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Responding to Challenging Behaviors in a Preschool Setting

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Challenging Behaviors

- Interferes with learning or engagement in prosocial interactions
- Nonresponsive to the use of developmentally appropriate guidance procedures or procedures suited for a given child's age and developmental level
- Purpose is to "gain peer or teacher attention, escape a task demand, or obtain sensory feedback or a tangible item"
- Defiance, hair-pulling, teasing, biting and bullying
- Minor illness, death of a loved one, divorce of parents, or other stressors within the family or elsewhere

Behavior Change Project

- Applied Behavior Analysis Methodology
- Baseline
- Implementation
- Return

Positive Behavior Supports

- Behaviorist theory
- Reinforcing the good work that children do will lead to better outcomes
- All about the feedback children receive
 - Praise
 - Planned ignoring
 - Classroom rules
- Important to not cause extrinsic motivation

My Research

In a preschool setting, how can teachers best respond to challenging behaviors by blending methods of positive behavior supports and prosocial guidance?



Prosocial Guidance

- Constructivist theory
- Children are motivated by their peers and the feelings of the group as a whole
- Cooperative play
- Children handling their own problems
- Alerting children to similarities that exist among each other
- Feeling for another, working with another, and ministering to another

Significance to the Field of Education

- 10% of preschoolers exhibit noticeable problem behaviors
- Both teachers and students tend to reject children who exhibit challenging behavior
- These implementations can be used by general education teachers, not just intervention specialists

Preschool Aged Children

- Social development
- Children ages 3-5
- Preschoolers are constantly changing emotions because they are unaware of how to deal with them
- Peer interaction vs. Adult interaction
- Play time

Importance of this Age

- If gone undirected, challenging behaviors could "interfere with [children's] learning and ability to develop relationships with peers"
- Children who help others have more "positive relationships and interactions with their peers, and people who were prosocial as children are less likely to be antisocial as adults"

Key References

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