



REFRAMING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

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Objectives

1

Discuss the importance of picking our battles with children.

2

Reframe defiance or aggression

3

Identify effective ways to teach children how to express the need behind their defiance

4

Discuss and review strategies that work in responding to defiance/aggression

Scenarios

You are a parent of 3 kids.

You are driving your kids home from school and one of your kids begins to tap the window repeatedly in the back. The other 2 kids do not notice.

Later that evening, your middle child begins to make faces at the youngest. The youngest gets very upset and starts screaming at their sister.

3 Questions if we want to stop a child's behavior

Is this impeding the child's learning, development, or comfort or that of others in the family?

Is it against a family value/norm/expectation?

Is it a safety issue for anyone in the family?

Establishing Clear Family Values/Expectations

- Minimal
- Clear
- Easy to understand regardless of the stage of development
- Leaves little room for misinterpretation (“Be respectful”)



3 Questions if we want a child to start a new behavior

What is the goal of what I am asking the child to do? (Our own upbringing should not be the only goal)

Are there other ways for the child to meet that goal?

Is the child in the place in their brain where they are capable of meeting the goal in the moment?

What is defiance?

Academic needs

Regulatory needs

Sense of control

Non-preferred activities

What is aggression?

Can mask another feeling

Self-efficacy

Feeling ignored/invalidated

Interpersonal issues

“I WOULD BE ABLE TO HELP
MY KIDS WOULD JUST TELL
ME WHAT THEY NEED!”

Supporting Our Children in Communicating Needs

- I am feeling...
- I need...
- It would help me if...

Example Worksheet

I noticed you were... (options to circle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delaying starting an activity• Sitting with your head down• Moving around the room• Seemingly distracted
How are you feeling?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tired• Frustrated• Bored• Confused• Upset• Anxious
Do you need support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes• No• Maybe, but I'm not sure what kind of support
What kind of support would best serve you in the moment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bathroom break• Support with the classwork• Partnering with another student• A calm corner break• Head down for 5 minutes

- **Prioritize regulation (regulate, relate, reason)**
- **Specific praise**
- **Differentiate expectations based on development**
- **Be aware of tone/positioning/power dynamics**
- **Give children processing time AND space**

Responding to Defiance at Home

A LOT OF TIMES WE RESPOND TO
DEFIANCE, DISRESPECT, OR
DISRUPTION IN A LESS THAN IDEAL
WAY BECAUSE WE ARE TRIGGERED.

Scenarios

You are the parent of a 3rd grader.

You pick your third-grade son up from school. He barely mutters hello to you. When he gets home, he throws his bag on the floor. You remind him that the expectation is that he should hang his bag on the hook and take out his lunch bag. He says if you want that done, you should do it yourself.

You are the parent of a 10th grade daughter.

Your daughter wakes up late on a Saturday morning after attending a school event on Friday night. She seems fine when she wakes up and gets progressively more irritable as the day goes on. Her younger sibling comes into her room and she pushes them out of the room and slams the door.

Scenarios

Big Picture

Kids do well if they can

If our lens reflects the above, then we switch to a position of support

If a child is being defiant/disrespectful/disruptive, they likely have an unmet need

Our immediate goal is to meet the need

Our long-term goal is to enable and empower our children to communicate the need.

Questions/ Comments

Thanks for having me!

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