Pyramid Pages

News & Tools for Parents & Early Childhood Providers

Social emotional learning and development is fundamental to children’s success in school and beyond, and its importance is understood now more than ever. The Pyramid Model promotes young children’s healthy social and emotional development; and provides tools, strategies, and resources for caregivers and families.

How to Understand the Meaning of a Child’s Challenging Behavior

As a parent or caregiver, you may see a child behave in a way that doesn’t make sense and ask yourself, “Why does he or she keep doing that?” It can be very frustrating. Sometimes, when a child is overwhelmed by strong emotions or does not know the appropriate way (such as words, sign language or pointing to pictures) to express needs or wants he or she may use challenging behavior (such as hitting or screaming) to communicate.

Children use challenging behavior to either:

1) Get something, such as attention or a toy, or
2) Get out of doing something, such as going to bed, eating a new food or getting buckled in the car seat.

The first step to help a child learn a new appropriate behavior is to determine if he or she wants something or wants to avoid doing something.

For some ideas for parents and providers on how to do this, check out the Backpack series like the ones shown here in English and Spanish—also available in many other languages on: Challengingbehavior.org

Resources

- To learn more, here is a webinar that can help: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sktbpt8Q-M
- For more information: email us at CTPyramid@gmail.com