
Development of Intrinsic Motivation

Emotional Control
Problem Solving
Simonsays
PAY ATTENTION!

With the help of Jo, Mitz and H, the Simon family of Simon Says helps your kids improve their attention span! With the help of Simon Says, you can learn how to

- Improve your child's concentration
- Enhance their memory skills
- Develop their ability to focus

Simon Says is a fun and interactive game that is designed to help children of all ages.

Look inside for more information and how to play!
## Talking with Kids About Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People with ADHD sometimes...</th>
<th>Here's an example:</th>
<th>I learned that the reason this happens is:</th>
<th>My therapist taught me things that I can do to help myself. For example:</th>
<th>The game that helped me get started is:</th>
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<tr>
<td>... have trouble stopping one thing in order to begin something else</td>
<td>Sometimes when my mom tells me to stop playing outside because it's time to go to the store, I don't want to do it and I throw a fit.</td>
<td>Once my brain is focused on one thing, it has a hard time letting go of that thing and focusing on something else.</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Switching Focus</strong></td>
<td><strong>My therapist taught me a way to calm my breathing, my body and my brain. It's called a cool-down, and it helps me get ready to switch focus.</strong></td>
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<td>I look at a STOP sign whenever I practice the cool-down. (I've practiced so much that now I can imagine a STOP sign in my head, and that helps me remember how to do the cool-down.)</td>
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<td><strong>STOP, Relax, Focus, Go!</strong></td>
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<td>... have trouble getting big jobs started and then getting them finished on time</td>
<td>When it's time to clean my room, I never feel like getting started. Even when I really want to get it done, I get distracted and I lose track of time, and then my parents get mad at me.</td>
<td>I don't have a good picture in my mind of all the things I need to do and of how fast I need to work to get the job done.</td>
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<td><strong>Goal Orientation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Since I don't have a good picture in my mind of what to do, I make something called a game plan. It's a picture on paper, so I can see all the things I need to do and which one to do first. It has a START and a FINISH, so it looks kind of like a game board. I even use a game marker to keep track of my progress.</strong></td>
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<td>And I've been practicing guessing how long it takes to do things. My mom and I make a game out of it, so it's fun!</td>
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<td><strong>The Go-for-the-Goal Game Show</strong></td>
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### Talking to Kids About Behavior

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<td>... forget all about what they are supposed to be doing</td>
<td>When I get ready for school in the morning, I usually forget to do some of the things that I’m supposed to do. My parents are always fussing at me to do this, do that.</td>
<td>I have trouble keeping things in my mind so I can take the right action at the right time. <strong>Working Memory</strong></td>
<td>Instead of depending on my parents to always remind me what to do, now I use cues to help me remember to do the right thing at the right time. My therapist, my coach and I put our heads together and figure out what kind of cues will grab my attention and be a good reminder of what to do.</td>
<td>Simon Says Pay Attention!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... do something else instead of what they are supposed to do</td>
<td>I play with the dog instead of getting dressed for school. I get mad at my friend and do something mean instead of explaining what’s wrong.</td>
<td>It’s hard for me to stop myself; my brain doesn’t even realize I’m doing the wrong thing until it’s too late. <strong>Behavioral Inhibition</strong></td>
<td>My coach and I play games to help me practice stopping myself. In the games, when I get a cue, I have to stop what I’m doing and not move at all. Then, my parents use those cues in real life to help me realize that I need to stop myself. Sometimes we make an On-Track Map to help me think ahead about what to-do and what not-to-do.</td>
<td>Simon Says Don’t Do It!</td>
</tr>
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</table>
"A person's a person no matter how small."

Dr. Seuss
Parenting Teenagers

Systematic Training for Effective Parenting of Teens

By the author of Over Half a Million Parents

Seymour D. Moe

Published by STEP
What is the Motive of the Behavior

ATTENTION –
  Irritation – Recognition – S-R

POWER –
  Anger – Give Responsibility

REVENGE –
  Hurt – Discuss inequity

DISPLAY OF INADEQACY –
  Helpless – SAFE
P.E.T.

PARENT

EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING

The Proven Program for Raising Responsible Children

DR. THOMAS GORDON

Rebel Free from Anarchy

OVER 4 MILLION COPIES SOLD

REVISED AND UPDATED
Who Owns The Problem?

No problem Area

They Have a problem
Solution Not Impact You
Solution is not Dangerous
PROCEDURE = ACTIVE LISTENING

You Have A problem
Concrete, Tangible Impact
Solution or Behavior Is Dangerous
PROCEDURE = CONFRONTATION
AND PROBLEM SOLVING
Skill Deficit Perspective

• Understand the child is trying to do well.
• Figure out what is wrong from the child’s perspective. (The influence of frontal lobe functioning on literacy and math skills is also being increasingly revealed.)
• Consider what executive functions are involved in performing the skill
• Use Collaborative Problem Solving Method (Ross Greene) to come up with a real solution
Solutions

• Unless the solution addressed the child’s real needs (unsolved problem), it will not really work.

• Getting the child to discuss what is the problem from their point of view is the hardest step in the process.

• Solutions have to be realistic, durable and address the issues of both people.
Communication

- LISTENING
Confrontation Process

Sub-Thershold

Boiling Point
Communication - TALKING (Confrontation)

- **B** – Behavior in observable terms
- **E** – Effect or Impact of behavior on you
- **A** – Affect – how you feel about this
- **N** – Next time from now on –
  - Brain Storming Procedures
- **S** – Set a time to evaluate
  - Or Else
    - Positive Responses
    - Negative Responses
    - Emphasize Positive Responses
Interventions

• Collaborative problem solving (Ross Greene)
  – Method A – Must Do It
  – Method C – Postpone for Now or Drop
  – Method B – Find collaborative Solution
Explosive Child

Inflexibility + inflexibility = EXPLOSION

Stimulus response systems are designed to 1) teach basic lessons about right and wrong; and 2) motivate people to behave appropriately.

But children do well if they can. If they cannot, then stimulus-response systems are not going to be effective.
Explosive Child

- An explosive outburst occurs when the cognitive demands being placed upon a person outstrip that person’s capacity to respond adaptively.
- Flexibility and frustration tolerance are critical developmental skills that some fail to develop at an appropriate age.
- How you describe the explosive behavior will directly effect your management of it.
Explosive Child: Pathways and Triggers

• Pathways to explosive behavior
  1. Executive Functioning Skills
     1. Shift Cognitive Set
     2. Develop coherent plan of action
     3. Separation of behavior and affect
  2. Language Processing Skills
     1. Categorizing and expressing emotions
     2. Identifying and articulating one’s needs
     3. Solving problems
Explosive Child

• Pathways (cont)
  3. Emotional Regulation Skills
      Treat Depression /Anxiety
  4. Cognitive Flexibility Skills
  5. Social Skills

Triggers

Situations or events that routinely trigger an outburst. Think of them as problems that are yet to be solved.
Explosive Child

• Plan A – Imposition of adult will
• Plan C – Dropping the expectation completely
• Plan B – Collaborative Problem Solving
  – Empathy (plus reassurance)
    • Both issues on the table
  – Define the problem
    • Ingenious solution = Durable; Realistic; Mutually Satisfactory
  – Invitation
    • You will work together at the solution
Collaborative Approach

• A PHILOSOPHY:
  – Kids (and adults) do well if they can.

• A MANTRA
  – Behind every challenging behavior is an unsolved problem or a lagging skill or both.

• KNOWLEDGE
  – Traditional discipline (rewards and punishments) does not teach skills or help kids solve problems.
Collaborative Approach

• SOME GOALS
  – Significantly improve your understanding of your child’s challenging behavior. Create mechanisms for responding to their needs proactively rather than emergently.

• A MISSION
  – If you were frustrated by a problem you want to solve but could not, how would you like to be treated?
Collaborative Approach

• Three Ingredients of Method B:
  – Empathy
  – Define the Problem
  – An Invitation to help solve the problem
Explosive Child

Basic Assumptions:
1. The child is a little different
2. May be necessary to put authority figure agenda temporarily on the back burner
3. Explosions are predictable if you understand the child (dynamics)
4. Everyone dealing with the child should understand the child
Explosive Child: Why the approach often fails

• Over-reliance on emergency plan B
• Using plan B as a last resort
• Putting solutions on the table instead of concerns
• Entering plan B with predetermined solutions
• Agreeing to solutions that are not realistic, durable and mutually satisfactory
• Over-reliance on plan A and C
Stages of Change

• Precontemplation
• Contemplation
• Preparation
• Action
• Maintenance
Stages of Change

• Precontemplation
  – The person does not consider the behavior of focus to be a problem and/or is not currently considering changing the behavior. For a person at this stage, the benefits of the behavior are greater than the costs.
Stages of Change

• Precontemplation
  – Help the person engage in the counseling process and begin considering patterns and potential effects of not solving the issues that brought them to your office.
    • Decontaminate the referral process
    • Explore the meaning of the events that brought them to your office.
Stages of Change

• Contemplation
  – The person is considering that there may be a problem and is seriously contemplating changing behavior, but is struggling with mixed feelings about changing.
Stages of Change

• Contemplation
  – Help the person see the big picture. Discover discrepancies between their current behavior and their goals for the future, and consider making some changes.
  • Normalize ambivalence
  • Weigh pros and cons of changing
  • Imagine the future
  • Elicit change and self motivation statement and amplify those for the client
Stages of Change

• Preparation –
  – Help the person resolve the ambivalence about changing, develop a sense of ability to change (if it has already happened, it is probably possible), and make the initial plans for going about changing.
  • Clarify the client’s own goals and strategies
  • Help develop plan for change
  • Assist client in decreasing barriers to change
Stages of Change

• Action
  – Help client initiate change, cope with difficulties in the change process, and gain social support for new ways of being.
  • Support small steps toward change
  • Only offer expertise or advice with client’s permission
  • Emphasize that setbacks and lapses are unintended failures of the planning process and help to improve long-term plans.
    (adjusting courses in flight)
Stages of Change

• Maintenance
  – Help client cope with difficult situations, maintain commitment and energy, initiate new facets of living to help client integrate them, and process discouragement when it happens.
  • Affirm client’s resolve and self-efficacy
  • Assist client in making transition to working on long other term goals
Resources

• Theraplay
• Simon Says, by Daniel and Marcie Yeager
• ADHD – Warehouse
• Russell Barkley (Video – New Look at ADHD)
• Ross Greene – Explosive Child