

# Behavior is the Clue, NOT the Problem

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February 26, 2013  
LWSD PTSA Special Needs Group

# Behavior is the Clue, NOT the Problem

- #1: self regulation (body, thoughts, emotions)
- Anxiety, sensory interference, school avoidance, reactive and disruptive behaviors.
- Meltdown or shut down--sound familiar?



# The Promise of Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS)

CPS model is effective way to:

- Reduce conflict
- Successfully solve problems
- Teach kids the skills needed to function adaptively in the real world

# CPS Tenet #1

Challenging behavior is viewed as the byproduct of lagging cognitive skills including:

- Flexibility/adaptability
- Frustration tolerance
- Problem solving

# CPS Tenet #2

- Challenges are best addressed by teaching children the skills they lack



# CPS Tenet #3

- Reduce challenging episodes by collaboratively solving the problems before they escalate
  - Students who learn additional skills don't need to challenge as much
  - See challenging behavior as indicator there is a missing skill—less of a toll on child's self-esteem

# Skills That May Be Lagging

- Regulating emotion
- Expressing concerns and needs
- Handling transitions
- Being flexible, not “stuck”
- Seeing other points of view
- Thinking of multiple solutions
- Being able to wait, plan in sequence, complete a task

# When Key Skills are Missing

- Crying, kicking, hitting, spitting, screaming, throwing, breaking, running, hiding, yelling, swearing, etc. Sound familiar?

# CPS Defines Three Approaches

When a child does not meet expectations:

- Plan A (Adult): Impose adult will – “I’ve decided...”
- Plan C (Child): Drop it for now, give a reprieve on the expectation
- Plan B (Both): Teach skills and solve problems

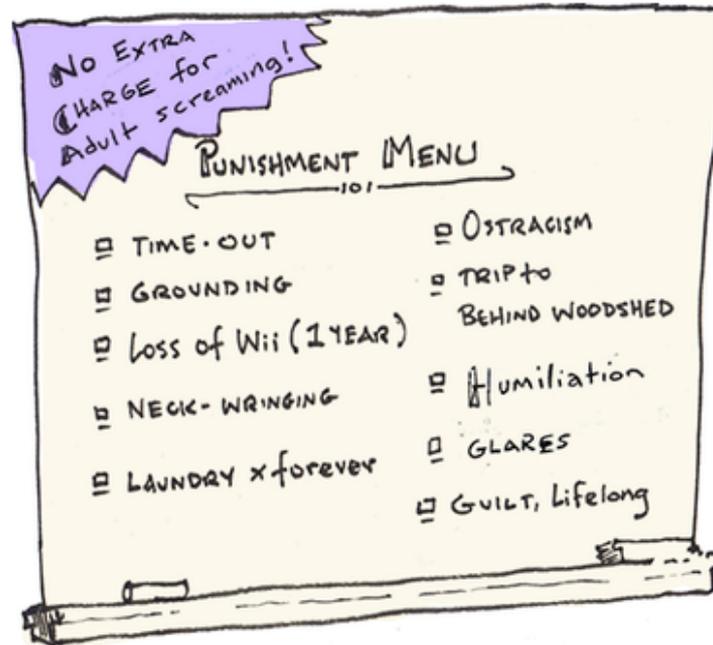
# Plan A: Imposing Will

- “No”
- “You must”
- “You can’t”
- “You better stop or...”

Plan A = adult expectations

Does not teach skills or create durable, mutually satisfactory solutions

# Plan A: Imposing Will



# Plan C: Drop It (for now, at least)

- Reduces challenging behaviors in the moment
- Builds relationships – child feels you understand how hard it is for him
- Can be used as part of overall strategy for a highly explosive child

Does not pursue adult expectations, teach skills or create a durable solution

# Plan B: The Heart of CPS

- Plan B teaches skills and solves problems
- Plan B helps adult and child stay calm enough to think
- Includes expressing needs, wants, and concerns
- Takes into account the other's point of view
- Results in realistic, mutually satisfactory and durable solutions to problems

# Step 1. Empathy and Reassurance

- Child's concerns expressed
- Child is reassured that adult won't resort to Plan A (impose adult will)
- Both child and adult feel and calmer
- Slows down adult impatience and desire to DO something right now

# Step 2. Define the Problem

- Identifies and summarizes both the adult's and the child's specific concerns
- Makes it clear there are two concerns to be reconciled
- Honors both points of view as worthy of consideration

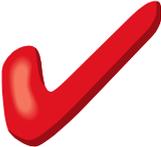
# Step 3. Invitation

- “I wonder if there’s a way...”
- “Let’s see if we can figure this out together”
- “How can we make it work for you and for me?”
- “Have you got any ideas?”

\*Note: don’t be a genius!

Key: solution must be feasible, doable, and mutually satisfactory

# ABC Chart

PLAN	Pursue Expectations	Reduce Meltdowns	Teach Skills
<b>A</b> Adult imposes will on child			
<b>B</b> Both collaborate on finding a solution			
<b>C</b> Child's perspective: Expectations are reduced or removed			

# Behavior is the Clue, Not the Problem

Meltdowns, tantrums, explosions and shutdowns:  
consider each as code language

- “Something critical is missing for me in the moment”  
and
- “I don’t know how to do what you’re asking (expecting) me to do”
- and
- “I’m giving you all I’ve got” “This is how I cope”

# Dead-End Explanations

- “he just wants attention”
- “he just wants his way”
- “he’s just manipulating us”
- “he’s just unmotivated”
- “he’s making bad/poor choices”

These explanations indicate that thinking has stopped and judgment has set in.

So, what if we used the *ALSUP* instead to clearly distinguish skills from problems?

# What's the ALSUP?

- Hand-out
- The Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP)
- Missing skills check list
- Essential tool for the true unsolved problem

# Results Worth Examining

- Fewer explosions, more self-regulation
- Those missing social skills began to build relationships
- Overall less dependent on our supports
- Better prepared to return to their home districts

# Adopting New Models Takes Work

- New ways of looking at challenging behavior
- Some out-of-the-box thinking
- Some time to learn new skills
- We've adopted the model successfully, and you can, too

# Worth Every Effort

- What are children really saying with challenging behavior?
  - Notice me!
  - I'm trying to tell you what I need!
  - I don't have a clue how to do this school stuff.
  - Why do you keep doing and saying the same thing?
  - How come you never ask me what I think?
  - Am I broken?

# Next Steps

- Plan B is the key: Learn about Collaborative Problem Solving
- Try it in baby steps with your child(ren)
- Come see it action at our school during a tour

**Children do well if they can, let's help them.**

# Resources

- Website: [www.livesinthebalance.org](http://www.livesinthebalance.org)
  - Streaming video examples of Plan B in action
  - Seminars, consultation, clinical services, articles, research, videos and DVDs
- Books:
  - Lost at School, Ross W. Greene, Ph.D.
  - The Explosive Child, Ross W. Greene, Ph.D.
  - Opening Our Arms, Kathy Regan
- CHILD:
  - [Website: www.CHILDnow.org](http://www.CHILDnow.org)
  - Phone: (206) 232-8680

# Appendix

- Plan B Cheat Sheet
- Assessment of Lagging Skills & Unsolved Problems (ALSUP)