

# HELPING CAREGIVERS MANAGE CHALLENGING TEEN BEHAVIORS IN TF-CBT

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And many others...



## Goals for the next hour...

- Normalize difficulty
- Better understand why teens are so difficult
- What do we tell caregivers to do?
- Problem solve some cases

## Tell me about it...

- What are the biggest issues caregivers share with you?

## Adolescent Development

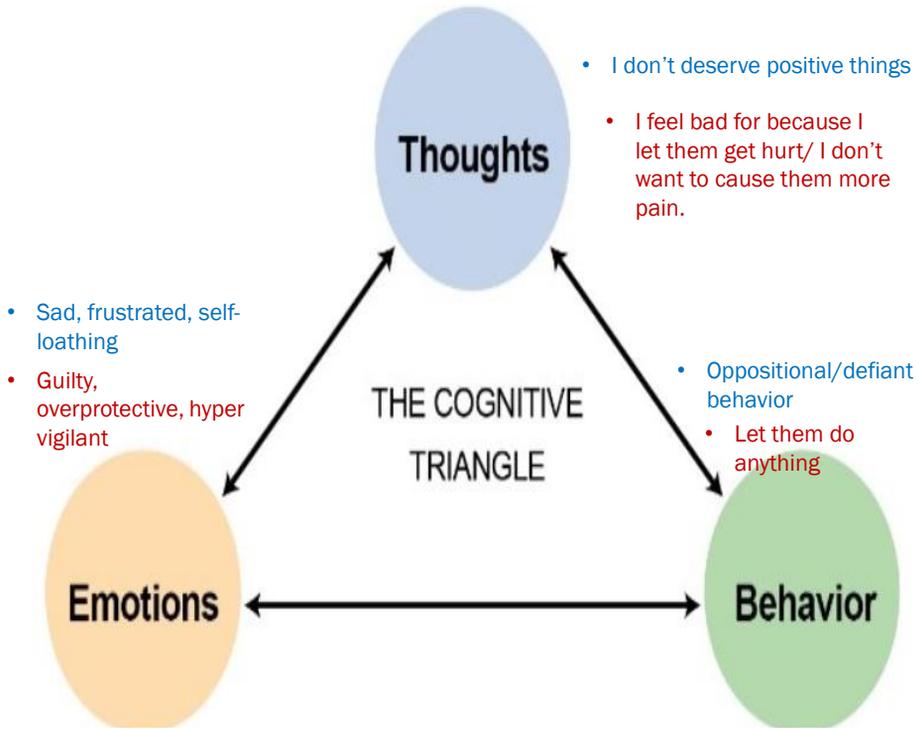
- Puberty
- Abstract Cognitive Abilities
- Egocentric Ideas
- Reasoning Abilities
- Social Focus
- Risky Behavior
- Identity Formation
- Autonomy

# Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

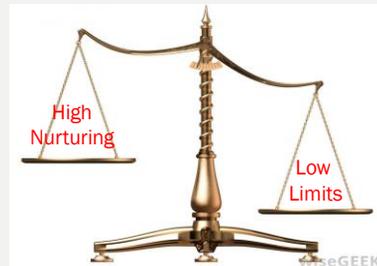
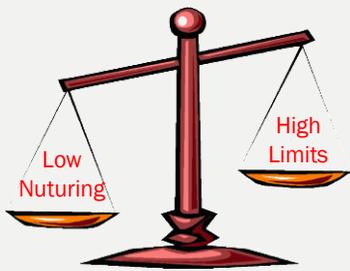


## How does trauma effect...

- ...typical development?
  - Problem solving
  - Coping
  - Social skills
  - Reasoning
  - Emotional regulation
- ...moral development?
  - empathy and perspective taking
  - self-preservation/survival
  - avoidance of conflict vs. preference towards conflict



What can happen.... And what is our goal?



## Now let's put it all together

- High limits-----goes against developmental desire for autonomy
- Low nurturing-----might reinforce teen's unbalanced thinking
  
- What happens with low limits and high nurturing?
  
- How does this look in real-life?

THE IMPORTANCE OF  
ASSESSMENT IN  
MANAGING CHALLENGING  
BEHAVIOR

## First stop—caregiver buy-in

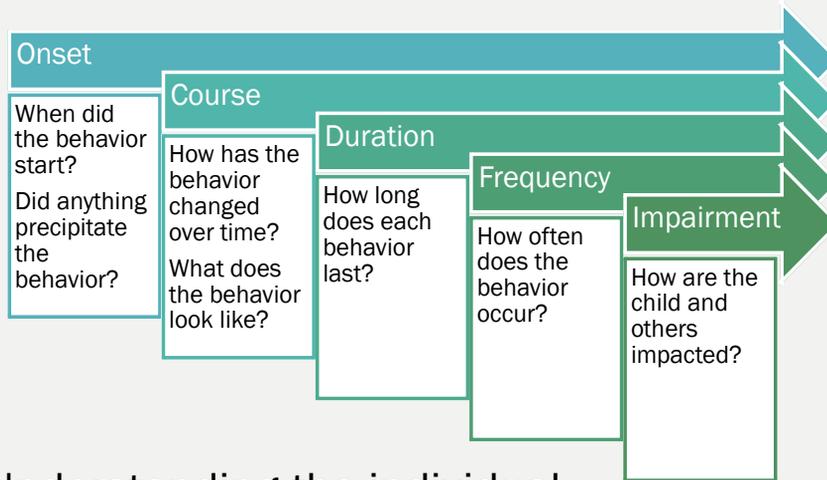
- How has parenting been affected by traumatic events
- Engagement of caregivers to commit to reducing trauma symptoms by providing safety, structure, and consistency to increase positive behavior while reducing negative behavior.



## Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)

- Allows behavior to be defined, understood, and put in context
- Sets the stage for building a plan to change behavior on all fronts, not just on the response after a behavior occurs
- Helps caregivers understand their role in changing behavior

## Key Questions to Ask in an FBA

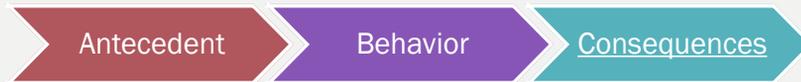


Understanding the individual

## Pieces of an FBA

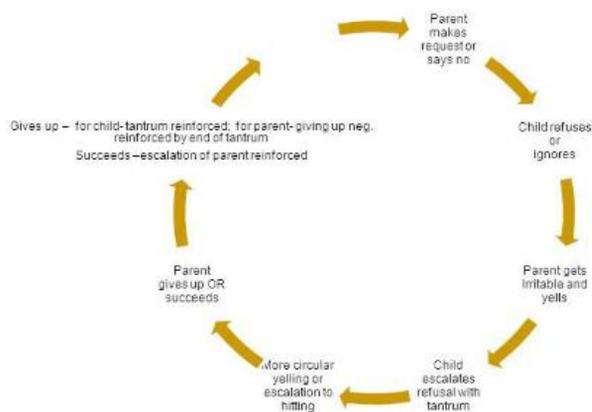


## Why may the behavior keep occurring?



- Attention (Positive or Negative)
  - *I made someone laugh; it's the only time my caregiver focuses on me*
- Escape / Avoidance
  - *When I escalate, people leave me alone. I don't have to do my chores or go to school*
  - *Is it a skills deficit or a performance deficit?*
- Gain Access to Items
  - *When I act out, sometimes they give in and I get what I want*
- Self-Reinforcing
  - *This feels good; I had fun doing it*

## The coercion cycle



## Why does this matter? How to select a method?

Behavior	Function of Behavior	Method for Behavior Management Plan
Stealing treats/food	Teen wants treats/food	Create system for earning treats
Acting Out/Misbehaving	Seeking caregiver attention	Support parent initiating positive one-on-one time
Aggression towards caregiver	Fear related to caregiver raising voice	Caregiver reducing yelling; implement "time out" during disagreements
Lying	Avoidance of punishment/conflict	Provide incentive for truth telling, house rules for responses to lying
Defiance/Refusal	Doesn't want to complete chore/task; caregiver typically gives in eventually	Caregiver remove self from coercive cycle, implement consequence/reward for chore/behavior

# ADDRESSING TEENAGE BEHAVIOR

## Parenting 101

- Core features of behavior management:
  - *Consistency, predictability, clear rules*
  - *Positive reinforcement*
  - *Negative consequences*
  
- Adaptations for teenagers:
  - *Involve teens in decision making*
  - *Grant increasing independence*
  - *Importance of maintaining positive relationships/communication*

## The Importance of Relationships



## Caregiver-Child Communication



- Circumstances that foster improved, more effective communication
- Characteristics of healthy communication
- Skills for increasing capacity for expressing one's self and hearing another's perspective

## Caregiver-Child Communication

- Provides teens and caregivers the opportunity to practice skills discussed in session.
- Allows the opportunity for teens to express a concern to their caregiver and caregivers the opportunity to hear and respond appropriately.

## Quality Time

- Anyone know PCIT?
- Same principles can be applied

### Special time:

3-4 days a week for 15 minutes

Activity that is enjoyable that the teen chooses or join them in an already engaged activity.

## SETTING RULES

Simple  
Phrased Positively  
Measurable

## Guidelines for House Rules

- Clear and Specific
- Measurable
- Phrased positive
  - *“Respectful language and tone” vs. “No back talking”*
- Agreed upon by both child and caregiver
- Don't always have to be fair- caregiver is still in charge
- Is it enforceable consistently?
- Is it necessary? Can we pick our battles?

PROBLEM NEEDING A	POSSIBLE RULE	EVALUATE THE RULE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and specific?</li> <li>• Addresses a serious problem?</li> <li>• Enforceable?</li> <li>• Feasible for teen to really do it?</li> <li>• Adults in charge agree?</li> <li>• You can enforce it consistently and unemotionally?</li> <li>• Did you get teen's input?</li> </ul>

# STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOR

## Strategies for Managing Behavior

- Removal of privileges/consequences
- Reward system to earn privileges
- Grounding
- Use of natural consequences

## Appropriate Rewards/Consequences

- **Basic Rights**- NOT to be taken away as consequence
  - *Regular family food (not including soft drinks/treats)*
  - *Clothing*
  - *Shelter*
  - *Love*
- **Growth Privileges**- avoid taking away as consequences:
  - *Extracurricular activities*
  - *Community activities*
- **Optional Privileges**- can/should be rewarded and removed in response to behavior
  - *Electronics*
  - *Snacks/Treats*
  - *Allowance*
  - *Social time with friends*
  - *Later curfew*

## Consequences/Removing Privileges

- **Breaking a House Rule**
  - *Removing a privilege*
  - *Adding a negative consequence*
    - *Grounding*
    - *Extra chore*
    - *Others?*

## Rewarding Positive Behavior

- Earning “Optional” Privileges **AND labeled praises** for measurable smaller behaviors
  - *Agreed upon by teen and caregiver*
  - *Daily, weekly, etc., depending on teen level of functioning*
- For teens/caregivers who need structure and visual support
  - *“Behavior Charts”/ Point systems*
  - *If using a point/reward system, minor misbehavior simply does not earn teen that privilege*
  - *Caregiver does not add additional consequence for not completing behavior*

## How have you heard caregivers use grounding?

- Quick, angered response with no attention to schedule
- No follow through
- Piling on the grounding
- No monitoring system in place

## What should grounding really mean?

- Think time-out, but aged up
- Removal from all privileges and positive reinforcement
- Short-term
  - *If always grounded, what does teen have to fight for?*
- Predictable
- Consistent

## Natural Consequences

- Capitalizing on peer dynamics/social pressure
  - *Hygiene*
  - *Room clean*
  - *Eating habits*
  - *Poor communication*
  - *Poor school work- impact on extracurriculars*
  - *Others?*

## Case Examples

- 13 year old male – low self-worth, high anxiety
  - *Will not do any of identified chores*
  - *Mother largely against positive reinforcement system*
  
- What would you do?
  - *Interventions for behavior?*
  - *Interventions with mother?*

## Case Examples

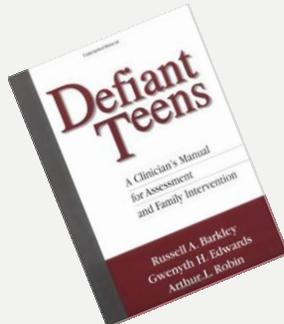
- 16 year old female – emotionally withdrawn, anger outbursts
  - *Argumentative with caregiver*
  - *Has zero privileges because of “poor attitude”*
  
- What would you do?
  - *Interventions for behavior?*
  - *Interventions with caregiver?*

## Case Examples

- 15 year old female – history of substance use, highly avoidant, defiant
  - *Caregiver reports her to be unmotivated by caregiver praise*
  - *Very few expectations in the home*
  
- What would you do?
  - *Interventions for behavior?*
  - *Interventions with caregiver?*

## Reading Recommendations

- Your Defiant Teen (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed):10 Steps to Resolve Conflict and Rebuild Your Relationship
  - *By Barkley and Robin*
  
- How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen So Teens Will Talk
  - *By Faber & Mazlish*



# THANK YOU!

**Center on Child Abuse & Neglect**

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