

... "bite size"
news from
your
Region 10
Behavior
Specialist



OH, Behave!

Volume 12, Issue 1

Late Summer/Early
Fall 2018

Chill Out Corner



Behavior Tip of the Quarter:

Start the new year off right by flipping any negative attitudes that form. Watch what happens when you begin to give children, parents, teachers, etc. the benefit of the doubt! Here's to a great year!

In every exciting issue:

- Ask The Behavior Specialist
- Behavior Tip of the Quarter
- Calming Choice Card
- Social/Emotional Book Nook



Child Care
Resource Center

Child Care Resource Center
(Formerly Work Family Resource Center)
Lead Agency for Region 10
"Enriching Child Care, Engaging Families,
Enhancing Communities"

www.childcareresourcecenter.org

Do the children in your classroom recognize when they need a break so they don't get overwhelmed? Do they have a safe place that offers support of big emotions (anger, frustration, disappointment, etc.)? Is there a way for children to "try on for size" newfound calming techniques when they perceive they need to? If you want children to learn how to regain control of their emotions, a "chill out corner" is an essential part of a preschool classroom. There are many names for this space. You may have heard it called:

- Self Soothing Place
- Calm Down Corner
- Calming Corner
- Break Spot
- Chill Spot
- Cozy Corner
- Safe Space
- Cool Down Corner
- Comfy Corner
- Chill Out Zone

Regardless of what it is called, the most important part is what happens in this vital area. Let's be clear that it is NOT a punitive space. The purpose of this area of the classroom is to help children feel better. It is a positive space and should be made soothing and inviting. It should contain items that help soothe hurt feelings and disarm anger and frustration. Some of the things you could include are:

- Beanbag chair
- Pillows
- Soft, stuffed animals
- Puppets
- Pinwheels for blowing and learning how to appropriately breathe
- Bubbles

- Books on tape with a headphone set
- Emotion and feeling books
- Paper, crayons, markers
- Playdough, clay
- Calm down or sensory bottles
- Visuals reminding children to take deep breaths
- Fidgets
- A box of tissues

The possibilities are endless! Consider color as a way of setting up a cozy area. Blue, green, purple, and gray colors invoke feelings of safety and peace. Dim lighting creates a softer feeling and this can be done through the use of a strand of lights or a small lamp. Have children help decide what to include in this area by asking them what helps them feel better when they are upset. Be sure and incorporate their suggestions.

Teachers should introduce this space to children upon implementation. It is ok for teachers to suggest a child go to the cozy area when they are upset, but never force a child to go.

It is not enough to simply designate an area and call it a safe space. In order for it to be effective, children need to fully understand when and why it would benefit them to go to this area when they need it. The objective of this area is for children to be able to regroup, refocus, and center themselves before negative emotions escalate. Discuss the use of this area with children by demonstrating, modeling, and rehearsing. For example, a teacher may ask the children, "What

should I do if a friend tells me she does not want to play and it makes me mad?" Use the characters in a book to help children understand the use of the area by stating, "I think Charlie may need to visit the chill down corner. I bet it would help him feel better!"

At first children may need help understanding when to go to – and how to utilize– this quiet place. Talk with children about how to go to the quiet place. What are the rules for use? Can they access the space whenever they feel they need to or do they need a "break pass"? Together, create rules for use of the space. For example, only one person can be in the space at a time and you must use the space without disrupting others. Consider how long a child can remain in the chill out area. This may not be a problem unless a child isolates himself and does not want to participate in any other activity. Be sure children understand they can rejoin the group when they feel they are able to do so. This provides dignity and respect in regards to how a child may be feeling.

Remember, the goal is for children to learn how to manage their own feelings and to be able to explore ways to deal with these big emotions. Once children understand the purpose of the chill out zone, they will utilize it when they feel their emotions are overwhelming them which will keep their feelings from spiraling into a chaotic experience. This is truly a "win-win" for everyone!

Tip: The "Calming Choice" Cards included in every issue of this newsletter would be wonderful to include in this space!

Ask The Behavior Specialist!



Question: I have heard many excellent ways to welcome children to class every morning; but, do you have any suggestions on how to end the day on the same meaningful note? I am an NC Pre-K teacher and we have been brainstorming but can't figure out what is best. Thank you!

Answer: This is a wonderful question! Personally greeting each child and family in the morning is important in building a nurturing relationship. Sending them home and closing out the day in a responsive way is also vital. Not only does it cement the bond, it also helps set the tone for the following day. For example, if a child has engaged in problem behavior or had some moments that left them feeling badly, ending the day on a positive note can change it around for that child! Regardless of how the day went, give every child a sincere goodbye and wish them well. Individually, as you would do in the mornings upon arrival, smile and provide a genuine gesture (hug, high five, wave, etc.) and let him or her know you are looking forward to seeing them tomorrow. Comment on something wonderful you and the child experienced during the day or per-

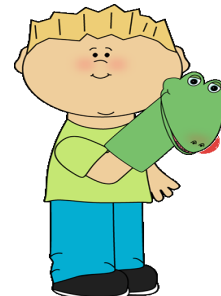
haps the child has made some progress with a skill they have been struggling to learn. Commenting on these type of things in front of a child will not only strengthen your relationship, but it will also boost self-esteem.

Remember, children should be greeted by name and face-to-face each morning, and sent home the same way. Greetings can be more than just a hello or a goodbye. While you want to make arrival and departure greetings a part of every day, the way you acknowledge a child can vary. For example, use a greeter apron (see picture below for an example) that offers choices such as a special handshake, a wave to parents or teachers/friends from a special window as they leave, etc. Even a rhyme such as "Hello Renae! Come in and play!" or "See ya later, Alligator!" Children will feel special whether they are entering or leaving the classroom. Everyone will appreciate starting and ending the day on a fun and positive note!



In each issue you will find a new card to help you build your very own "Calming Choices" Card Set for your classroom.

When I am upset, I can...
PLAY WITH PUPPETS



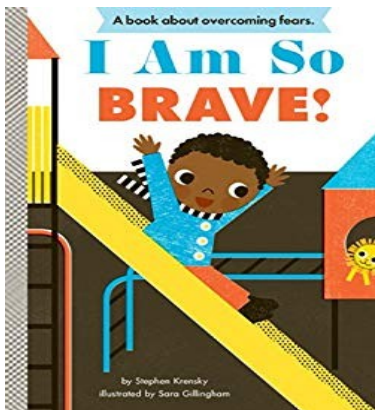
For durability and repetitive use, print on cardstock paper and laminate.

"Every day in a hundred small ways children ask, "Do you see me? Do you hear me? Do I matter?" Their behavior often reflects our response."

~L.R. Knost



Social/Emotional Book Nook



Stephen Krensky created a charming book to address the "small wins" of becoming brave. This fourth book in the empowerment series celebrates the feats of growing out of toddlerhood with courage and success. Whether it's petting a dog or waving good-bye to a parent, young children will see that confidence grows with each bold step taken. Perfect for ages one to three years.



Do you have a question you would like to see answered in our monthly column?

Feel free to fax your question to 704-636-9021.

You can remain anonymous if you prefer, but please put your question to the attention of "Ask The Behavior Specialist".



Questions or Comments?



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