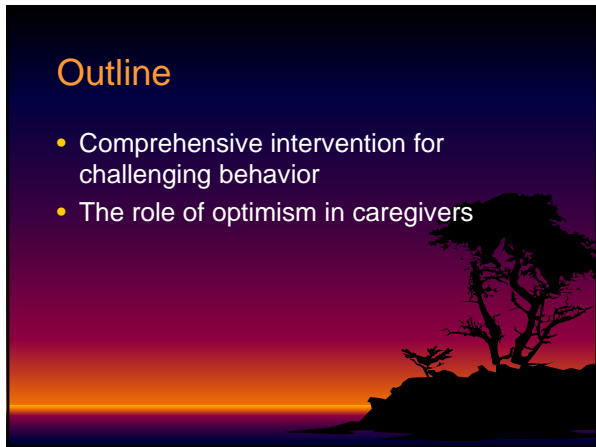


An Optimistic Approach to Helping Students with Challenging Behaviors

V. Mark Durand
University of South Florida St. Petersburg

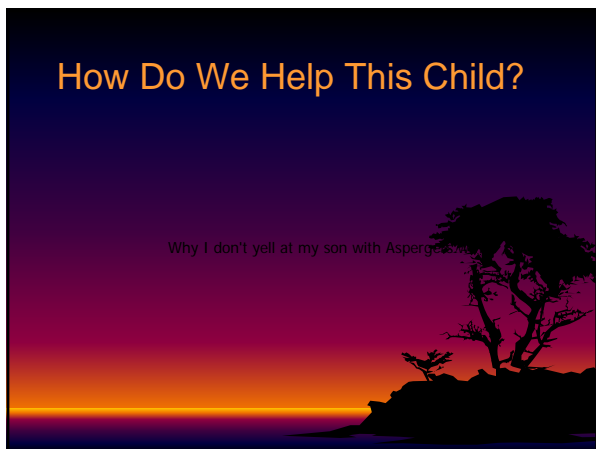
This slide features a sunset background with a silhouette of a tree on the right. The title is in orange and the author information is in white.



Outline

- Comprehensive intervention for challenging behavior
- The role of optimism in caregivers

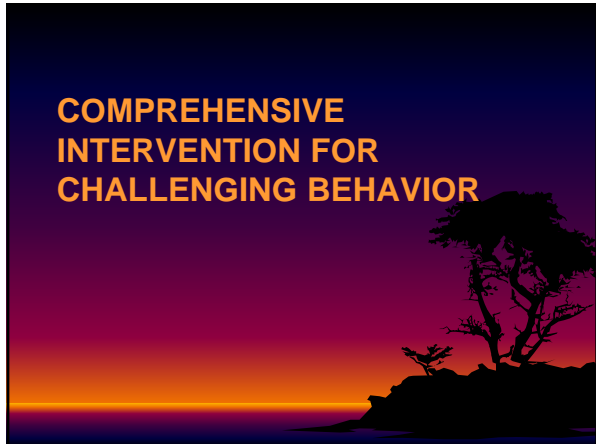
This slide features a sunset background with a silhouette of a tree on the right. The title is in orange and the list items are in white.

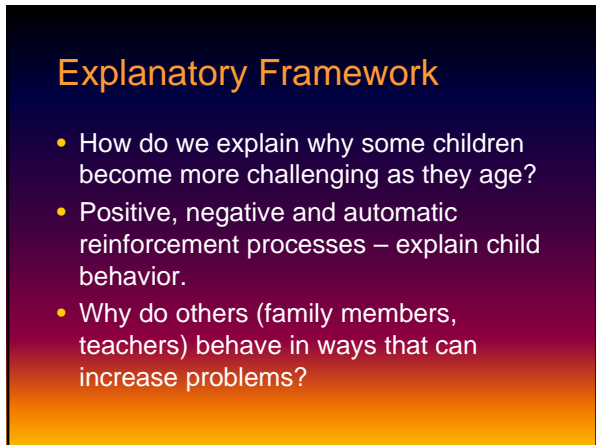


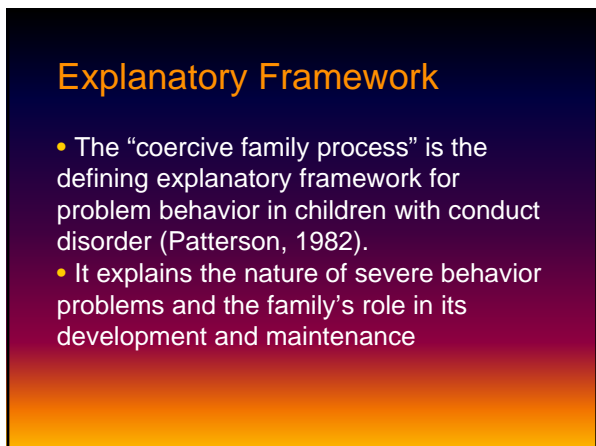
How Do We Help This Child?

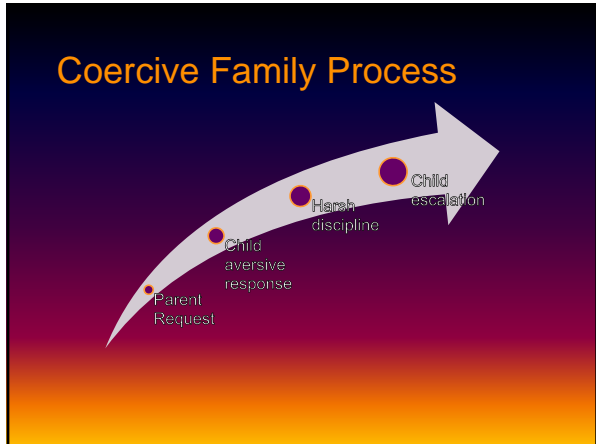
Why I don't yell at my son with Asperger's

This slide features a sunset background with a silhouette of a tree on the right. The title is in orange and the subtitle is in white.









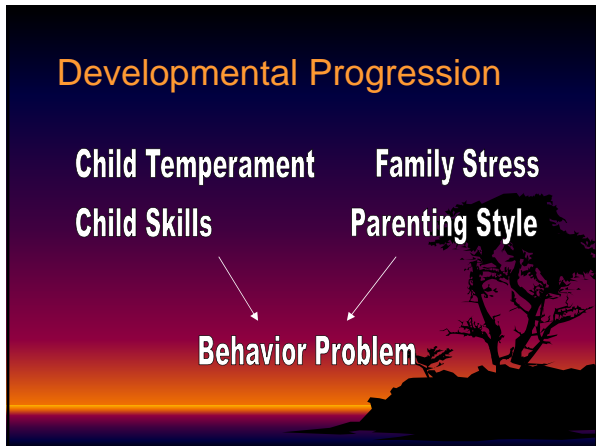
Explanatory Framework

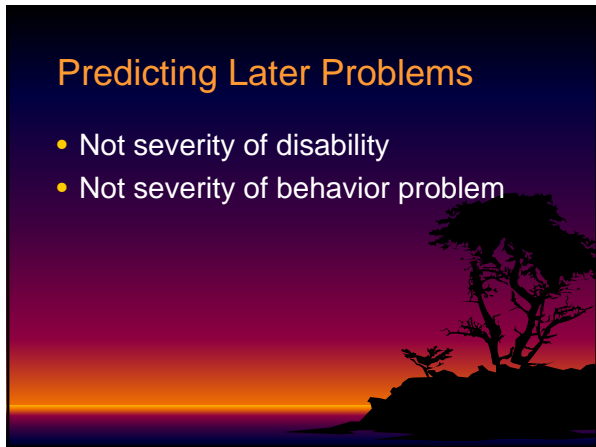
- No similar model exists for these behaviors as observed in children with autism spectrum disorders.

Prevention Project

- Prospective longitudinal study
 - N=128
 - Age 3 to age 6

Durand, V.M. (2001). Future directions for children and adolescents with mental retardation. *Behavior Therapy*, 32, 633-650.







How you see yourself as a parent/teacher

Pessimistic Thoughts

- *I cannot control this child.*
- *I have doubts about my ability to help this child improve his/her behavior.*

Optimistic Thoughts

- *I am usually able to handle problem situations.*
- *I am capable of helping this child improve.*

How you think others see you as a parent/teacher

Pessimistic Thought

- *When this child misbehaves, people see me as a bad parent/teacher.*

Optimistic Thought

- *I believe I am a good parent/teacher.*

How you think others view this child

Pessimistic Thought

- *I think that other people judge this child when he/she is misbehaving*

Optimistic Thought

- *Most parents/teachers have times when their child/student misbehaves.*

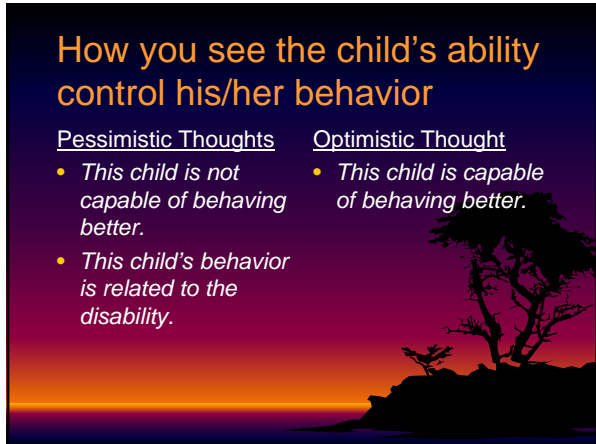
How you see the child's ability control his/her behavior

Pessimistic Thoughts

- *This child is not capable of behaving better.*
- *This child's behavior is related to the disability.*

Optimistic Thought

- *This child is capable of behaving better.*



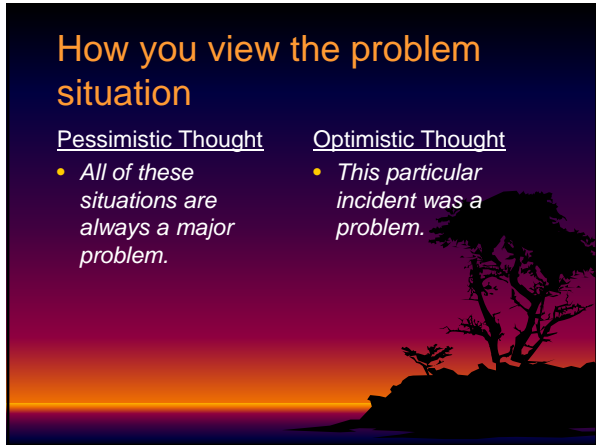
How you view the problem situation

Pessimistic Thought

- *All of these situations are always a major problem.*

Optimistic Thought

- *This particular incident was a problem.*



How you view the future

Pessimistic Thought

- *Things will never get better or will get worse.*

Optimistic Thought

- *Things can and will get better.*



Who is responsible for a problem situation (Child)

Pessimistic Thought

- *The child is doing this on purpose.*

Optimistic Thought

- *The child is not intentionally being disruptive.*

Who is responsible for a problem situation (Others)

Pessimistic Thought

- *If only others would follow my suggestions correctly, this child would be better behaved.*

Optimistic Thought

- *Everyone is doing their best under the circumstances.*

Who is responsible for a problem situation (Self)

Pessimistic Thought

- *It is my fault that things are going wrong.*

Optimistic Thought

- *I am doing the best that I can under the circumstances.*

Who should be responsible for the problem situation

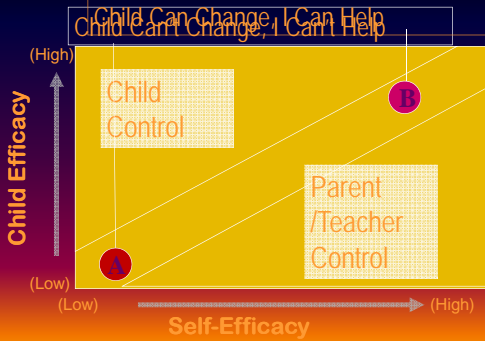
Pessimistic Thought

- *Why am I always the one who has to be responsible for these situations?*

Optimistic Thought

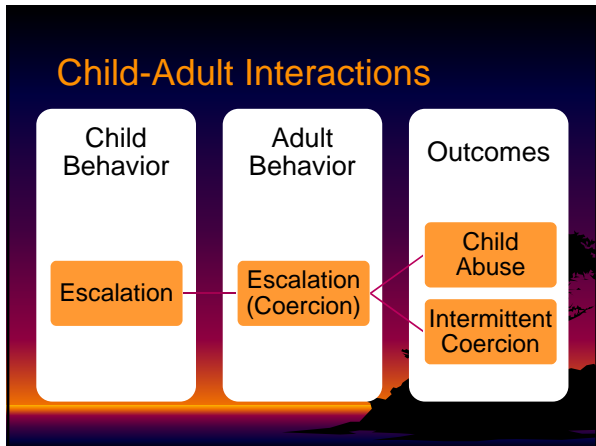
- *Everyone is doing the best they can under the circumstances.*

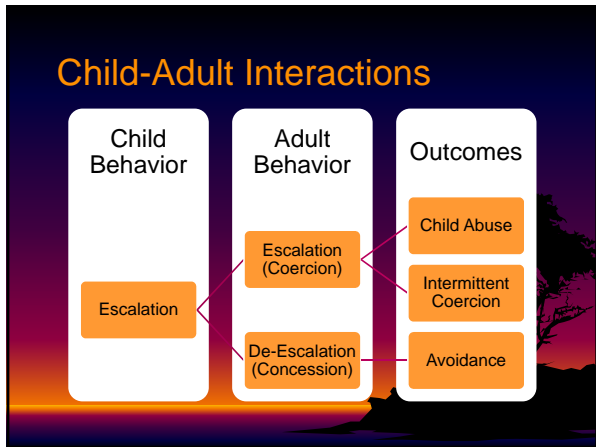
Attitudinal Influences



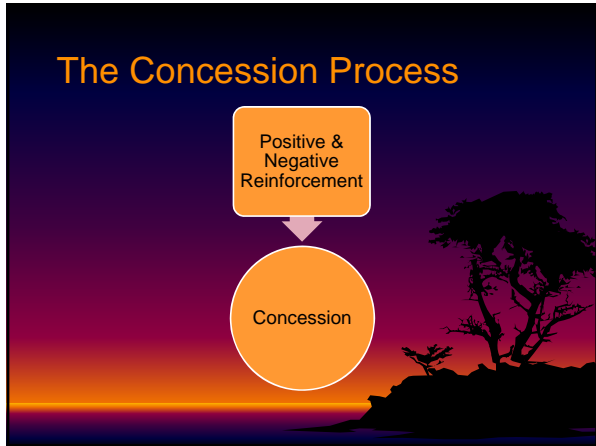
Explanatory Framework

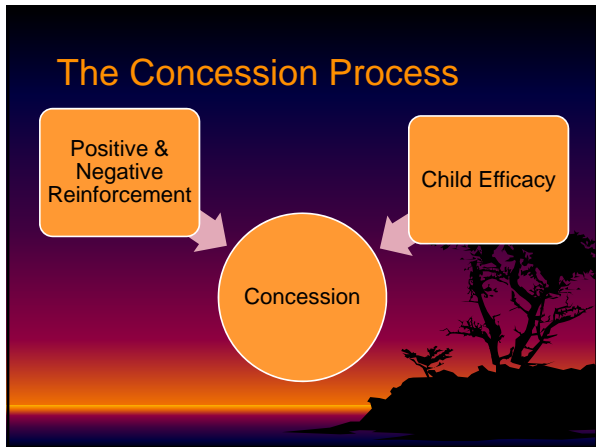
- The “concession process” may help integrate a variety of observations about the development of challenging behaviors in ASD and how we react to them.

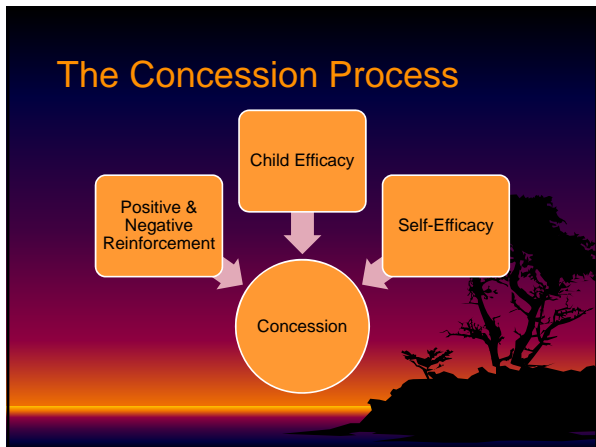


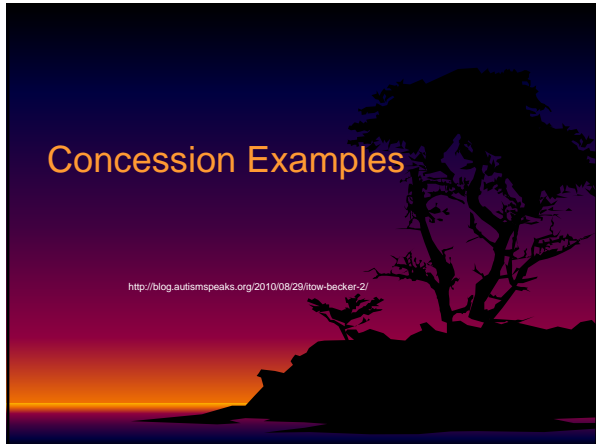






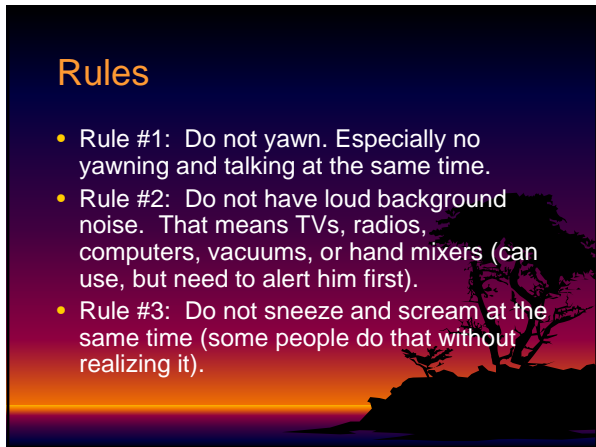






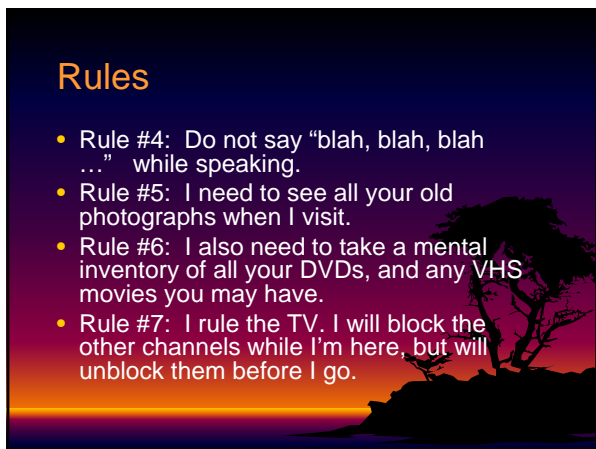
Concession Examples

<http://blog.autismspeaks.org/2010/08/29/tow-becker-2/>



Rules

- Rule #1: Do not yawn. Especially no yawning and talking at the same time.
- Rule #2: Do not have loud background noise. That means TVs, radios, computers, vacuums, or hand mixers (can use, but need to alert him first).
- Rule #3: Do not sneeze and scream at the same time (some people do that without realizing it).



Rules

- Rule #4: Do not say "blah, blah, blah ..." while speaking.
- Rule #5: I need to see all your old photographs when I visit.
- Rule #6: I also need to take a mental inventory of all your DVDs, and any VHS movies you may have.
- Rule #7: I rule the TV. I will block the other channels while I'm here, but will unblock them before I go.

Rules

- Rule #8: No loud unexpected laughter. Please.
- Rule #9: Unlimited baths are expected.
- Rule #10: Friday night is pizza night. It must be gluten-free.
- Rule #11: I need to touch you on the chin and the head every time you yawn, sneeze, or sing.

Rules

- Rule #12: Keep things orderly and predictable. Please. I need to know the schedule.
- Rule #13: No deviations in the schedule. Please.
- Rule #14: Absolutely do not change your mind or give me more options.
- There are so many other things I could add, so many that they don't even seem odd to me anymore.

Evidence

- What experimental evidence exists for the concession process?
- Research with families and teachers

Positive Family/Teacher Intervention

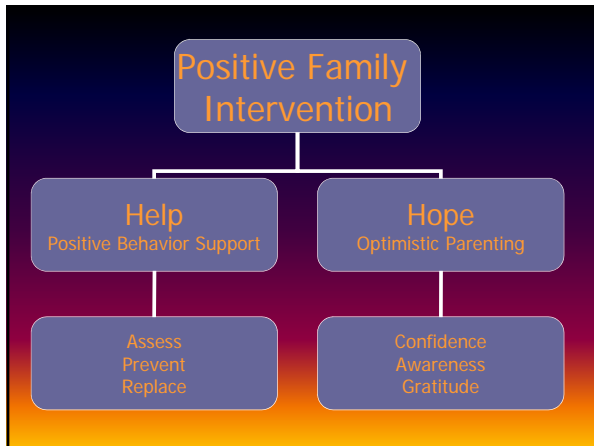
- Can we make pessimistic families/teachers more optimistic?
- Integrating *cognitive-behavioral intervention* with *positive behavioral support*

Positive Teacher Intervention

- Research underway (with Dr. Elizabeth Steed – Georgia State University)
- Relies on Motivational Interviewing to improve optimism


Positive Teacher Intervention

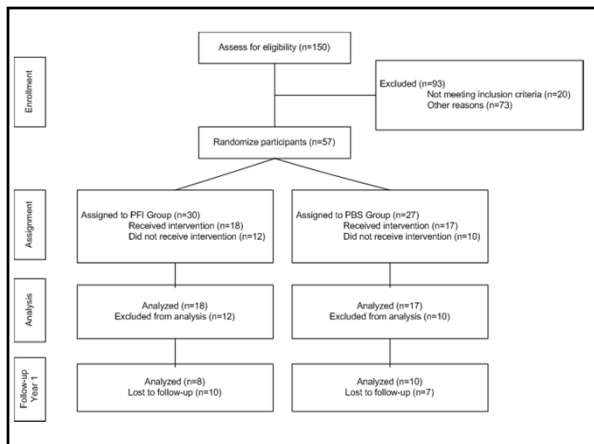
- Teachers implemented significantly more strategies to teach children social skills and involved families in their child's social emotional development.
- At the end of intervention, there were significantly fewer children with serious social emotional difficulties in teachers' classrooms.



Positive Family Intervention

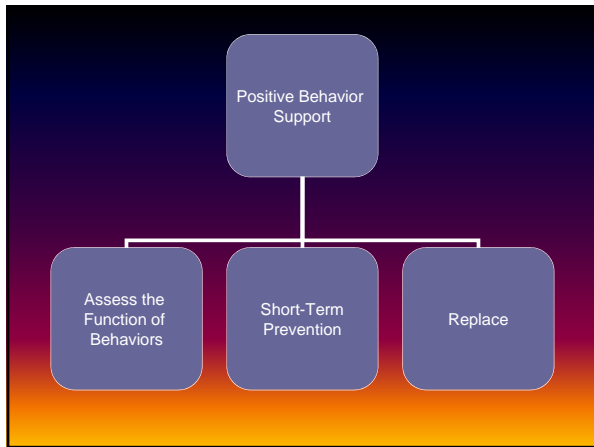
- Standard protocol
- 8 weeks
- 1 ½ hours per individual session
- Standardized measures





Positive Family Intervention

- Session 1: Establishing Goals
- Session 2: Gathering Information
- Session 3: Analysis and Plan Design
- Session 4: Preventing Problems
- Session 5: Managing Consequences
- Session 6: Replacing Behavior
- Session 7: Putting Plan in Place
- Session 8: Monitoring Results



Self-Talk Journal - Session 1

Situation What happened (success or difficulty)?	Beliefs What did you think or feel (self-talk)?	Comments

Self-Talk Journal

Situation	Beliefs	Consequences
What happened? (success or difficulty)	What did you think and feel?	What happened as a result? (actions)
<i>When my son sat down for dinner, he started whining and crying. (difficulty)</i>	<i>I thought "We will never have a normal dinner" and felt defeated, thinking that meals will always be a problem.</i>	<i>I gave him cookies so he would stop crying.</i>

Session 2: Gathering Information

- To explore the relationship between thoughts and behavior
- To understand the purpose and goals of behavior
- To learn how to gather information through:
 - observing behavior
 - interviewing people
 - recording information
- To begin gathering information

Situations & Beliefs

- Identify situations that provide triggers to negative thinking (e.g., What was exactly happening? Where were you? What did your child and others do?)
- Identify beliefs associated with the event (e.g., What were you feeling and thinking while this was going on? What did you say to yourself?)

Identifying Situations & Beliefs



ANAS Mom Identification.wmv

Share a Difficulty

- Example - “She wouldn’t leave the TV to go to school.”
- What were you thinking?
- Pessimistic Scenario – “Here we go again.”
- Optimistic Scenario – “I knew this might happen and I have a plan to handle her if she tantrums.”

Share a Success

- Example - “My son sat through a whole meal without yelling.”
- What were you thinking?
- Pessimistic Scenario – “He must be in a good phase.”
- Optimistic Scenario – “My efforts and patience are beginning to pay off.”

Consequences

- Identify the consequences or results of the negative (and positive) thinking (e.g., When you were thinking _____, how did that affect what you did? What were the results of your actions – both immediate and long-term?)

Recognizing Consequences



JOER Consequences.wmv

Recognizing Consequences

- Parenting “in the moment”

Session 3: Analysis and Plan Design

- To use distraction to deal with unproductive self-talk
- To use information to analyze patterns
- To summarize patterns / generate hypotheses
- To use patterns to brainstorm intervention ideas

Distraction

- Strategy to help with pessimistic beliefs
- Distracting oneself from the pessimistic thoughts

Distraction



CRNG Distraction Example

Session 4: Preventing Problems

- To understand the disputation process
- To discuss circumstances that increase the likelihood of behavior
- To learn strategies for avoiding difficult situations
- To learn strategies for improving difficult situations
- To learn ways to provide a child with choices
- To learn strategies for prompting good behavior

Disputation - *A strategy for challenging beliefs*

- Step 1: Identify the negative belief (e.g., What exactly do you say to yourself that is pessimistic?).
- Step 2: List evidence that supports the belief. (e.g., What makes you believe that to be true?)

Disputation

- Step 3: Find alternative explanations for the problem (e.g., Are there other possible reasons/motives?).
- Step 4: Evaluate the usefulness of maintaining the belief. (e.g., In what ways does that belief benefit you/ others or improve the situation?)

Disputing Negative Beliefs



CRNG Disputation.wmv

Session 5: Managing Consequences

- To use affirmations to replace pessimistic beliefs
- To understand how reactions may maintain your child's behavior
- To learn how to manage consequences
- To take precautions when using punishment

Substitution

- Replace the pessimistic ideas with positive thoughts or affirmations (e.g., "This is a difficult situation and I am handling it well. I am a committed, loving parent. If I can follow through with my plan, things will get better.")

Substituting Positive Thoughts



RASA Substitution.wmv

Session 6: Replacing Behavior

- To practice cognitive restructuring
- To select replacement behaviors for your child
- To teach your child skills

Short-Term Prevention

- Modify the environment
 - reduce work
 - increase attention
- Personal intervention
 - mood induction
 - sleep treatment

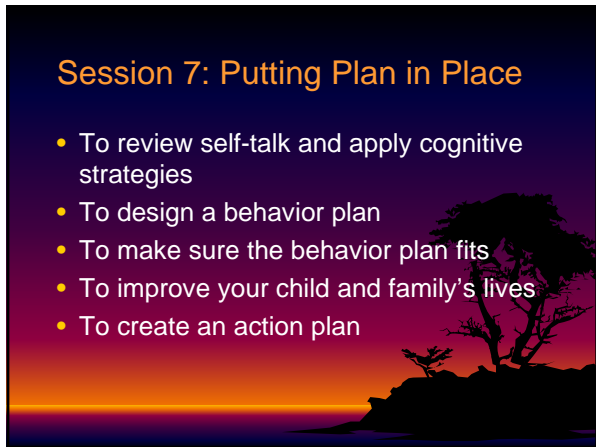
Short-Term Prevention

- Dangers
 - Perception of treatment
 - Eliminates the crisis
 - Limited transferability
- Should be viewed as temporary



Session 7: Putting Plan in Place

- To review self-talk and apply cognitive strategies
- To design a behavior plan
- To make sure the behavior plan fits
- To improve your child and family's lives
- To create an action plan

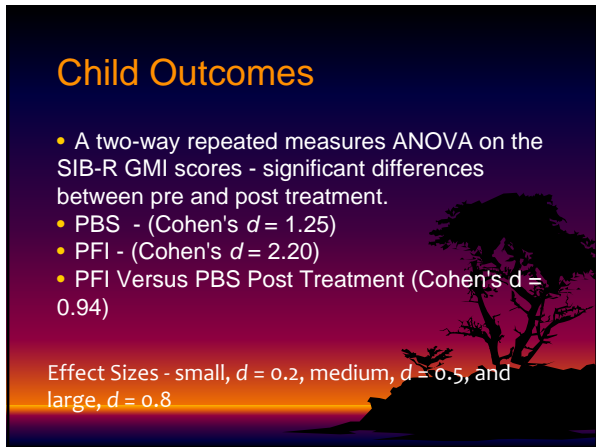


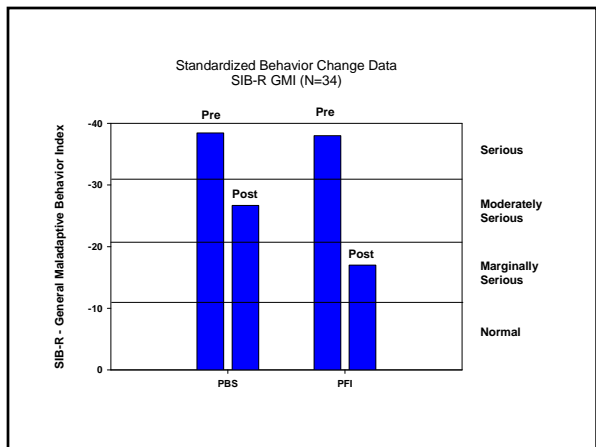
Session 8: Monitoring Results

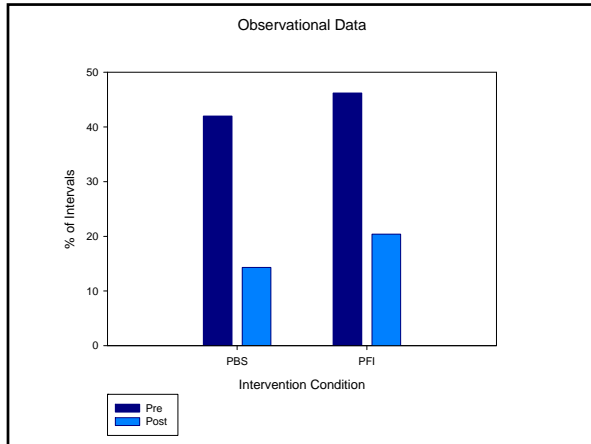
- To review self-talk and continue to apply cognitive strategies
- To make a monitoring plan
- To learn how to make adjustments over time
- To complete the training and continue on your own











Quality of Life

- Families from both groups reported significant improvements on following questions;
 - *Other members of the family have to do without things because of my child.*
 - *Sometimes I feel very embarrassed because of my child.*
 - *My child is able to take part in games or sports.*

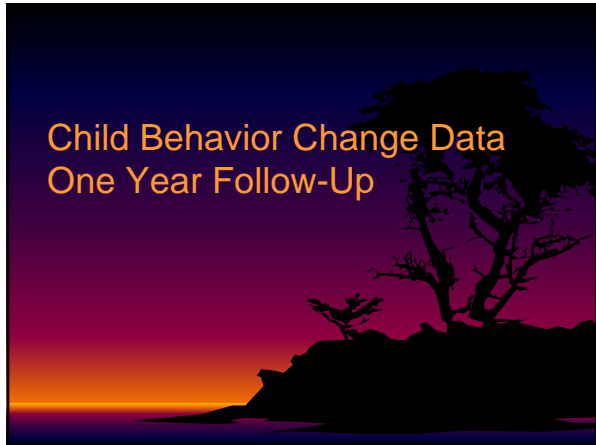
Quality of Life

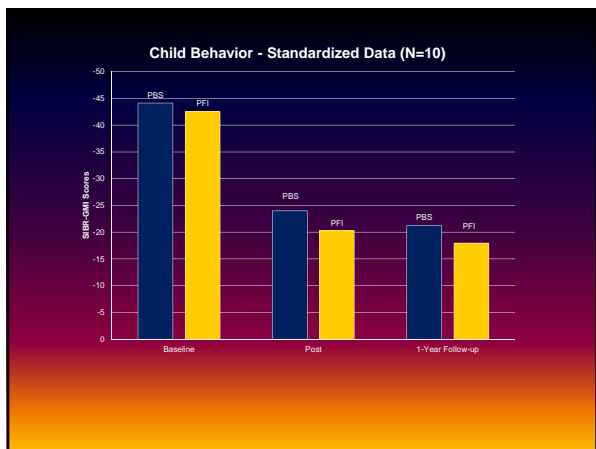
- Mothers in PFI condition reported improvement on these questions;
 - *My child will be limited in the kind of work he/she can do to make a living.*
 - *I get almost too tired to enjoy myself.*
 - *There is a lot of anger and resentment in our family.*
 - *I am worried much of the time.*

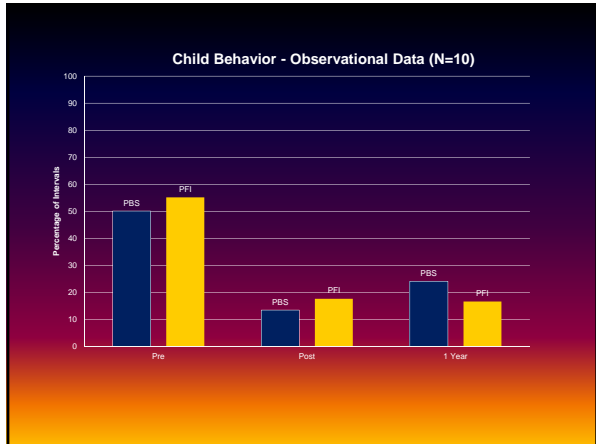
Self-Efficacy

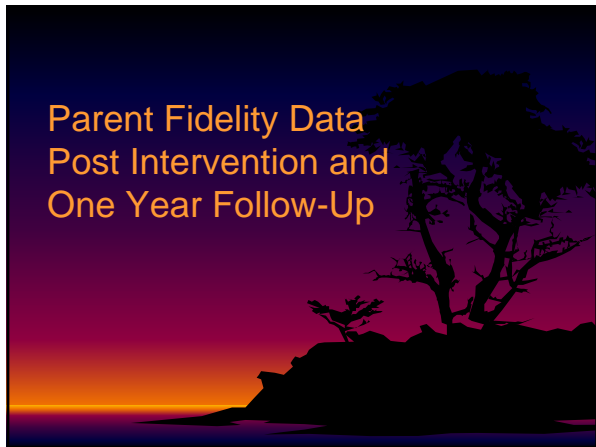
- PFI group responded more positively than mothers in the PBS groups.
 - *I feel less tense when I take my child out in public.*
 - *I am less likely to avoid taking my child out in public.*
 - *Members of our family get to do the same kinds of things other families do.*

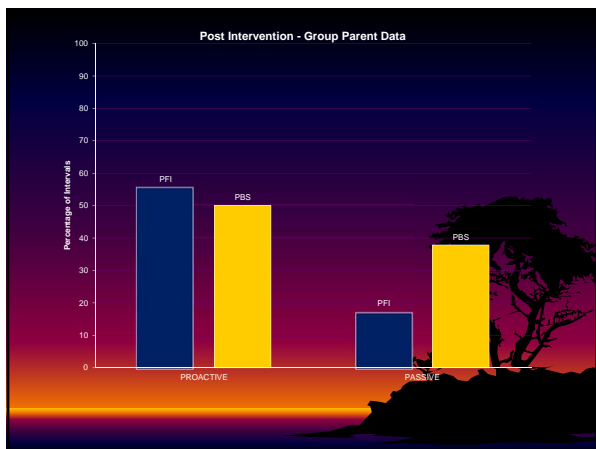
Child Behavior Change Data One Year Follow-Up

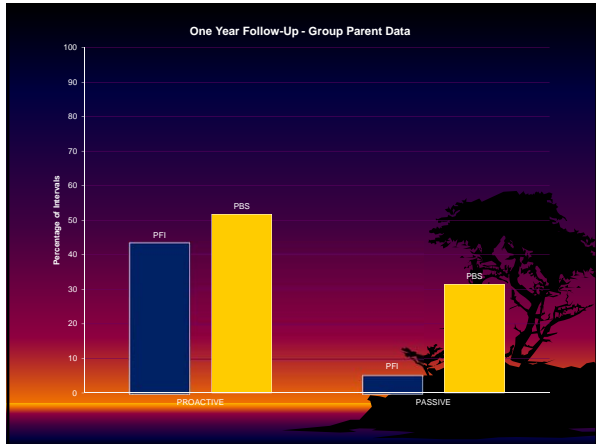


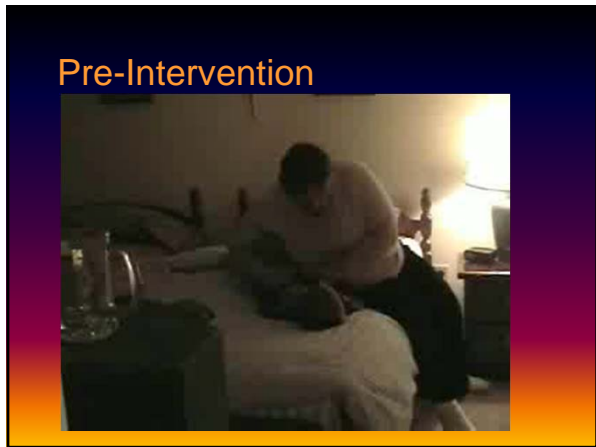


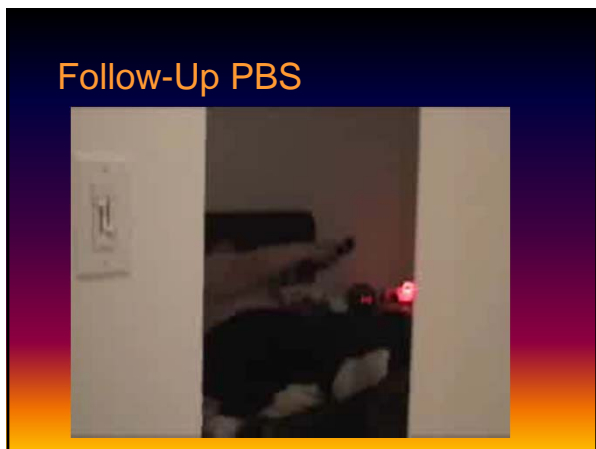












Pre-Intervention



Follow-Up PFI



Summary of Results

- Both PBS and PFI result in significant improvements in child behavior
- These improvements continue after one year
- Parents report overall improvements on QoL

Summary of Results

- PBS families tend to use avoidance strategies to improve child behavior
- PFI families tend to use more active strategies
- PFI families report more community involvement with their children and less anxiety

The Concession Process

- The tendency to change environments and approaches to avoid problem behavior

Positive Family/Teacher Intervention

- Addresses the needs of children with challenging behavior
- Addresses the need of family members and teachers who carry out the plans
- Better outcomes when we address both
- Improved family/school partnerships

How Effective Are We?

- Are our interventions only successful with highly motivated families/professionals?
- We need to begin to design our strategies to reach those families/teachers who need our help the most.

Optimistic Parenting

- Durand, V.M. & Hieneman, M. (2008). *Helping parents with challenging children: Positive family intervention, Facilitator's guide*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Durand, V.M. & Hieneman, M. (2008). *Helping parents with challenging children: Positive family intervention, Workbook*. New York: Oxford University Press.



Optimistic Parenting

- Durand, V.M. (2011). *Optimistic parenting: Help and hope for you and your challenging child*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

