Parenting Approaches for Challenging Kids (PACK)
Children (8-12 yo)

Module 1

INTRODUCTIONS. BACKGROUND. CAUSES OF MISBEHAVIOR

- Materials Needed
  - Copies of workshop syllabi for parents (see attached)
  - Copies of reference list for parents (see attached)
  - Copies of new label charts (see attached)

- 1530-1545 Introductions
  - Ask each parent to identify themselves by first name
  - Establish basic group guidelines
  - Ask each parent to mention one positive feature of their children and mention one “challenging bx” they’d like to focus on

- 1545-1600 Discussion of Parenting Goals
  - Query parents, list on board what are their wishes and goals as parents, e.g., build strong, close parent-child relationships, have compliant v. successful v. happy children, foster healthy self esteem/resiliency?
  - Eye on the future, willing to tolerate a lot now if a guarantee re child having a positive future adjustment, healthy, successful

- 1600-1615 Define Resiliency
  - Generate discussion re resilience
  - What is it? Capacity to bounce back from stress, problem-solve independently, do the right thing no matter what, even if no one watching, doing the right thing even if no punishments or rewards, essentially having strong character
  - What promotes it? Essentially consistently treating children as if their thoughts and feelings are important, encouraging independent thinking via collaborative problem-solving, teaching skills to kids including managing feelings especially anger, plus stress management and social skills, modeling effective management of affect, modeling an optimistic mindset

- 1615-1640 Discussion of Factors re Why Children Misbehave
  - Developmental aspects-expectations should match development, e.g. tantrums for a 2 yo nl, but not for a 6 yo
  - Situational stressors, e.g., hunger, fatigue, overwhelmed, frustrated, disappointed
  - Temperamental differences-review temperament-easy, difficult v. slow to warm up, discussion re that children are unique, each may require unique approach, define difficult temperament, discuss a few examples to deal w/difficult temperament (e.g., preparations for poorly adaptable kids)
  - Review old and new labels, the labels “stick” and color how the child views themselves, child see themselves through parents’ eyes, the label also effects how we explain/attribute the bx (often erroneously take neg bx personally) and impacts how we feel about the child, esp. during episode misbx

- 1640-1645 Questions, Wrap Up
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Old Negative Label</strong></th>
<th><strong>New Exciting Label</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demanding</td>
<td>Holds high standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
<td>Tenacious, assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpredictable</td>
<td>Flexible, creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>Zestful, enthusiastic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argumentative</td>
<td>Strongly committed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nosy</td>
<td>Curious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild</td>
<td>Energetic</td>
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<td>Inflexible</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
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<td>Charismatic</td>
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<td>Compelling</td>
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<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Cautious</td>
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<td>Explosive</td>
<td>Dramatic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picky</td>
<td>Selective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whiny</td>
<td>Analytical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distractible</td>
<td>Perceptive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reference List

1. On Resiliency, Improving Parent-Child Relationships, Improving Child Compliance:
   - *Raising Resilient Children* by Robert Brooks and Sam Goldstein.
   - *Parent Effectiveness Training* by Thomas Gordon
   - *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

2. On Explosive Kids:
   - *The Explosive Child* by Ross Greene

3. On Difficult Temperament
   - *Raising Your Spirited Child* by Mary Sheedy Kurkison
   - *The Difficult Child* by Stanley Turecki

4. On Homework Problems
   - *Ending the Homework Hassle* by John Rosemond

5. On Sibling Rivalry
   - *Siblings Without Rivalry* by Elaine Mazlish and Adele Faber
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Module 2

OVERVIEW OF P.A.C.K. PARADIGM

• 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In

• 1545-1600 Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board
  o Examples:
    • Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters
    • Build close, supportive relationships bet parents-kids

• 1600-1645 Provide Overview Of Conceptual Framework Of P.A.C.K.

• PACK’s Basic Philosophy—All children wish to be successful socially, academically and behaviorally at home and school
  o We all want to be successful in every way
  o We all want to be liked by everyone
  o Children want to please adults (mostly) and make and keep friends
  o They want to get good grades and to remain in good graces with the grown ups
  o Why would any child deliberately bring negative attention from peers, parents and teachers all day long, if they knew a better way
  o Ross Greene’s philosophy: “Children do well...if they can.”

• Children who have a pattern of negative behavior have skills deficits or developmental delays in the following areas:
  o Problems with regulating feelings, especially anger
  o Problems tolerating frustration (often at level 2 yo even though 8 yo)
  o Problems with being flexible (they are rigid kids in a world that demands flexibility)
  o Impaired capacity to solve problems independently
  o Or they have difficult temperaments, language delays, learning problems, adhd
  o Kids who are repeatedly misbehaving tend to feel miserably

• Successful interventions must build character/confidence and teach stress mgt, affect regulation, frustration tolerance, flexibility, problem-solving. Conceptualize negative behavior as stemming from a mismatch bet environmental demands and child’s capacities.

• When a child is locked into a cycle of negative behavior, the parent must initiate the change in dynamics:
  o If the child knew a better way, they would do it
  o The grown ups in the child’s life must find a way to approach the child so that she reacts in a desired way and wants to be compliant with our requests
  o Also, must build skills in the child—show child how to manage strong feelings, especially anger, manage stress and

• Traditional parenting approaches don’t work for these kids
  o Many parents wed to tradition
• Reluctant to let go of these traditional approaches: don’t know another way, “it worked for me growing up.”
• Concerned re alternative approaches are weird, radical
• Concerned that they are “giving in” and not exerting appropriate control over their kids, not they might be too permissive or end up with spoiled, over-indulged children if they become more democratic in their parenting
• What are the traditional approaches? Brainstorm with parents, list on board:
  📌 Examples include: spankings, time outs, punishments, removal privileges-how do these teach kids needed skills, independent problem-solving, build character?
• These traditional approaches certainly don’t tend to foster strong characters, resiliency, close parent-child relationships, autonomy
• If threats, rewards, punishments, adult supervision are removed, child will misbehave
• No opportunity to instill a sense of personality responsibility or internal moral compass.
• Punishments foster revenge fantasies, child will resent and just be sneakier, may feel misunderstood.

* Punishment is often problematic and often leads to:
  • Feelings of hatred
  • Guilt
  • Self-pity
  • Feelings of revenge
  • Unworthiness
  • Defiance

* Most children don’t react by saying “bless my father and mother who just punished me. They really taught me a lesson. I’ll try harder/do better next time!” Instead they say:
  • “She’s mean! I’ll get back at her.”
  • “Dad never listens to me! He doesn’t care about me or understand me at all!”
  • “Taking away TV won’t stop me. I’ll do it again only next time I won’t get caught.”
  • “I’m bad. I deserve to be punished.”

* Spanking can be problematic
  • A little spanking may turn into a big spanking
  • What are we teaching the child if we spank? They conclude, if you don’t know what else to do – Hit!
  • They learn “I am not capable to learning right from wrong without punishment.”

* Negative reinforcement increases negative, defiant behavior and fosters dependency
  • There is a cycle of child refusing to do chores or neglecting to do hw or engaging in inappropriate bx
  • Child (and parent) continues on this course until parent nags or blows up
  • Child learns not to initiate desirable bx until nagging or yelling occurs, because they are programmed that way through repeated negative reinforcement
  • They engage their parents (draw them in) with negative acting out and will persist until strong reaction from parents, in some cases
  • The child is not motivated to “do the right thing” on their own and learn to await direction from parents

* Each child is unique and will require a unique (parenting) approach
In other words, parents/teachers/other adults must treat each child, differently, according to their unique attributes, personalities, temperaments, strengths/weaknesses.

- Every instance of challenging behavior may require a unique approach.
  - In other words, we have to understand if it's due to distractibility/impaired attention->impaired short memory, skills deficits-impaired regulation of feelings, impaired problem-solving, impaired frustration tolerance, environmental demands exceed capacities
  - Or is my child just being deliberately defiant, a stubborn stinker?

- When kids feel good, they act good.
  - If the grown ups can help these kids turn things around-learn missing skills, be successful socially, academically and behaviorally at home and school, gain competence and confidence and most importantly build strong, close, supportive relationships with their parents, the good behavior flows naturally
  - When kids feel good and parent-child relations are good, minimal discipline needed to maintain desired bx
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Module 3

aversive behavior cycle, arousal and introduction to parental empathy
(tool for lowering arousal)

- Materials Needed
  - Copies multiple choice test on parental empathy (see attached)

- 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting
  - Ask each parent to identify themselves by first name
  - Establish basic group guidelines
  - Review goals of parenting, aka PACK

- Goals of parenting approaches for challenging kids:
  - Fostering resiliency (capacity to manage stress, be confident, independent)
  - Teaching child to regulate affect and tolerate frustration
  - Teach child how to be more flexible
  - Solve problems independently

- 1545-1600 Facilitate discussion regarding role of increase arousal in fueling
cycle of neg bx begets neg attn which in turn increases neg bx and so on and
so forth
  - When a defiant child (or child with psychosocial impairments or difficult
temperament) hears “No,” “You can’t” or “You must,” a power struggle or
meltdown is imminent, anytime time child feels “boxed in”
  - Recognize that under or behind anger is really fear-anger and anxiety go
together, essentially one might react with hostility when they feel threatened
(doesn’t have to be a rationale, realistic threat, it’s all about perception)
  - When a child or parent becomes “aroused,” feels threatened in some way, they
experience an adrenaline response, a “fight or flight” response, accompanied by
physical symptoms or arousal/anxiety-inc HR, RR, dizziness, lightheadedness-
blood rushes away from brain to large skeletal muscles, heart and lungs
  - What happens to your capacity for rational thought when you are furious, upset?
Out the window
  - When aroused, we are evolutionally programmed to fight or run away, we tune
out the sound of the human voice and instead are tuned into the frequency of
large predators, your child literally cannot hear you
  - As parent becomes aroused, in response to child’s arousal (parent emotionally
connected to child, child knows how to push parent’s buttons), parent’s arousal
only further fuels child’s arousal-viceous cycle occurs-easier to get there if long-
standing pattern-essentially parent and child are both sensitized or programmed
to react automatically when faced with certain cues (e.g., “No,” “You can’t,” “You
must”)

- 1600-1615 Review techniques to lower the child’s arousal
  - Lower your own arousal, use yourself, lower your voice, gently tone and body
posture (same techniques psychiatrists use with agitated patients)
In other words, when you child goes up, you go down, model the regulation of affect, appropriate expression of anger

- Relaxation Training
- Express and model empathy
- Help child build feelings vocabulary (provide feelings hand out)
- Avoid using words "No," "You can’t," "You must" (those only increase arousal, generate defiance)
- Show a willingness to put child’s concern on the table (the best way to get someone to listen to your concern is to first demonstrate you hear and are willing to consider their concern)

- 1615-1645 Introduce and Discuss **PARENTAL EMPATHY**

- Methods for lowering child’s arousal-Empathy, Empathy, Empathy

- Administer Multiple Choice Test on Parental Empathy

- Define Empathy. It is a 2 Part Process:
  - Step (1): Identify the child’s feeling
  - Step (2): Communicate to the child that you understand their feeling

- **What is NOT empathy?** (Write list of **Feeling Blockers** on the board)-10 minutes
  - Here are some examples of parental responses which increase frustration, lower self esteem, erode parent-child relationships, block a child’s feelings:
    - **Denial of Feelings:** "There’s no reason to be so upset."
    - **Trivializing Feelings:** "You don’t have a good reason to be upset."
    - **Solving the Problem for Them:** "Don’t worry, I’ll buy you a new, or I’ll fix it."
    - **Reassurance:** "You shouldn’t be worried. You will do fine."
    - **Philosophical Response:** "Life is like that. Things don’t always turn out the way we want."
    - **Advice:** "You know what I would do, I would..."
    - **Questions:** "Didn’t you realize that ...?" "What exactly were you thinking?" Asking "Why do you feel that way?" or "Why did you do that?"
    - **Defense of the other person:** ‘I can understand your friend’s reaction. He’s probably under terrible pressure.’
    - **Pity:** "Oh you poor thing. That is just terrible."
    - **Psychoanalysis:** "Has it ever occurred to you that the real reason you are so upset by this is because ...?"

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** **Feelings are not right or wrong, they just are.** If the child detects you aren’t validating their feelings, they will become
more upset and simply work harder to convince you they have good reason to be upset (upping the ante).

- **Review Test Together**—Match responses with either empathy or one of list of “Feelings Blockers.” Be careful not to leave parents feeling defensive if got “wrong” answers.

- **Introduce Empathy Formulas (Write on Board) and Provide Feelings Vocabulary Hand Out:**
  - “You sound...”
  - “You Look...”
  - “You seem...”
  - Insert a feeling word (mad, sad, happy, frustrated, disappointed)—brainstorm
  - What if you get the feeling wrong?? No harm done. Child will quickly correct you and child will still appreciate you are trying to understand/validate their feelings

- **Advantages to Empathy:**
  - Defuses upset so a person can become rational, able to reason again
  - Invites a discussion of feelings and situation surrounding upset
  - Brings parent and child closer, child feels validated and understood
  - Teaches child how to identify and express feelings in an appropriate more grown up way (also helps if parents consistently model appropriate expression, anger)
  - Builds healthy self esteem (“my feelings matter”) and strengthens identity

- **Disadvantages to NOT providing empathy**
  - When a child’s feelings are blocked, denied, dismissed or o/w invalidated, they become confused, angry, resentful
  - Having your feelings, perspective repeatedly negated leads to erosion of parent-child relationship (why bother telling parents—they don’t care or don’t understand) and low self esteem (my feelings don’t matter, no sense expressing them)
  - Feelings will tend to spill out in a physically way (aggression) or other acting out (defiance)
MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST ON EMPATHY

a. Daddy nearly killed me when he took that splinter out of my finger.
   1. It couldn’t have been that bad.
   2. Sounds as if it really hurt.
   3. He did it for your own good.

b. Just because of a little snow the coach cancelled our big game.
   1. That must be a disappointment. You were all psyched to play & now you have to wait.
   2. Don’t let it get you down. You’ll have plenty of other chances to play.
   3. Your coach made the right decision. Sometimes a little snow can turn into a big snow.

c. A child is playing with your new string of beads.
   1. How many times have I told you, you are to never touch my jewelry? You’re a bad girl.
   2. Please don’t play with Mommy’s beads. You’ll break them.
   3. You really like my new beads. The trouble is they break easily. You can play with these wooden beads or with this scarf.

d. I don’t like spiders.
   1. Oh.
   2. Why not? They’re part of nature.
   3. I don’t like them either.

e. (Looking anxious) I have to take my math final tomorrow.
   1. Relax. I’m sure you’ll do well.
   2. If you had spent more time studying, you wouldn’t be worried now.
   3. You sound worried. I’ll bet you wish it were over & done with.

f. Your child is eating spaghetti with his fingers.
   1. Your table manners are disgusting.
   2. I know it’s easier to eat spaghetti with your fingers. When the family eats together we’d like you to use a fork.
   3. I can’t believe that at your age you’re still eating with your fingers.

g. David wants to take me to the school dance. He’s really nice, but I don’t know...
   1. Oh go. You’ll see, you’ll have fun.
   2. Well make up your mind. Either you want to go or you don’t.
   3. So part of you wants to go & part of you isn’t sure.

h. I’m gonna run away from home.
   1. Fine. I’ll help you.
   2. You’re being silly. I don’t want to hear that kind of talk.
   3. You sound very unhappy. I’ll bet you wish a lot of things were different around here.
EMPATHY ROLE PLAYING EXERCISES

- Empathy Formulas:
  - "You sound..."
  - "You Look..."
  - "You seem..."

  Insert a feeling word (mad, sad, happy, frustrated, disappointed)-brainstorm
  What if you get the feeling wrong?? No harm done. Child will quickly correct you and
  child will still appreciate you are trying to understand/validate their feelings

- Role Play Empathy Exercises: Identify Feeling & Respond. Pair up parents and
  take turns.

  A. The bus driver yelled at me today & everybody laughed.
  B. I’d like to punch that Mike in the nose.
  C. Just because of a little rain my teacher said we couldn’t go on our field trip. She’s
crumb.
  D. I don’t know why teachers have to load you down with so much homework over the
  weekend.
  E. We had basketball practice today and I couldn’t sink that ball once.
  F. Laney is moving away & she’s my best friend.
A Quick Reminder . . .

Helping Children Deal with Their Feelings

Children Need to Have Their Feelings Accepted and Respected.

1. YOU CAN LISTEN QUIETLY AND ATTENTIVELY.

2. YOU CAN ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR FEELINGS WITH A WORD.
   "Oh... Mmmm... I see..."

3. YOU CAN GIVE THE FEELINGS A NAME.
   "That sounds frustrating?"

4. YOU CAN GIVE THE CHILD HIS WISHES IN FANTASY.
   "I wish I could make the banana ripe for you right now!"

* * *

All feelings can be accepted.
Certain actions must be limited.

"I can see how angry you are at your brother. Tell him what you want with words, not fists."

Note: You may find it useful to make a copy of this and other "reminder" pages and put them up in strategic locations around the house.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAD</th>
<th>EXCITED</th>
<th>ECSTATIC</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAD</td>
<td>HAPPY</td>
<td>FURIOUS</td>
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<tr>
<td>DREAMY</td>
<td>DISAPPOINTED</td>
<td>TERRIFIED</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOPEFUL</td>
<td>FRUSTRATED</td>
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<td>EMBARRASSED</td>
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<tr>
<td>IN LOVE</td>
<td>THOUGHTFUL</td>
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Module 4

ADVANCED PARENTAL EMPATHY TRAINING

- Materials Needed
  - Copies empathy cartoons from workbook (parent notebooks)
  - Copies of Kafka's Letter to his father (parent notebooks)
  - Copies of Parental Empathy in a Nutshell Chart reviewing (see attached)

- 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board
  - Examples:
    - Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters
    - Build close, supportive relationships bet parents-kids

- 1545-1600 Introduce Reflective Listening:
  - Simply paraphrasing or repeating back parts of what the child has said
  - If you simply don’t know what to say, try “Oh,” or “I hear ya” or “I’m not saying no” or “Tell me more about that” or just say “Hmmm....”

- 1600-1630 ROLE PLAY EMPATHY EXERCISES:

- Identify Feeling & Respond. Pair up parents and take turns.
  A. The bus driver yelled at me today & everybody laughed.
  B. I’d like to punch that Mike in the nose.
  C. Just because of a little rain my teacher said we couldn’t go on our field trip. She’s dumb.
  D. I don’t know why teachers have to load you down with so much homework over the weekend.
  E. We had basketball practice today and I couldn’t sink that ball once.
  F. Laney is moving away & she’s my best friend.

- 1630-1645 More on Empathy...

- Examples:
  - A child is crying. Instead of saying, ‘What are you crying about, it is no big deal’ you can simply acknowledge the child’s feeling. ‘Something is making you sad, your tears are telling me how bad you feel.’
  - A child’s balloon breaks – we typically say, ‘Don’t worry I’ll get you another one.’ What we could say, ‘You’re really sad that your new balloon broke.’
  - A child brings home an 80 on a spelling test. You typically say, ‘An 80 isn’t that bad, you should be happy with that.’ Say, ‘I see getting that 80 really hurt you. You were hoping for a higher grade.’
- Child gets haircut & cries, 'my hair is too short.' You typically say, 'Don't worry, it will grow back.' Try, 'You're really mad at that barber because he cut your hair too short.'

- Child comes in & says, 'I hate grandma.' You say, 'That's not a nice thing to say.' Child, 'I don't care, I hate her.' You, 'How can you say such a thing? Grandma loves you.' Child, 'Well, I don't love her.' You, 'Listen I don't want to hear that kind of talk out of your mouth again. She is your grandmother.' Child, 'I don't care. I hate her.' You, 'I don't want to hear anything else, I think you better go to your room.' Now that was quality time with the child.

- Should we agree with the child? No, agreement would not be helpful (I agree with you & I hate your grandmother too???)!! What is helpful is an attitude on the part of the parent that says, 'I am here to help you to be clear about your thoughts & your feelings. I'm not going to get in the way by giving you my thoughts or my judgments. I trust that by reflecting & mirroring your feelings, something good will come from it.'

- How might the conversation go? Child, 'I hate grandma.' You, 'Boy, you sound angry.' Child, 'You bet I am.' Something grandmom did must have really upset you.' 'Well every time she comes she spends time with the baby and gives him gifts.'

- Review empathy cartoons, have the parents read aloud in form of role play
- Read Letter to Kafka's Father
- Hand Out Parental Empathy in a Nutshell Tables (see attached)
"Dearest Father, You asked me recently why I maintain that I am afraid of you." With these words, Frank Kafka, then in his thirty-sixth year, began a letter to his father. "I was a timid child. For all that, I am sure I was also obstinate, as children are. I am sure that Mother spoilt me too, but I cannot believe I was particularly difficult to manage; I cannot believe that a kindly word, a quiet taking by hand, a friendly look, could not have got me to do anything that was wanted of me. Now you are, after all, at bottom a kindly and soft-hearted person . . . but not every child has the endurance and fearlessness to go on searching until it comes to the kindliness that lies beneath the surface." With example upon example, Kafka went on to describe the frightening gulf between father and son and the strains in their relationship that Kafka blamed for his own lack of confidence and his inability to marry. The lack of empathy between father and son was interrupted occasionally and accidentally when Kafka was able to catch glimpses of his father expressing feelings of sorrow and tenderness.

"Fortunately, there were exceptions to all this, mostly when you suffered in silence, and affection and kindliness by their own strength overcame all obstacles, and moved me immediately. Rare as this was, it was wonderful. For instance, in earlier years, in hot summers, when you were tired after lunch, I saw you having a nap at the office, your elbow on the desk; or you joined us in the country, in the summer holidays, on Sundays, worn out from work; or the time Mother was gravely ill and you stood holding on to the bookcase, shaking with sobs; or when, during my last illness, you came tiptoeing to Ottla's room to see me, stopping in the doorway, craning your neck to see me, and out of consideration only waved to me with your hand. At such times one would lie back and weep for happiness, and one weeps again now, writing it down."

Kafka apparently hoped that his long letter might improve their relationship, that "it might reassure us both a little and make our living and our dying easier." He gave it to his mother, possibly with the thought that she would pass it along; ironically, she did not.

Module 4
Summary Table of Potential Parental Responses to a Child in Distress:

Note: If a child doesn’t perceive that his feelings or perspective are being validated or appreciated by you, he will try harder to convince you he has good reason to be upset and become increasingly distressed by his perceived lack of validation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses Likely to:</th>
<th>Responses Likely to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Increase Arousal/Meltdowns/”Vapor Lock”</td>
<td>1. Decrease Arousal</td>
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<td>2. Increase Defensiveness</td>
<td>2. Increase Coping</td>
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<td>3. Increase Defiance</td>
<td>3. Increase Problem-Solving Capacity</td>
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<td>5. Decrease Coping</td>
<td>5. Increase Discussion, Processing of Feelings</td>
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<td>6. Decrease Problem-Solving</td>
<td>6. Increase Resiliency (”Bounce Back”)</td>
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<td>7. Decrease Closeness with Parents</td>
<td>7. Increase Closeness with Parents</td>
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<td>8. Foster Capacity for Empathy</td>
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<th>Blaming and Accusing</th>
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<td>Name-calling</td>
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<td>Comparisons with Siblings, Others</td>
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<td>Asking “Why do you feel...?”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Reassurance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trivializing the feelings, event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saying “No.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“You can’t.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“You must.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“That’s one...”</td>
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<th>Giving Advice</th>
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<th>EMPATHY</th>
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<td>“You sound...”</td>
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<td>“You look...”</td>
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<td>“You seem...”</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Insert Feelings Word-Mad, Sad, Glad or Frustrated)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Invitation to a problem-solving party</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Let’s work this out...”</td>
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<td>“What do you think we should do...?”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Reflective Listening-paraphrasing or repeating back parts of what they said</th>
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<td>Saying “Oh.”</td>
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<td>“Hmmm...”</td>
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<td>“Tell me more...”</td>
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<td>“I hear ya....”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I’m not saying no.”</td>
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Parental Empathy in a Nutshell:

i. Definition, Empathy:
   a. Understand what a child/person is feeling
   b. Convey to them in words that you understand what they are feeling.

ii. Goals of Empathy:
   a. Defuse a potentially explosive situation
   b. Make an empathic connection/stronger relationship
   c. Help child build feelings vocabulary
   d. Teach child to discuss/process intense negative feelings rather than act them out

iii. How to Give Empathy:
   a. “You seem_________.”
   b. “You sound_________.”
   c. “You look_________.”
   d. Fill in blank with a feelings word (mad, sad, glad, frustrated).

i. Empathy Sabotagers/Pitfalls:
   a. Blaming and accusing
   b. Name-calling
   c. Threats
   d. Commands
   e. Lecturing and Moralizing
   f. Warnings
   g. Martyrdom Statements
   h. Comparisons
   i. Sarcasm
   j. Prophecy
   k. Asking “Why did you_____?” or “Why do you feel_____?” (only makes kids feel defensive, they usually don’t know “Why...?”)
In stead of denying the feeling,

My turtle is dead. He was alive this morning.

Now don't get so upset, honey.

Don't cry. It's only a turtle.

My turtle is dead. He was alive this morning.

Oh no. What a shock!

He was my friend.

To lose a friend can hurt.

It's strange. When we urge a child to push a bad feeling away—however kindly—the child only seems to get more upset.

Wah! Wah!

Stop that! I'll buy you another turtle.

Now you're being unreasonable!

I don't want another one!

I taught him to do tricks.

You two had fun together.

You really cared about that turtle.

I fed him every day...

Parents don't usually give this kind of response, because they fear that by giving a name to the feeling, they'll make it worse. Just the opposite is true. The child who hears the words for what he is experiencing is deeply comforted. Someone has acknowledged his inner experience.
When children want something they can't have, adults usually respond with logical explanations of why they can't have it. Often the harder we explain, the harder they protest.

Sometimes just having someone understand how much you want something makes reality easier to bear.
It can be discouraging to try to get through to someone who gives only lip service to listening.
Parenting Approaches for Challenging Kids (PACK)
Children (8-12 yo)

Module 5

EFFECTIVE PARENT CHILD COMMUNICATION TO IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS, FOSTER RESILIENCY AND INCREASE CHANCES OF COMPLIANCE

• Materials Needed
  o Copies of Parent Multiple Choice Tests on Parent-Child Communication (see attached)

• 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board
  o Examples:
    ▪ Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters
    ▪ Build close, supportive relationships bet parents-kids

• 1545-1600 Communication is the key
  o We have to take on the responsibility for initiating a change in the parent-child dynamic
  o We start by assuming if we change our approach, we’ll get a different response
  o Essentially we need to ask ourselves “What is the best way to communicate what I want which is most likely to produce the desired response from my child?”

• Administer Multiple Choice Test on Parent-Child Communication

• 1600-1625 Discuss Common Pitfalls with Communication

• Write List on Board (Blaming and Accusing, Name Calling, Threats, Commands, Lecturing and Moralizing, Warnings/Threats, Martyrdom Statements, Comparisons, Sarcasm, Prophecy)

• Review Usual Ways of Gaining Cooperation:

• HERE ARE OUR USUAL WAYS OF ENGAGING COOPERATION (read scenario and ask parents to guess what pitfall being illustrated and discuss):

  1. “Your dirty fingerprints are on the door again. Why do you always do that? How many times do I have to tell you to use the doorknob? The trouble with you is you never listen.” Blaming & Accusing

  2. “It’s below freezing today & you’re wearing a light jacket! How dumb can you get? That is really stupid, you’ll end up with pneumonia.” Name-Calling

  3. “Just you touch that lamp once more & you’ll get a smack.” Threats

  4. “I want you to clean up your room right this minute.” Commands

  5. “Do you think that was a nice thing to do – to grab that book from me? I can see you don’t realize how important good manners are. What you have to understand is that if we expect people to be polite to us, then we must be polite to them in return. You wouldn’t want anyone to grab from you, would you? Then you shouldn’t grab from anyone else. We do unto others as we would have others do unto us.” Lecturing & Moralizing

  6. “Watch it, you’ll burn yourself. ‘Careful, you’ll get hit by a car.’ ‘Don’t climb there! Do you want to fall?” Warnings
7. "Will you two stop that screaming! What are you trying to do to me, make me sick? Give me a heart attack? Do you see these gray hairs? That's because of you." **Martyrdom Statements**

8. "Why can't you be more like your brother? He always gets his work done ahead of time." **Comparisons**

9. "You knew you had a test tomorrow & left your book in school? Oh smart! That was a brilliant thing to do." **Sarcasm**

10. "You lied to me about your report card, didn’t you? Do you know what you’re going to be when you grow up? A person nobody can trust.” **Prophecy**

**Review Multiple Choice Test on Communication** - 5 minutes, have parents identify what each answer choice typifies (empathy verses sarcasm, etc...)

**1625-1645 Review multiple choice test together**
MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST ON COMMUNICATION

1. A child is painting in the living room.
   A. If I catch you with those paints in the living room once more, I'll take them away.
   B. Paint can stain the carpet. You can paint in the kitchen or in your room. You decide.
   C. What is wrong with you? Do you know how hard it is to get paint out of a rug?

2. (Whining) Mom, you've got to take me for school supplies today! You said you would.
   A. Stop that whining.
   B. Don't bother me now. Maybe later.
   C. Here's how I like to be asked: Mom, could you please take me for school supplies today?

3. A child runs out the door leaving his homework on the table.
   A. Jimmy, your homework.
   B. Jimmy, come back here. You're such a scatter-brain. Look what you left on the table.
   C. You spent the whole night doing your homework & then you go off without it. That's brilliant!

4. Mommy, get off the phone I have to tell you something.
   A. Leave me alone! Can't I have one conversation in peace?
   B. Shh, be quiet. I'll be off soon.
   C. I'd like to finish talking. You can write what you want to tell me or you can draw it.

5. You child has neglected to water the plant you bought for her.
   A. You begged me for that plant and now you are letting it die.
   B. The leaves on your new plant are drooping.
   C. The next plant I buy you is going to be plastic.

COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY EXERCISES

Make Your Own Statement:

1. You are about to wrap a package & can't find your scissors. Your child has a pair of scissors, but is constantly borrowing yours & not returning them.
2. Your child keeps leaving his sneakers in the kitchen doorway.
3. Your child just hung his wet raincoat in the closet. You realize your child has not been brushing his teeth lately.
SIMPLE CHOICES

DEFINITION:

When a child continues with a disruptive behavior and ignores the parent’s positive reminders, the child is given the responsibility for the behavior by being able to choose what will happen. Typically the child must choose between performing the behavior asked of him/her or accepting a logical consequence.

HERE’S HOW:

a) **Never** give empty threats. A parent loses credibility with the children if (s)he threatens a consequence that cannot actually be followed through (e.g., "if you don’t start hanging your coat up, I will never buy you another coat.")

b) When possible, state choices positively (e.g., Instead of “If you don’t stop tearing the paper off your crayons, I will take them away.” Say, “If you keep the paper on your crayons, you will be able to keep coloring.”)

c) Avoid a hostile, confrontive tone of voice (e.g., “Stop touching that VCR or you’re in big trouble!”). It encourages the child to view the choices as a challenge. If you make it clear that you are going to calmly allow the child to take responsibility for the choice, (s)he will be more likely to choose the responsible alternative (e.g., "The VCR is for Mommy or Daddy to touch. You can either choose to leave it alone or you can go to your room. It’s up to you.").

d) With an angry child, walk away and give him/her a couple of minutes to consider a choice before demanding a response. Standing over a child can often force him/her to choose the challenging option as the physical threat does not allow a "good out" (e.g., “You have two choices. You can put your coat on or you will have to stay inside. I’m going to walk over there and give you some time to think about your choice. It is up to you.").

e) Take a hostile child aside so that the choice can be made without the influence of an audience. It is sometimes easier for the child to comply with your request if (s)he does not feel the pressure to "perform" for others.
Here are some good sentences to memorize for those times when a well-phrased “choices” statement is needed:

**TWO CHOICES**

"You have two choices (for younger children, hold up 2 fingers as a visual cue that this is your bottom line).
"You can either play gently with your blocks, or you will have to play with something else."

**WHEN-THEN**

"When you sit in your chair, then I will give you your snack."

**IF-THEN**

"If you don’t put your toys in the box, then you can not watch Power Rangers."

**EITHER-OR**

"You can either choose to do your homework now, or you can miss TV and do it after dinner."

"You can either play gently with the other children, or I will have to send your friends home."
HELPFUL WAYS TO ENGAGE A CHILD’S COOPERATION

- Materials Needed
  - Copies of summary list of ways to gain cooperation (see attached)

- 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board
  - Examples:
    - Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters
    - Build close, supportive relationships bet parents-kids

- 1545-1600 Discussion Effective Ways to Gain Cooperation

- GOLDEN RULE: NO SHAME, NO BLAME, NO PUT Downs

WAYS TO ENGAGE COOPERATION:

Instead of Name-Calling, Accusing, Threatening, etc...:

1. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE

A. “Susie, the banana peel is on the floor.”

B. Child is letting the bathtub overflow due to forgetting to turn off the water. A parent might usually say, “You are so irresponsible. You always start the bath water then forget to turn it off.

It’s hard to do what needs to be done when people are telling you what’s wrong with you. It is easier to concentrate on the problem when someone just describes it to you. You say, “The water in the bathtub is getting close to the top.”

When grownups describe the problem, it gives children a chance to tell themselves what to do. Essentially these techniques are “facing saving” for the child. You are saying “Oh you just didn’t know” and giving them a chance to do want you want, to please you. Your goal is to help them not feel defensive, under attack and provide an opportunity to do right by you.

C. A light is left on in a room. (Bad: “How many times do I have to tell you to turn off the light!”) Say, “The light is on in the room.”

2. SAY IT WITH A WORD

A. “Susie, the peel.”

Children dislike hearing lectures, sermons, & long explanations. For them, the shorter the reminder, the better.
B. Child starts to leave house without lunch. (Bad: "Look at you! You're walking out the door without your lunch again. You'd forget your head if it weren't attached!") Say, "Your lunch."

C. Child stated that they would take care of the dog if you got them one for a pet. 
Child has not fed the dog. (Bad: "You promised before we got a dog that you would feed him every day. Now this is the third time I've had to remind you this week & I'm getting tired of it. I don't want to have the whole burden myself. You need to help.") Say, "The dog."

3. GIVE INFORMATION

A. "It's easy to slip on a banana peel. It belongs in the garbage."

Information is a lot easier to take than accusation.

B. Milk is left out after using. (Bad: Who drank the milk & left the bottle standing out?"
Say, "Milk turns sour if it isn't refrigerated."

C. You walk into child's bedroom & there is food on the bed. (Bad: "That's disgusting! Look at the apple cores on your bed! You live like a pig!") Say, "Apple cores belong in the garbage."

When children are given information, they can usually figure out for themselves what needs to be done.

D. Child is writing on the wall. (Bad: "If I catch you writing on the walls once more, you're going to get a spanking!") Say, "Walls are not for writing on. Paper is for writing on."

E. You are setting the table & your child is watching. (Bad: "It would never occur to you to give me a hand with the housework would it?") Say, "It would really be helpful if the table were set for dinner now."

4. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU FEEL

A. "It upsets me to see peels on the floor."

Children are entitled to hear their parents' honest feelings. By describing what we feel, we can be genuine without being hurtful. It is possible to cooperate with someone who is expressing irritation or anger, as long as you're not being attacked. When parents are being helpful they talk about their feelings only. They use the word "I" or "I feel..."

B. Child interrupts you. (Bad: "You're rude! You always interrupt.") Say, "I feel so frustrated when I start to say something & can't finish."

C. Child tells you that you have to take them to the store as you had told them earlier. (Bad: "What do you mean, I have to take you? You sound like a spoiled brat!") Say, "I don't like being told I have to do anything - what I like to hear is can you take me now?"

Parents can honestly express their feelings, especially when they are honest in the acceptance of their child's feeling.

D. "I am really crabby today" or "I am really tired today."
Often if we express what we want or expect we can solve our chronic problematic interactions.

E. Say, "Billy I want you to be kind and gentle to Skippy our dog” will be much more helpful than “How could you be so cruel to that poor animal??!!".

F. Father finished bathing child and said, "Billy I want you to clean up the bath toys after you finish drying off." The child responded by saying, ‘I don’t want to!’ How would you react?

Father said, "Oh, you don’t want to. Well, sometimes it helps if you whistle or hum while you work."

5. OFFER A CHOICE

A. "You can throw it in the garbage bag in the kitchen or outside pail."

6. WRITE A NOTE

A. "Fruit is sweet, enjoy the treat, then toss in the garbage the parts you can’t eat love Mom."

Sometimes nothing we say is as effective as the written word. Here are examples of some notes that parents have written:

B. Father who was tired of cleaning his daughter’s long hairs from the sink drain: note says "Help! Hairs in my drain give me a pain. Glug – your stopped up sink."

C. Mother taped this note to television: "Before you turn this on – think – have I don’t my homework? Have I practiced?"

NOTES:
1. It’s important to be authentic. Sounding patient when you’re angry just doesn’t work. Be authentic.
2. Just because I don’t ‘get through’ the first time, doesn’t mean I should revert to the old ways.

COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY EXERCISES

Make Your Own Statement:

1. You are about to wrap a package & can’t find your scissors. Your child has a pair of scissors, but is constantly borrowing yours & not returning them.
2. Your child keeps leaving his sneakers in the kitchen doorway.
3. Your child just hung his wet raincoat in the closet.
4. You realize your child has not been brushing his teeth lately.
SUMMARY OF WAYS TO GAIN COOPERATION

➢ Describe What You See/The Problem

➢ Accept Feelings

➢ Substitute Yes for No (on Your Terms...)

➢ Give Yourself Time to Think

➢ Say it in a Word

➢ Write a Note

➢ Point Out a Way to Be Helpful

➢ Express Strong Disapproval Without Attacking Character

➢ Give a Choice
Parenting Approaches for Challenging Kids (PACK)
Children (8-12 yo)

Module 7

EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

Materials Needed
Copies of effective discipline chart (see attached)
Copies of collaborative problem-solving exercises from workbook (see parents notebooks)

1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board
Examples:
Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters
Build close, supportive relationships between parents-kids

1545-1600 Discussion of discipline/punishment

Punishment Often Leads To:

| Feelings of hatred |
| Feelings of revenge |
| Defiance |
| Guilt |
| Unworthiness |
| Self-pity |

Alternatives To Punishment:

| Point out a way to be helpful |
| Express strong disapproval without attacking character |
| State your expectations |
| Show the child how to make amends |
| Give a choice |
| Take action |
| Allow the child to experience the consequences of their misbehavior |

Examples:

1. Point Out A Way To Be Helpful: Instead of “Oh, you’re going to get it when your father gets home.” Say, “It would be helpful if you picked out three big apples for me.”

2. Expressing Strong Disapproval Without Attacking Character: Instead of “You’re acting like a wild animal! No TV for you tonight.” Say, “I don’t like what’s going on! It’s disturbing to shoppers when children run in the aisles!”

3. Giving A Choice: Instead of, “If I catch you running again you’ll get a smack.” Say, “Billy, no running. Here are your choices: You can walk or you can sit in the cart. You decide.”

Review golden rules of discipline, giving effective instructions
furious & ready to punish his son. Instead he decided to involve his son in finding a solution. He said,

Michael, I didn’t like what happened in the car today. When you jumped up & down in the back seat, your head blocked the window & I almost didn’t see that big truck coming up behind us. That was dangerous. For this family’s safety I need you to think of three things you could do in the car that would help you sit quietly.

The child came up with ten things! Look at cars, sing songs (softly), play games like ABC, think, chew gum, count, rest, color, watch people, read books.

What can you do about the bickering between the children?

One of our major recommendations is to involve the children in finding solutions to their problems rather than imposing a solution upon them.

I saw my son break a vase in the living room & he denied doing it. What’s the best way to handle lying?

A lie usually represents a wish or a fear. Your son wished he hadn’t broken your vase & feared your reaction. It’s a good idea to deal with the wish or deal with the fear rather than focus on the lying.

Example:

"Who broke this vase?" "Not me." "Are you sure? Don’t lie to me." "No, I swear I didn’t." "You’re a little liar: I saw you do it & now you are going to be punished." (not helpful) "I saw you throw the ball & break the vase." "No, I didn’t. I swear." "I’m sure you wish it hadn’t happened. Danny, I’m upset. I expect you to be able to say no to yourself when you are tempted to play with a ball in the living room. Now how do we get this mess cleaned up?" (better)

My daughter has been doing a lot of whining lately & it’s driving me crazy. How can I stop it?
Before you try to stop the whining you might want to think about what could be causing it. Once you’ve zeroed in on the cause, you can deal with the feeling by respectfully acknowledging it. By labeling a child as a whiner, we reinforce her whining. Instead we want to encourage our children to get their needs met in more direct & positive ways.

My son has a tantrum over the least little thing. How do I keep him from having tantrums? A tantrum is a child’s response to powerful emotions that temporarily overwhelm him.
Golden Rules of Discipline

1. Consistency suggests that we will use our skills the same way on a crisp morning picnic as on a dreary afternoon at the mechanic’s garage. And, it suggests that we will strive to respond to our customers the same way when they have a headache as they would if they just found $20 bill in their rosebud.

2. Predictability can be discussed by talking about the ‘robot’ approach to our interactions in times of great emotion. Because children with behavior problems often find it exciting to push the limits and see how others will react, it is most effective to respond in a routine boring fashion. If children know in advance that consequences are always provided with a neutral, robotic expression using pre-established words, much of the stimulation is removed from the procedure.

3. Follow-through depends on parents learning to say what they mean and mean what they say. If a child with behavior problems perceives that a parent is flexible about rules or consequences, the limits of the rubber will be tested until it eventually breaks. Parents are encouraged to establish only a few rules, but to enforce them like a brick wall.

The Golden Rules of Disciplining Your Child In a nutshell:
Consistency: use the skills the same way every time.
Predictability: always respond in a routine boring fashion.
Follow-through: enforce rules like a brick wall.

Giving Effective Instructions

Make Commands Direct, Not Indirect: tell children what to do instead of asking whether they want to comply.


Make Directives Single Rather Than Compound: give only one command.

Make Commands Specific, Not Vague: Do not use terms such as ‘Be good,’ ‘Come on,’ ‘Straighten up,’ or ‘Be Careful.’ Convey exactly what behavior is desired.

Give Directives in a Neutral Tone of Voice: Use matter-of-fact approach.

Be Polite & Respectful: Start most instructions with ‘Please.’

Be Sure Directives Are Developmentally Appropriate: ensure the child is physically & cognitively capable of following the command.

Use Gestures: this aids in comprehension.

Use Directives Only When Really Necessary: only used for times when it is important that the child obey.

Incorporate Choices When Appropriate: be sure you can live with either choice.
Provide a Carefully Timed Explanation (when appropriate): it is appropriate for children to be given explanations for why they should do a requested behavior (usually prior to command). (When a reason is given between the instruction & compliance, it is a setup for an argument.)

Review determining compliance, fostering compliance, handling noncompliance-15 minutes

Determining Compliance

Doing something slightly different from parent command: noncompliance.

Dawdling: count to three one thousand, if child has not made an attempt to comply, it is considered noncompliance.

Playing Deaf: unless there is a reason to believe that the child did not hear you, this is a form of noncompliance.

Partially Complying: if child does not complete instruction, use gestures & do not repeat command.

Minding with a bad attitude: ignore bad attitude & treat as compliance.

Undoing: (child initially obeys & then behaves in a way that negates the obedience). Considered compliance & if it continues, use more specific instructions.

Praising Compliance
Always be specific in your praise of the child (e.g., ‘Thanks for minding me. I like it when you do what I ask,’ or better, ‘Good listening! You did what mommy asked you to do and you don’t have to go to time out! I’m very proud of you.’)

Two-Choice Statement for Noncompliance
1. Give command.
2. Count to three one-thousand.
3. Issue two-choice statement in a neutral tone of voice & use the two-fingered gesture.

“You have two choices. You can either ... or....”

It is critical that you never provide a two-choice statement without being prepared to follow through with time out (it is a promise, not a threat).

4. If child complies after two-choice statement, give enthusiastic labeled praise (e.g., “Good listening. I’m glad you followed instructions so you don’t have to go to time out”).

Whenever you ask yourself, “How do I make this child do something” tell yourself you’re heading in the wrong direction!

A more helpful question would be, “How do I encourage my child to become an active participant in solving the problem?” or “How can I approach this with my child so that she will react/respond the way I would like?”

For example, a father told us that he had been enraged by his son’s hyper behavior in the car, despite repeated warnings to the boy to sit still. By the time they got home, the father was
SUMMARIES OR GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

Punishment Often Leads To:
- Feelings of hatred
- Feelings of revenge
- Defiance
- Guilt
- Unworthiness
- Self-pity

Alternatives To Punishment:
- Point out a way to be helpful
- Express strong disapproval without attacking character
- State your expectations
- Show the child how to make amends
- Give a choice
- Take action
- Allow the child to experience the consequences of their misbehavior
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A more helpful question would be, “How do I encourage my child to become an active participant in solving the problem?” or “How can I approach this with my child so that she will react/respond the way I would like?”
PRACTICE WITH PROBLEM SOLVING

Imagine that you have a six-year-old daughter, Amy, who is too rough with your eighteen-month-old son, Billy. You've warned Amy over and over again not to hurt her brother, but she just ignores you. It's true, sometimes Billy grabs her toys, but you've explained to Amy that her brother is only a baby and doesn't understand. Today Billy tore a page of her favorite book and Amy pushed him so hard that he fell and got a bump on the back of his head. There seems nothing left to do but punish her. But how? You could hit her the way she hits her brother. Or you could forbid her to play with her friends for a week. Or you could take away her new toy.

Instead you decide to listen respectfully to her point of view, share your point of view, and ask her to join you in trying to solve the problem together.

Step I. Listen to and acknowledge your child's feelings or needs. (For example, here's what you might say to bring up the subject:)

Parent: I notice that when Billy grabs your toys, you hit him or push him, because he makes you so angry. Have I got that right? (And here's how your child might respond.)

Child: Yeah, he's such a pest. He bothers me all the time. He tore my best book. I had to push him. He should play with his own baby toys.

Parent: (Continue the conversation by acknowledging your child's feelings.)

Parent: (Find out if there's anything else her brother does that bothers her.)
Child: (What might she add?)

Parent: (Sum up your child’s point of view.)

Step II. Talk about your feelings or needs.

Parent:

Step III. Invite the child to join you in a search for solutions.

Parent:

Step IV. Write down all ideas. Don’t comment on whether they are good or bad. If possible, let the child go first. (For example)

Send him to live with Grandma

Module 7
Step V. Discuss which ideas you don't like, which you do, and how you plan to follow through.

Parent: ________________________________

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Child: ________________________________

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Parent: ________________________________

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Child: ________________________________

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Step VI. Shake hands on your agreement.
SOLVING THE PROBLEM TOGETHER

Here’s our version of the kind of problem-solving discussion that might take place between a parent and a child who is hitting a younger sibling.

Step I. Listen to and acknowledge your child’s feelings and needs.

Parent: I notice that when Billy grabs your toys, you either hit him or push him because he makes you so angry. Have I got that right?

Child: Yeah, he’s such a pest. He bothers me all the time. He tore my best book. I had to push him. He should play with his own toys.

Parent: (acknowledging the child’s feelings) So when you hit him, it’s your way of saying, “Don’t break or tear my things. Play with your own toys and leave me alone.”

Child: Yeah.

Parent: (finding out if there’s anything else the child wants to tell) Is there anything else Billy does that bothers you? I’d really like to know.

Child: The time I let him play with my puzzle, he lost two pieces. And he threw my teddy bear in the toilet.

Parent: (summing up child’s point of view) So not only does he bother you when you’re playing, but when you try to be nice to him, he either loses your toys or ruins them.

Step II. The parent talks about his or her feelings and needs.

Parent: Here’s how it is from my point of view. I get very upset when one of my children hurts another of my children.

Step III. The parent invites the child to help in a search for solutions.

Parent: Let’s put our heads together and see if we can think of some ways for you to play peacefully, keep your toys safe, and at the same time make sure your brother doesn’t get hurt.

Step IV. The parent writes down all ideas without commenting on whether they are good or bad. (S/he lets the child go first.)

Child: Send him to live with Grandma.

Parent: I’ll write that down. What else?

Child: Make him stay in his crib.

Parent: (writing) Stay in his crib. Okay, anything else?

Module 7
Child: I could close my door.

Parent: (writing) Close door. We could put the toys you don't want him to touch on a high shelf that he can't reach.

Child: Or put them in my closet.

Parent: I've got that. But what can you do when he takes a book that's special to you?


Parent: (still writing) And if you want to play by yourself, you can tell him, "I want to play by myself now."

Step V. Parent and child discuss which ideas they don't like, which they do, and how they plan to follow through.

Parent: Well, I couldn't go along with this first idea of sending him to Grandma. I could never send either of my children away. So we'd better cross that out.

Child: And if we make him stay in his crib, he'll just cry. So cross that out too.

Parent: But you could close your door if you want to be private.

Child: And we could hide my best toys in the closet.

Parent: Do you think you could restrain him gently if he tries to grab a toy you don't want him to touch?

Child: Yeah, but what if I tell him I want to play by myself and he doesn't listen?

Parent: If you try everything we've talked about and it still doesn't work, you can always call me and I'll take him out of your room. But I have the feeling you'll get better and better at figuring out ways to handle Billy gently by yourself.

Step VI. Parent and child shake hands on their agreement.

Parent: Let's shake on the ideas we agreed to and put them up on the refrigerator door to help us both remember.

Module 7
WHAT IF THE SOLUTION DOESN'T WORK?

Sometimes parents ask, "What if the plan you and your child agree upon works for a while and then fails? Suppose the child reverts to her old ways? What then? These are the times that test our determination. We can either go back to lecturing and punishing or we can go back to the drawing board. For example:

Parent: I'm disappointed that our ideas aren't working anymore. I see you've started to hit Billy again and that's not acceptable. Shall we give the old plan another chance? Shall we talk about what's getting in the way? Or do we need to come up with some new ideas?

As parent's we realize that even the most perfect plan will not be permanent. What worked for the child when she was six may not work for her when she turns seven. Life is a continual process of adjustment and readjustment – of having to cope with new problems. By involving our children in the search for solutions, we are giving them the tools to help them solve the problems that confront them now – while they're at home – and in the difficult, complex world that awaits them.
PROBLEM SOLVING

How can parents motivate their children to behave responsibly? Are there alternatives to punishment? One alternative is to sit down with a child and work at solving the problem together. Here's how the problem-solving method works:

Step I. Listen to and acknowledge your child's feelings and needs.

Your teacher told me you've been feeling around in class. I want to hear what you have to say about it.

Don't criticize what he says. Encourage him to explore all his feelings.

Oh, so when Joey does that to you, you feel you have to do it back to him.

Anything else? Well, the teacher never calls on me, and I have to just sit there.

Sum up your child's point of view.

So part of the feeling around is because of Joey, and part of it is because the teacher doesn't call on you.

Step II. Talk about your feelings or needs. (It's best to keep this part short.)

It upset me to learn that my son wasn't behaving in class.

Let's put our heads together and see if we can come up with any ideas that would make things go better in school.
Step IV. Write down all ideas. Don't comment on whether they're good or bad. (If possible let the child go first.)

The teacher is mean.
Change my class.
Change class.
Anything else?

Maybe I could change.
my seat.
Change seat.
What else?

Ask her to call on me. She
hardly ever calls.
on me.

She says she has to give
the other children a
chance. But I want her
to know I know
the answers.

And can we ask her to
call on me
one time?

I also think she needs
note of apology.

Maybe you could write
your answers and show
them to her at the end of
the period.

Good. And put down that
she should call on me at
least once.

Suppose I write and
you tell me what to say.

Step V. Decide which ideas you don't like, which you do, and how you plan to follow through.

I think we'd better cross
out "change class." It's
too late in the term
for that.

Leave in "change seat.
But Joey should change his seat, too, and sit
far away from me.

And can we ask her to
call on me
one time?

I think your
teacher should
know all your
ideas.

Dear Ms. Jones.
I'm sorry for what
cut. From now on...
Parenting Approaches for Challenging Kids (PACK)
Children (8-12 yo)

Module 8

"BASKET PROGRAM," COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

- Materials Needed
  - Copies of lists of relevant verses irrelevant behaviors (copy from Turecki’s book, Parent Notebook)

- 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board
- Examples:
  - Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters
  - Build close, supportive relationships bet parents-kids

1600-1615 Introduce basket program
- Basket A-enforce like a brick wall, not negotiable (e.g., zero tolerance of physical aggression and child must attend school)
- Basket B-teach skills via collaborative problem-solving
- Basket C-you decide it’s not worth battling, not worth inducing and enduring a melt-down over, you “let it go” for now

Perform exercise by generating lists of relevant and nonrelevant bx (mom and dad) and help parents identify appropriate basket for each

1615-1645 Introduce collaborative problem-solving:

3 Step Process:
(1) Empathy
(2) Define The Problem From Child’s Perspective First, Then the Parent’s
(3) Invite Child To A “Problem-Solving Party”

Do paper and pencil exercises and role play collaborative problem-solving

More helpful tips for increasing compliance, building strong relationships, healthy self esteem:

Reduce the frequency of the following:

1. Directives (commands). Direct commands (Give me the crayon) as well as indirect (How about giving me the crayon?)

2. Questions (Children are bombarded with questions, take away the lead from the child, direct the conversation). Also leading questions, wouldn’t you rather use the blue crayon?

3. Criticism (Any negative or contradictory statement about the child or what the child is doing).
A. Blatant Criticism: That was a dumb thing to do. You sure look stupid when you whine like that.

B. Don’t Phrases. Phrases beginning with don’t are typically negatively stated commands & take the lead away from the child. Inherent in a negative command is disapproval of the child’s activity or behavior.

C. Negative Correction: A subtle form of criticism that we all use. A negative correction occurs when the child makes and error & you point out the mistake before offering corrective information. Example: Child colors an object blue & says, “I’m coloring this purple!” You say, “That is not blue, you’re making it purple.” Cut the first part.

Increase the following:

1. Descriptions of the child’s behavior. Watch child closely & comment on even the miniscule aspects of the child’s appropriate behavior.

2. Reflections of the child’s statements. This means repeating back the basic message of what the child has said, a form of verbal imitation. The message can be extended, elaborated on, or subtly corrected through reflection.

3. Imitations of the child’s appropriate behavior. It is the sincerest form of flattery & boosts self-esteem.

4. Praise. Praise good behavior – don’t let sleeping dogs lie. Catch the child being good. A praise should occur in behavioral play therapy every 20-seconds.

If Problems Persist:
1. Talk about child’s feelings.
2. Talk about your feelings (keep short).
3. Invite child to brainstorm with you to come up with mutually agreeable solution.
4. Write down all ideas without evaluating. (Don’t say, that’s a silly idea – it ends the process. Just go from one idea to next.)
5. Review ideas & decide which ones you like & dislike.
Parenting Approaches for Challenging Kids (PACK)  
Children (8-12 yo)  

Module 9  

MAKING CHILDREN FEEL SPECIAL AND APPRECIATED, BUILDING SELF ESTEEM,  
CULTIVATING "ISLANDS OF COMPETENCE"  

- Materials Needed  
  - Parent and Child Feedback/Satisfactions Forms  
  - Parent and Child Outcome Measures (?YOQ v. Ohio Scales)  
  - Copies of "Putting It All Together" summary forms.  

- 1530-1545 Introductions, Check In, Review Goals of Parenting and List Them on the Board  
  - Examples:  
    - Raise resilient, independent, successful children with strong characters  
    - Build close, supportive relationships bet parents-kids  

1545-1630 Review ways to make children feel special/appreciated  
Brainstorm a list of things you can do to make the child feel special:  

Examples:  
1. Spending a little extra time.  
2. Writing a note to the child.  
4. Create traditions & special times: let children know when you are doing something special with them that this is your 'special time.' Let them know of your enjoyment ('Wow! This is GREAT!') What happens when the phone rings? You won't answer it because it is your special time.  
5. Remember significant occasions & significant events.  
6. Always build up (praise, accent strengths), don't chip away (mention weaknesses, yelling, disparaging remarks)  
7. Expressing empathy (validating their feelings, perspective)  
8. Listening with full attention  

Fostering positive self esteem/engineering for success  

Environmental Engineering: Set things up for the child to experience success so you can shout praise from the highest mountain for something that they succeeded in completing). Identify and exploit "Islands of competence."  

Beware of Reinforcing Low self-esteem.  

1. Some children truly struggle to master challenges or activities at home, in school, or on the playground. Often their general lack of success leads them to attribute whatever success they do attain to luck, chance, or fate, all factors outside of their control. This reduces their confidence that they will be capable of succeeding in the future.  

2. A luck experience is just that; although luck may lead to success, the attribution of that success as random will not foster an island of competence or a resilient mindset. I suggest that
from now on, when a child attributes her success to luck instead of attempting to convince her otherwise, you first empathize & validate her expressed belief.

3. Remember: Validating what a child says is not the same as agreeing with the child. When you begin with validation, children are more likely to listen to an alternative perspective.

4. I know that you feel you were lucky when you do well on a test or when you win a game, but I wonder if you really were lucky. Maybe other things helped you to do well.

The more successes a child experiences the more likely that the child will develop a resilient mindset. Two major factors that determine whether a child’s successes nurture a resilient mindset are:

1. Whether the child believes the successes are based, at least in part, on his or her own resources & efforts.

2. Whether the successes are judged to be important to the child & significant others (friends, parents)

What to watch for is for the child who is successful at activities that are not highly valued in their families (or by peers).

Parents must learn to appreciate the individual differences in each child & accommodate their expectations to those differences.

Ways to encourage autonomy

To Encourage Autonomy

1. Let children make choices. (Choices give a child valuable practice in making decisions)

2. Show respect for a child’s struggle. (When a child’s struggle is respected, he gathers courage to see a job through by himself.)

3. Don’t ask too many questions. (Too many questions can be experienced as an invasion of one’s private life. Children will talk about when they want to talk about it)

4. Don’t rush to answer questions. (When children ask questions, they deserve the chance to explore the answer for themselves first).

5. Encourage children to use sources outside of the home. (children cannot be completely dependent on us – the world is their home)

6. Don’t take away hope. (By trying to protect children from disappointment, we protect them from hoping, striving, dreaming, & achieving their dreams)

Note: whenever you feel yourself starting to get agitated or involved, ask yourself, ‘Do I have any choice here? Must I take over? Or can I put the children in charge instead?’

More Ways to Encourage Autonomy

1. Let her own her own body.

2. Don’t talk about a child in front of him, no matter how young the child.

3. Let a child answer for himself.

4. Show respect for your child’s eventual readiness.

5. Watch out for too many ‘no’s’
Alternatives to 'NO'

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Give information: C: Can I go over to Suzie’s to play now? Instead of ‘No, you can’t’ say,</td>
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<td>we’re having dinner in five minutes.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Accept Feelings C: I don’t want to go home. Can’t we stay? Instead of, No we have to go now.</td>
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<td>Say, I can see if it were up to you we’d stay for a long, long time.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Describe the problem. C: Mom, can you drive me to the library now? Instead of, No, you’ll</td>
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<td>have to wait. Say, ‘I’d like to help you, but I have to finish getting dinner ready.’</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>When possible, substitute a ‘yes’ or a ‘no.’ C: Can we go to the playground? Instead of ‘No.’</td>
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<td>Say, Yes, certainly. Right after lunch.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Give yourself time to think. C: Can I sleep over at Gary’s house? Instead of ‘No’ say, ‘Let me</td>
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<td>think about it.’</td>
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**Review**—Use “Putting It All Together” handouts as outline

**Feedback and Outcome Measures** Have facilitators exit, parents leave completed forms in envelop
MODULE NINE

Ways to Make Children Feel Special and Appreciated:

1. Spending a little extra time.
2. Writing a note to the child.
4. Create traditions & special times: let children know when you are doing something special with them that this is your 'special time.' Let them know of your enjoyment ('Wow! This is GREAT!') What happens when the phone rings? You won't answer it because it is your special time.
5. Remember significant occasions & significant events.
6. Always build up (praise, accent strengths), don't chip away (mention weaknesses, yelling, disparaging remarks)
7. Expressing empathy (validating their feelings, perspective)
8. Listening with full attention

Fostering positive self esteem/engineering for success-10 minutes, list

Environmental Engineering: Set things up for the child to experience success so you can shout praise from the highest mountain for something that they succeeded in completing. Identify and exploit "islands of competence."

Ways To Encourage Autonomy

| 1. Let children make choices. (Choices give a child valuable practice in making decisions) |
| 2. Show respect for a child's struggle. (When a child's struggle is respected, he gathers courage to see a job through by himself.) |
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Note: whenever you feel yourself starting to get agitated or involved, ask yourself, 'Do I have any choice here? Must I take over? Or can I put the children in charge instead?'

More Ways to Encourage Autonomy

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| 3. Let a child answer for himself. |
| 4. Show respect for your child's eventual readiness. |
| 5. Watch out for too many 'no's' |

Module 9
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER...

Goals:
1. Raise resilient kids
2. Build strong relationships with kids
3. If 1 and 2 are set, good behavior (the 3rd goal) flows naturally.

Relationship/Self Esteem/Character Builders:
1. Empathy
2. Avoid Giving Advice or Reassurance, Dismissing Feelings
3. Active or Reflective Listening
4. Daily Special Time
5. Collaborative Problem-Solving
6. Praise
7. Avoid or Modify Labels
8. Attack Problem Not The Child

Behavior Modifiers:
1. Basic Principles:
   a. Consequences need to be immediate & specific (for both positive and negative bx)
   b. Consequences, parental response must be consistent across settings, time, parents
   c. Incentives before rewards
   d. Word behavioral targets, commands in affirmative way
   e. Anticipate and plan for bx problems
2. Effective Commands
3. No Shame, No Blame, No Put Downs!
4. Give Information
5. Write Notes
6. Offer Choices
7. Express Your Feelings
8. Attending to Appropriate Behavior/Compliance/Independent Play
9. Token/Reward System

10. Effective Tracking/Monitoring