



Classroomwide Practices Assessment

1. Where are you giving your time and attention? It is easy to fall into a pattern of giving time and attention to challenging behavior and to largely ignore children who have persistent challenging behavior when they are behaving appropriately. It is critical to be spending the vast majority of time with every child when he or she is behaving well. Ask yourselves this question:
 - Are we providing positive feedback to children with persistent challenging behavior at five times or more the rate that we are giving corrective feedback for challenging behavior? Yes No

2. Where are you at in providing children with a level of predictability in the daily schedule that prevents challenging behavior? Most every early childhood setting has a schedule of activities in place. Many of these settings, however, do not have a level of predictability to the schedule that provides children with the certainty necessary to act as a prevention to challenging behavior. Schedules that become interrupted or altered by challenging behavior, different adults in the class, or a whim to do something different are not prevention schedules. Likewise, schedules that are not taught directly to children, reviewed with children on a regular basis, or discussed beforehand with children when a necessary modification needs to be made (e.g., a field trip day) are not prevention schedules. Ask yourselves this question:
 - Are we using schedules in a way that is likely to prevent challenging behavior? Yes No

3. Looking more deeply into the question of schedules, are there predictable routines within routines within routines as a planned part of your classroom? For example, circle time is often a routine that occurs on a regular basis (every day). Simply having that general routine as a predictable event, however, will not function to prevent challenging behavior. There must be a consistent routine within the circle time. For example, Ms. Alexa's class does circle time as the first activity every day, and the first routine within her circle time is a greeting song. Simply having a greeting song within your routine, however, is not sufficient for many children with challenging behavior. They need yet another level of predictability. Ms. Alexa has a routine within the child choice song routine such that every day the sequence of events is for a child to pass out props to accompany the song, the song is then sung, and then another child picks up the props. Ask yourselves this question:
 - Do we have routines within routines within routines across the preschool day? Yes No

4. Are we explicitly teaching the behavioral expectations for each classroom routine? Many early childhood settings have classroom rules for general deportment (e.g., use walking feet, share toys and materials, use inside voice, keep our friends safe). Having these rules is worthwhile, but, in many cases, they simply occupy a space on the classroom wall, are only reviewed early in the preschool year, or are never translated into their application for specific, multiple routines. Early childhood providers may make the colossal mistake in many circumstances of assuming that children know how to behave appropriately and that their misbehavior is simply noncompliance. Sometimes this is the case, but the only way to be certain is to have explicitly taught the specific expectations in the first place. Ask yourselves this question:
 - Have we taught children the specific behaviors we want to see for each classroom routine? Yes No

5. Are we explicitly teaching peer-related social skills on a classroomwide basis to prevent challenging behavior? A certain fraction of all challenging behavior in any group care setting for young children will derive from peer conflicts over toys, materials, and the attention of adults. Peer-related social skills such as sharing, taking turns, and following another child's play idea can function to prevent challenging behavior. Unfortunately, up to 20% of all typically developing young children show signs of peer-related skill deficits (Asher, 1995), and an overwhelming number of young children with special needs show similar deficits. Acquiring peer-related social skills is not a simple task. Social behavior is complex, subtle at times, and requires a lot of practice to reach what we might consider mastery. Not only do peer-related social skills need to be directly taught, but many children will need explicit instruction across the entire school day to yield good outcomes. Ask yourselves this question:
 - Are we providing explicit peer-related social skill instruction on skills such as sharing, taking turns, and following another child's lead throughout the day? Yes No

Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children: The Early Childhood Model of Individualized Positive Behavior Support
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Figure 5.2. Classroomwide Practices Assessment.