

Social-emotional Development, Challenging Behaviors and Building Self-Regulation

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Learning Objectives

- Ecological developmental model.
- Different levels of social-emotional milestones.
- Strategies for self-regulation for children with challenging behaviors.
- Awareness of staffs' own emotional and behavioral state.
- Recognizing different kinds and sources of stress.
- Effects of stress on you/people around you and children.
- Stress management/self-regulation strategies for staff/teachers.
- Personal Action Plan.
- Questions & Answers.
- Evaluations.

Ecological-Developmental Model

- Ecological systems theory, also known as development in context or human ecology theory, identifies five environmental systems with which an individual interacts. Ecological systems theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner.
- Interactions are highly complex.

Nature versus Nurture

- Genetic predispositions have a strong impact on child development.
- Child development occurs in a social context.
- Contexts are created and shaped by culture.
- Cultural beliefs play a key role in how parents/teachers view and interpret developmental issues.

Functional Social and Emotional Milestones (Dr. Stanley Greenspan)

1. Attention and Regulation.
2. Forming Relationships or Mutual Engagement.
3. Intentional Two-Way Communication.

Functional Social and Emotional Milestones

4. Complex Gestures and Problem Solving.
5. Use of Symbols to Express Thoughts and Feelings.
6. Connecting Symbols Logically and Abstract Thinking.

Functional Social and Emotional Milestones

- These milestones are to be looked at functionally in relation to expectable patterns of development in the earliest years.
- Because the children make use of previously acquired or mastered capacities to reach higher level of functioning, limitations in early levels will impact the quality of higher levels.

Functional Social and Emotional Milestones

- It is important to give the highest priority to limitations in the earliest level.
- Limitations in early levels do not stop the development of emotional and social capacities; a child can reach higher levels of social and emotional milestones with limitations in lower levels.

Level 1: Attention and Regulation

- Typically observable beginning between birth and 3 months.
- Noticing and attending to the surrounding through all the senses.
- Staying regulated in the presence of internal and external stimuli.

Level 1: Attention and Regulation

What to observe in children:

- Visually track and explore objects and faces.
- Alert, attentive, and interested in the world.
- Stay calm for 2-3 minutes at a time.
- Do not become distressed by stimulation (i.e., touch, sound, movement).

Level 1: Attention and Regulation

Risk factors in children:

- Lack of calm and sustained interest to stimuli.
- Excessive crying.
- Eating/feeding difficulties.
- Sleeping difficulties.
- Unable to be soothed.

Level 2: Forming Relationships or Mutual Engagement

- Typically observable beginning between 3 and 6 months.
- Developing a meaningful relationship with the teacher – for soothing, security, and pleasure.
- Able to experience the full range of emotions with support from the teacher.

Level 2: Forming Relationships or Mutual Engagement

What to observe in children:

- Seem happy when she sees a familiar person.
- Connect with the primary caregivers through eye contact, smiles, and body postures.
- Visually “check-in” with the caregivers.
- Show curiosity to new objects presented by the caregivers.

Level 2: Forming Relationships or Mutual Engagement

Risk factors in children:

- No engagement.
- Lack of visual referencing.
- “Tune-out.”
- Fleeting expressions of joy and pleasure.

Level 3: Intentional Two-Way Communication

- Typically observable beginning between 4 and 10 months.
- Using gestures and purposeful demonstrations of affect to communicate with others.
- Gestures become more complex and verbal conversations emerge as the child gets older.

Level 3: Intentional Two-Way Communication

What to observe in children:

- Engage in back and forth interactions.
- Connect feelings to actions.
- Intentional communication.
- Begin to understand cause and effect as well as differentiating self and others
 - *my actions can bring out responses from someone else.*

Level 3: Intentional Two-Way Communication

Risk factors in children:

- Non-responsive; no interactions.
- Lack of initiation for communication.
- Ignore people's cues.
- Lack of intentional actions.

Level 4: Complex Gestures and Problem Solving

- Typically observable beginning between 10 and 18 months.
- Using newly acquired motor skills and language to get the needs met.
- Employing complex sequences of gestures/actions and words to problem solve.

Level 4: Complex Gestures and Problem Solving

What to observe in children:

- Use intentional emotional interactions to get their needs met.
- Initiate and respond to communication and interaction.
- Generate ideas and solve problems in play.
- Respond to limit setting.

Level 4: Complex Gestures and Problem Solving

Risk factors in children:

- Inability to initiate and sustain consecutive social interactions.
- No exchange of emotional signals.
- Lack of problem-solving desires and attempts.

Level 5: Use of Symbols to Express Thoughts and Feelings

- Typically observable beginning between 18 and 30 months.
- Imaginative play begins to emerge.
- Expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas through language and imaginative play.
- Projecting feelings onto the characters and actions in play scenarios.

Level 5: Use of Symbols to Express Thoughts and Feelings

What to observe in children:

- Use words and phrases in meaningful ways.
- Become representational – pretend play, mental images.
- Regulate behavior and expresses needs/wants with gestures, words, and combination of words.

Level 5: Use of Symbols to Express Thoughts and Feelings

Risk factors in children:

- Limited use of meaningful words.
- Lack of meaningful play.
- Do not express ideas, desires, interests, or needs.

Level 6: Connecting Symbols Logically and Abstract Thinking

- Typically observable beginning between 30 and 48 months.
- Connecting and elaborating sequences of ideas logically.
- The narratives typically have a beginning, middle, and end.
- Understanding abstract concepts, consequences of action, and motives.

Level 6: Connecting Symbols Logically and Abstract Thinking

What to observe in children:

- Begin to form ideas between the ideas of others and their own thoughts.
- Give opinions and able to do reality testing.
- Have the capacity to elaborate pretend play.
- Play themes evolve to include more abstractive concepts (i.e., empathy).

Level 6: Connecting Symbols Logically and Abstract Thinking

Risk factors in children:

- Thoughts are illogical.
- Reflect limited emotional range through thoughts and play.
- Lack of elaboration in pretend play.

Self-Regulation Activities

- Think-pair-share: Consider the Developmental Milestones
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_O1brYwdSY
- Engage in a Self-Regulation Activity (Bubbles)

Staff Self-Regulation –
Reducing Your Stress
Level

Humor

- From Mayo Clinic:
- “A good laugh has great effects. When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:
- Stimulate many organs. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.

Humor

- Activate and relieve your stress response. A laugh can also fire up and then cools down your stress response and increases your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- Soothe tension. Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.”

Have You Had a Dream Like This?



Types and Sources of Stress

- At your table, please discuss different types (sources) of stress and how these stressors MAY affect your:
 - body,
 - work/professional life, and
 - personal life.

Family Stress



Common Sources of Work Stress (APA)

- According to American Psychological Association:
- Excessive workloads.
- Few opportunities for growth or advancement.
- Work that isn't engaging or challenging.
- Lack of social support.
- Not having enough control over job-related decisions.
- Conflicting demands or unclear performance expectations.

Burnout

- Three main components:
 - Feelings of being emotionally exhausted by the work.
 - Feelings of depersonalization which result in negative, cynical attitudes toward clients.
 - Diminished personal accomplishment, reflecting a sense of lowered competence in work with clients.

Compassion Fatigue

- Compassion fatigue results, when burnout that has not been addressed.
- Defined as a state of tension and preoccupation with individual or cumulative trauma of clients.
 - Re-experiencing the traumatic events.
 - Avoidance/numbing of reminders of the traumatic event.
 - Persistent arousal.

Vicarious Trauma

- Vicarious trauma is another term used to describe compassion fatigue.
- Defined as “the transformation or change in a helper’s inner experience as a result of responsibility for an *empathic* engagement with traumatized clients.

Data On Stress

- In 2017, 61 percent of Americans cited work as a top source of stress, according to the American Psychological Association's (APA) annual Stress in America Survey.

Stress Illustrated

CAN
STRESS
KILL
YOU?



What Is Stress?

Stress is the body's reaction to any changes that require an adjustment or response. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. Stress is a normal part of life.

You Have a Choice

- All people experience stress...
- How you manage your stressors will determine how you feel and function??

How Does Stress Affect You?

Stress can affect you physically and mentally.

- Psychologically: Excessive crying, irritability, prolonged anxiety, mood swings, depression, anxiety, harm to self and others, substance abuse, etc.
- Physically: Headaches, dizziness, insomnia, eating problems, heart problems, back pain, prone to infections, reduced immune system, etc.

How Your Stress Affects the Children & Families around You

- Projection
- Children feel less engaged; less safe
- Difficulties building relationships
- Less learning
- Interaction with families will be affected

Group activity- Stress Management

- Pair up with your neighbor and discuss your stressors.
- Identify 5 strategies and your support system to combat your stress.

Stress Management

- Be religious/spiritual.
- Meditate.
- Forgive.
- Be thankful.
- Be positive.
- Sleep and eat well.
- Walk, breath.
- Plan ahead.
- Informed.
- Prioritize.
- Organize.
- Keep records.
- There is always tomorrow.
- Realize your limits.
- Be flexible.
- Say “No”.
- Avoid toxic people and/or environment.
- Be professional.

Stress Management Tips

- Break down whatever you have to do into smaller tasks. If you have to tackle a beast, carve it into nibble-sized hors d'oeuvres.
- Think of things that make teaching fun for you - and do them!
- Deal openly with a colleague who has bothered or upset you before the situation festers.
- Try not to take things personally because often comments aren't meant to be digs.
- Stay in close touch with nature. Take a class outdoors if weather and school policy permit it, open the windows at snack time, find a way to incorporate the change of seasons and nature walks into your curriculum.
- Make time during the school year for your hobbies. Don't wait for summer vacation.
- Apologize when you're wrong.
- Put a cartoon or photo that makes you laugh in you plan book or desk drawer and look at it when you need a boost.

Stress Management Tips

- Take a walk during lunch, a planning period, or after school. During your walk, don't think about the things you have to do.
- Steer clear of the coffee pot in the faculty room. Too much caffeine can make you nervous and irritable.
- Keep in mind that no matter what colleagues, your principal, students, or parents think or say, you're basically a good teacher who can't please all the people all the time.
- Don't listen to the rumors that fly around the school.
- Give yourself permission to do absolutely nothing for five minutes a day — and not feel guilty about it.
- Just say no. Politely refuse to take on more projects than you can handle, even if a colleague, your principal, or a parent asks you to.
- Be grateful to have a meaningful job.

Self-Reflection

- Helps individuals gain a better understanding of *why* and *how* they make the professional choices that they do.
- Takes time:
 - Acknowledge strengths.
 - Acknowledge challenges.
 - Improve your skills.

Strategies for Effective Self-Reflection

- Observe and remember what happens with children, families, and staff.
- Think about how your own experiences affect you and your work:
 - Personal Reaction: How a professional situation makes us feel.
 - Professional Action: How we choose to respond professional in action and/or words.
- Think about the perspectives of others.
- Identify stressors.

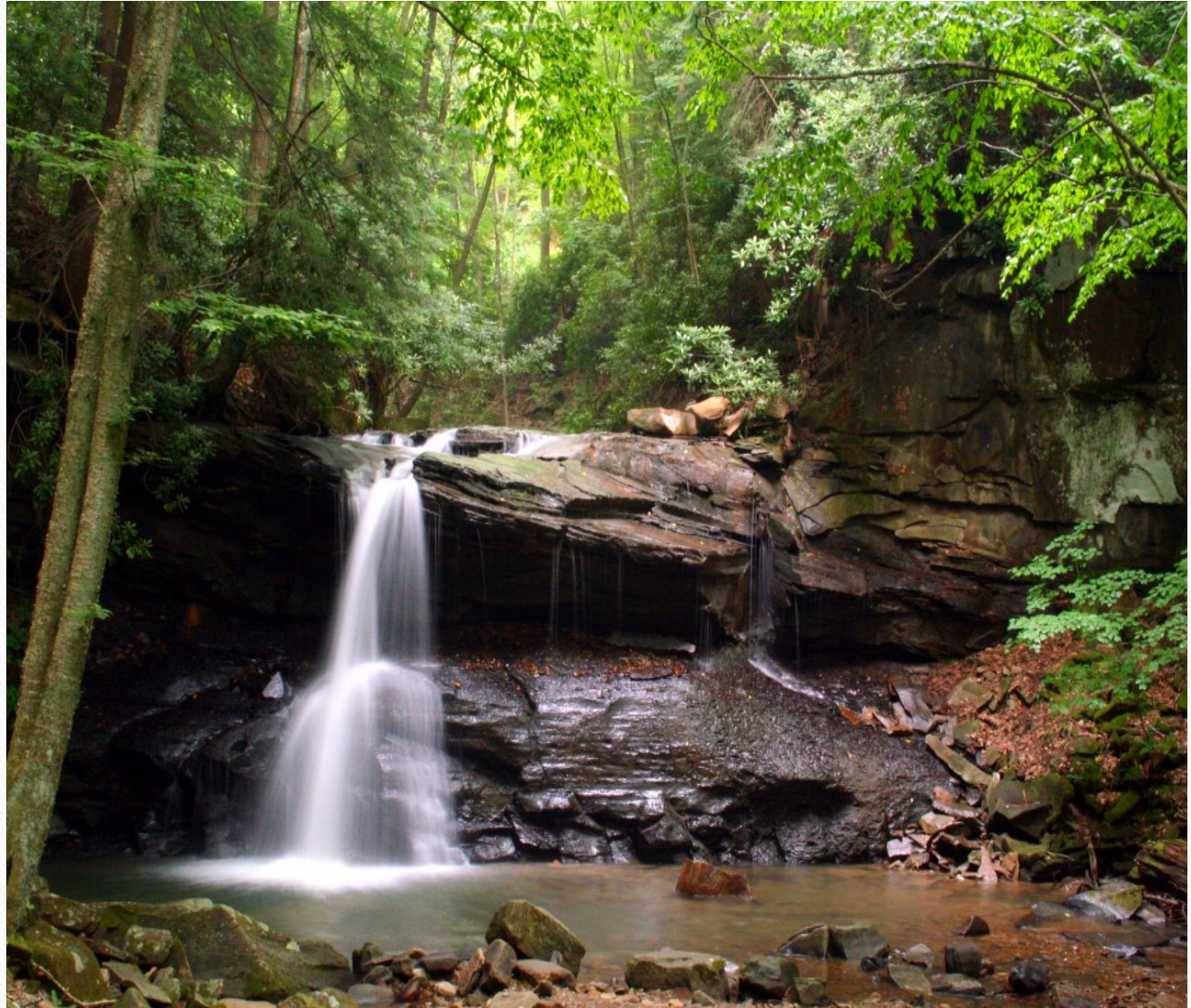
Strategies for Reflecting with Others

- Set aside time to share your reflections with others.
- Thoughtfully consider the reflections of others:
 - Talk honestly.
 - Listen thoughtfully.
- Use shared reflections as a source for creating action plans and considering future responses.

Beach



Forrest/
waterfall



Relaxation Exercise

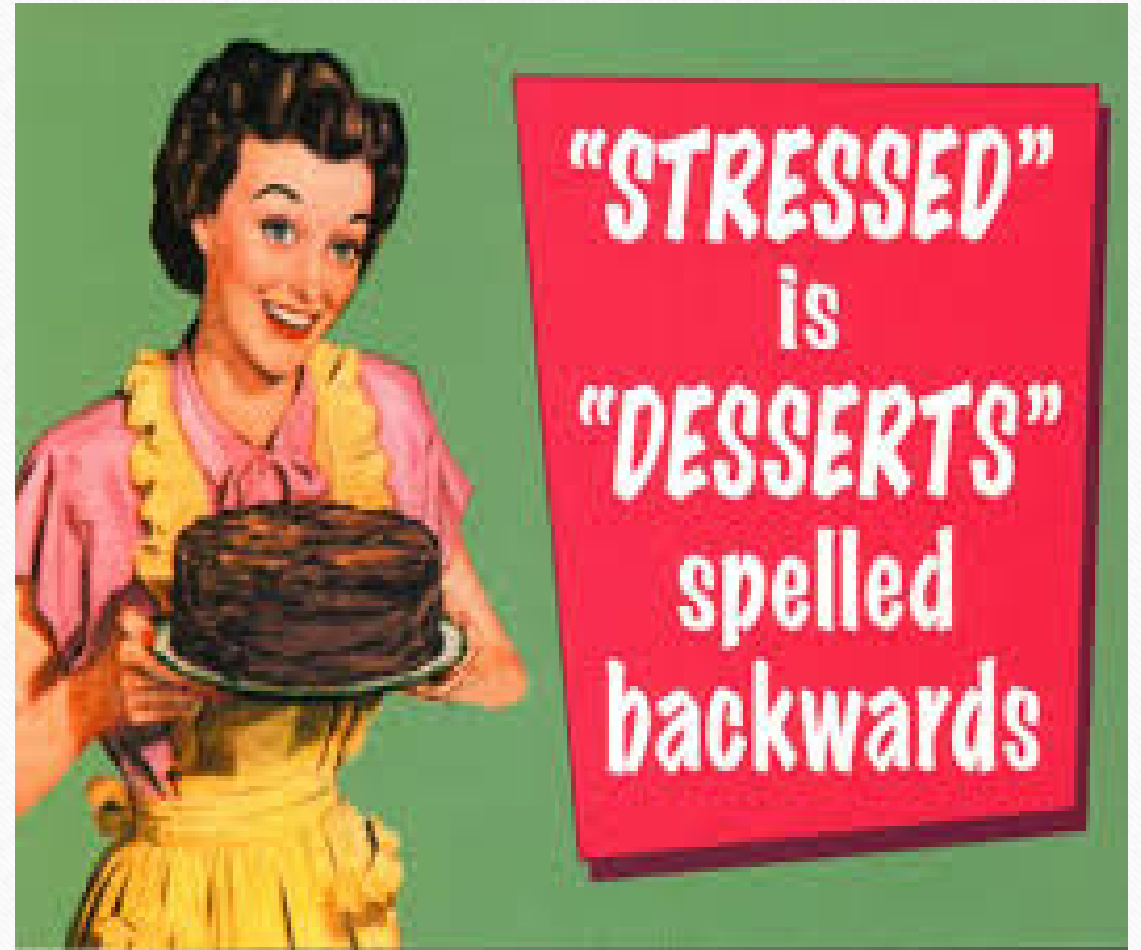
- Deep breathing and visualization

- https://students.dartmouth.edu/wellness-center/sites/students_wellness_center.prod/files/special_place.mp3

Personal Plan

- Think of a stressful situation that you want to change.
- Discuss it with a friend/family member.
- Write down a plan for change and think about it.
- Have a person checking in with you regularly.
- Get professional help when needed.

Reframe /
Different
Perspectives



Summary (APA)

- Track your stressors. Taking notes can help you find patterns among your stressors and your reactions to them.
- Develop healthy responses. Instead of attempting to fight stress with fast food, smoking, alcohol, etc., do your best to make healthy choices when you feel the tension rise.

Summary (APA)

- Establish boundaries. In today's digital world, it's easy to feel pressure to be available 24 hours a day. Establish some work-life boundaries for yourself.
- Take time to recharge. To avoid the negative effects of chronic stress and burnout, we need time to replenish and return to our pre-stress level of functioning.
- Learn how to relax. Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises and mindfulness (a state in which you actively observe present experiences and thoughts without judging them) can help melt away stress.

Resources

- Taking Care of Ourselves: Stress and Relaxation
- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-support-well-being/article/relaxation-exercises>
- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-support-well-being/article/taking-care-ourselves-stress-relaxation>

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