

“Stop & Think Parenting: A Guide to Children’s Good Behavior”

A Project ACHIEVE Parent Training PowerPoint Developed by the Arkansas State Improvement Grant in Coordination with the Arkansas Parent Training and Information Network

Script for PowerPoint Slides

Slide 1

Good afternoon (evening). I am really pleased to be here with you, representing the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) and the Arkansas Department of Education—Special Education Unit.

Today, we are going to talk about parenting, our children’s good and bad behavior, and how to teach our children the behavioral skills that they need to be happy, healthy, and successful. In the end, we are hoping to help parents to be more successful with their children—strengthening their positive relationships and interactions.

Most of the discussion today, will focus on the Stop and Think Parenting Program. This Program is a part of the Stop and Think Social Skills Program that is used in many schools across Arkansas and the United States as a part of Project ACHIEVE. Project ACHIEVE is an evidence-based school improvement program developed by Dr. Howard Knoff.

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“Evidence-based” means that this Program has been used in schools and homes across the country, and it has been demonstrated to be consistently successful. Indeed, both the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice have designated Project ACHIEVE and the Stop & Think Social Skills Program as national models that help children to develop in healthy and safe ways.

Dr. Knoff is a school psychologist, a Past President of the National Association of School Psychologists, and currently the Director of our Arkansas State Personnel Development Grant at the Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education.

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When confronted with situations, children have to decide if they are going to make a good choice or a bad choice. From a parental perspective, we seem to be constantly monitoring our children, desperately trying to avoid the "Dreaded D's": Disobedience, Disruption, Defiance, Disrespect, and Disregard. It seems like a never-ending battle. Moreover, when our children are disobedient or disruptive, it seems that punishment is the only response.

But, there is another way.

Children have important choices or decisions to make almost continuously throughout their lives. They also are continually responding or reacting to many social, interpersonal, or conflict situations. At different times:

- They are angry because they are not allowed to do something.
- They refuse to follow directions when they are told to do something.
- They have conflicts with their siblings.
- Their feelings are hurt when peers tease or taunt them.
- We wonder whether they will be able to say "no" when peers are pressuring them to engage in inappropriate behaviors or to make improper decisions.

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Based on the school-based Stop & Think Social Skills Program, the goal of the **Stop & Think Parenting Program** is to teach parents how to teach their children to "Stop & Think" and "Make Good Choices."

When this is successful:

1. Children use effective interpersonal, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills more often.
2. This helps them to grow socially, emotionally, and behaviorally.
3. And, in the long run— even though it looks different at preschool, elementary, middle school, and high school—this helps them develop self-management skills.

Critically, self-management skills are the skills that help children and adolescents to control and manage their own behavior.

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Before we talk some more about the **Stop & Think Parenting Book** and program, let's put social skills into the context of positive discipline and teaching children to manage their own behavior.

Significantly, good parenting and positive discipline and behavior management involves three elements: Skills, Accountability (including motivation), and Consistency.

Before we can expect children to “behave” in a certain way in a certain situation, we need to make sure that they have mastered the skill or ability to perform that behavior. How do children learn to read? In most cases, we teach them.

And do children learn how to read in a week or a month or a year? Of course not. All children learn how to read from many teachers (including you as their most important teacher), across many grade levels, and over many years. And then, even as adults, there still are words that we have not learned and that, for example, we need to look up in the dictionary.

How do children learn how to listen or follow directions or interrupt us when they need help? Once again, we need to teach them.

And, as with reading, children need to learn these interpersonal, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills through childhood and adolescence– and into adulthood.

So– bottom line—we need to TEACH children social skills. Moreover, we need to identify the definition of “Skill Mastery.”

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We believe that a Skill is mastered when a child or adolescent is able to “demonstrate that skill under conditions of emotionality.”

For example, if you are able to drive a car when the weather is sunny, the roads are clear, and there is no traffic—have you really mastered the “skill of driving”? Maybe not. If you are able to drive in the middle of a torrential rainstorm where you can barely see out your windshield, on a road that is not draining well, and with three 18-wheelers on all three sides of your car– have you mastered the “skill of driving”? Probably.

You see, you have only truly mastered the skill of driving when you are able to drive under “conditions of emotionality.” This is true of children also. [Swimming example]

For example, how often are your children able to handle situations at home when the climate or environment is calm? And yet, aren’t they less able to handle those same situations when the environment is filled with tension. . . or stress. . . or anger?

Through the Stop & Think Parenting process, parents not only teach their children important social skills to help them be successful, but they also positively practice these skills under simulated “conditions of emotionality.” That is, just like a basketball coach who practices different “game conditions” (e.g., having ten seconds left and needing to go the length of the court to score the winning basket), parents need to practice emotional situations with their children– so that they can successfully handle these situations when they occur in real life.

As long as we are talking about tension, stress, and anger. . . Let's recognize that "most emotional reactions—that lead to behaviors— are Classically Conditioned." We're talking "Pavlov" here. Remember Pavlov? He rang the bell and the dog began to salivate?

Now if you don't believe this, think about your significant other— or maybe, a past significant other. Isn't there something that your significant other can do. . . look at you a certain way. . . say some word or phrase to you. . . or use a certain voice intonation in his or her voice—that gets you immediately upset. . . or anger. . . or frustrated. . . or even romantic? And how fast do you get emotional? Almost immediately— right?

Well, children are the same way. Sometimes we say things to our children (e.g., "It's time for bed.") . . . Or look at them a certain way Or talk to them in a frustrated way. . . and it triggers their emotionality and an emotional response. And, again, how fast does the emotional response occur? Many times, almost immediately.

The Stop & Think training helps children learn how to control their emotions, so that they can still make "Good Choices" even when they are emotional. Now, realistically, this is not going to happen immediately. . . and for younger children, you will still have to prompt their "Stop & Think" response. But, the Stop & Think process has demonstrated these positive behavioral outcomes for many years across literally tens of thousands of children.

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Let's understand that children (as well as adults) are emotional beings. We can better understand children's emotional reactions if, first, we know **the situations that "trigger" their emotions**. Triggers come in many different forms. They may involve an **activity** (cleaning a bedroom), a **memory** (getting sick), a certain **tone of voice, a place, a person, a specific word**. The implication here is that, **if we know a child's trigger, we can prevent the trigger from occurring, or we can prepare the child for the situation to come**.

Second, we can better help children with their emotional reactions if we can recognize the **"Physiological Cues" that tell us that they are getting emotional**. Everyone has one or two Physiological Cues that tells them that they are getting emotional. If you are comfortable with this, could some of you share with us the place where your body tells you that you are starting to get emotional?

[Expect some of the following: Hands perspire, breathing quickens, heart beat harder, throat constricts, a throbbing at the temples of the head, hands clench into a fist, a generalize feeling of being off-centered]

What we are looking for, however, is what I call the "Early Warning System"— the physiological response in a child's body that happens early on BEFORE they are "Past the Physiological Point of No Return." If we can identify the child's Early Warning System— that is triggered by a specific situation or event— again, we can help the child to make Good Choices—even though they are emotional.

Understand that when children are “Past the Physiological Point of No Return”– they are physiologically unable to control themselves. When this happens, your child is not able to think as clearly or control him or herself until their body physiologically de-escalates. Thus, the only thing that you can do in this situation is to get your child in a quiet place where they cannot hurt themselves or anyone else. Yelling at them or barking commands at them often will simply sustain the emotional state that has resulted in their out-of-control behavior.

Think about it-- Have you ever “lost” it? When that has happened, do you recall that, even though you were aware that you had lost it, you could not regain control until your body physiologically let you. You could not think clearly. You could not respond to others effectively. You could not stop certain inappropriate behaviors or responses. This happens to children, too. Except that, while we are usually aware of our triggers and cues, they may not be– and so, we have to be aware for them and, eventually, help them to become self-aware.

In the end, children are going to get emotional. The question is: “When they are emotional, can they be helped to control their emotions so that they can still make Good Choices?”

So, how do we start? Well, we start with the five steps that make up the **Stop & Think Language**.

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The first step of the Stop & Think language is to tell your child to: **“Stop and Think.”**

This step gives children the necessary time to calm down and think about how they want to handle a situation. Thus, this step is an “impulse control,” “self-control,” “self-management” step that prepares the child for effective problem solving and Good Choice behavior.

When using the Stop & Think process, we often use Hand Signals at the same time that we say a particular step. Eventually, children “cue into” the Hand Signals such that they are able respond to the Hand Signals instead of a verbal (“Stop & Think”) prompt. The Hand Signals give parents an additional tool when they want to non-verbally prompt their children’s behavior. Clearly, it is helpful when we don’t always have to be talking to our children. . . always telling them verbally what to do.

The Hand Signal for this first Stop & Think step involves putting your hand out like a policeman stopping traffic, and then pointing to your head while saying, **“You need to ‘Stop and Think!’”**

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The second step is to ask your child, **“Do you want to make a Good Choice or a Bad Choice?”** We always finish this step by telling the child and having the child repeat, or waiting for the child to say, **“I need to make a Good Choice.”**

This step gives children the opportunity to decide what kind of choice they want to make. When we use the **Stop & Think** process consistently at home, teaching children the various social skills, motivating them to use the skills, we find that more and more they choose to “Make a Good Choice.” At the same time, when children choose to make a Bad Choice, we need to view this as a teaching opportunity– a time to reinforce the Stop & Think skills.

Thus, this step actually helps parents to specify the conditions that will hopefully motivate their children to make a good choice. This can be done by telling the child what positive outcome or reinforcement will result when he or she makes a Good Choice, and what negative outcome or consequence will occur if he or she makes a Bad Choice.

This way, if a child makes a Bad Choice, the parent simply follows through with the consequence. However, after the consequence is over, we strongly recommend that parents make the child practice the Good Choice (that they should have done before) at least three times at some reasonable point in time. Critically, for younger children, this gives them additional practice with the Good Choice behavior, increasing the potential that they will demonstrate it when they next need it.

For older children, the additional positive practice tells them that they are still accountable to demonstrate the Good Choice behavior. In other words, they need to “pay me now or pay me later.” Often, this “pay-back” is more meaningful to the older child than the consequence, and it motivates them to make the Good Choice immediately the next time a similar situation occurs.

Finally, the reason why we always end this step with, **“You (I) need to make a Good Choice”** is that this statement helps children to focus on or commit to thinking about Good Choices or Good Steps when they get to Step 3 of the Stop & Think language.

The Hand Signal for this second step involves giving your child a thumbs-up, then a thumbs-down, then ending with a thumbs-up while saying, **“Are you going to make a Good Choice or Bad Choice?--You need to make a Good Choice!”**

Once again, when verbalizing this step, you can include appropriate incentives and consequences into the process by saying, **“Are you going to make a Good Choice or Bad Choice? If you make a Good Choice, we can (for example) spend some quiet time together later on tonight. If you make a Bad Choice, you will (for example) need to go right to bed after dinner. I hope that you will make a Good Choice!”**

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The third step of the **Stop & Think** process is to ask the child, **“What are your (Good) Choices or (Good) Steps?”**

This step helps children to understand the steps needed to effectively perform a specific social skill and/or how to develop a specific plan or approach before implementing a social skill on their own. Thus, when we are first teaching social skills, this is the **“Teaching Box”** where the steps or choices of a specific social skill are taught. When the teaching is over and children begin to independently use the Stop & Think social skills, this is their **“Thinking”** or **“Planning”** box.

As with the other steps, we don’t want parents to rigidly use the **Stop & Think language**. As long as they stay close to the language, they can adapt it for their own circumstances or use.

The language also can be adapted to fit the different developmental levels of different-aged children. For example, for older children—who likely know the steps to a specific social skill, we ask them the open-ended question, **“What are your Good Choices or Steps?”** For younger children who need more guidance (or when we don’t want to spend as much time on this step), we are more directive—directly specifying the steps to the desired skill: **“Your Good Choices or Steps are _____.”**

The Hand Signal for this step involves putting both of your hands out to your sides with palms up, shrugging your shoulders while saying, **“What are your Good Choices or Steps?”**

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The fourth step of the five-step Stop & Think language is, “Let me see you ‘Just Do It!’”

This step is completed when children actually demonstrate the behavior (i.e., good steps or choices) associated with the social skill chosen, so that they then can decide whether or not the behavior or plan worked. With younger children, remember that you may need to repeat the skill steps as they follow them, and that you may need to physical guide your child through the steps of the skill. When older elementary children are first practicing a new skill, it often helps for them to repeat the skill steps out loud as they follow them. Over time, though, the older children (in contrast with the younger children who still need adult support) will memorize these steps silently and perform the behaviors representing the skill more automatically.

Now, we want to make an important point relative to the third and fourth Stop & Think steps. Tell me—how many of your children “Act before they Think”? Notice how the Stop & Think language is training children to “Think before they Act.”

See— there is a method to this madness. The Stop & Think language and steps have been scientifically designed to effectively help teach children behaviors that they will eventually be able to demonstrate for themselves.

The Hand Signal for this fourth step involves putting your hand up in the air with clenched fist, and then bringing (or pumping) that hand straight down toward your shoulder while saying, “Let me see you ‘Do It!’”

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The last step in this process is for children to tell themselves that they have, “**Done a ‘Good Job’.**” Here, we often have the children also pat themselves on the back.

Children need to learn how to recognize when they are successful and **how to reinforce themselves** for a job well done. Thus, this final step teaches children to reinforce themselves for successfully performing all of the steps of the Stop & Think process and the specific skill steps (in Step 3) needed for a particular situation or request.

This step is important because children are not always rewarded by others for making a good choice or for doing a good job. With younger children, we suggest that parents pat them on the back or give them a hug and tell them that they did a good job. Immediately after, parents should prompt their children to tell themselves that they did a good job and to pat themselves on the back.

With older children, we suggest that parents give them “High Fives” or some other act of “celebration,” and then prompt the children to tell themselves they “Did a Good Job.” Surprisingly, older elementary-aged children will still pat themselves on the back when prompted. Believe it or not, they are still just kids, and they enjoy the attention and positive regard. Over time, older children do this last **Stop & Think** step automatically and without prompting.

The Hand Signal for this step, once again, involves children patting themselves on the back while saying, “**I did a ‘Good Job!’**”

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These five **Stop & Think** steps are the foundation to the **Stop & Think** process.

In total, these five steps are used to teach children new social skills, to prompt their use of these skills when needed in real life, and to guide them toward making “Good Choices” in new situations where they may not have learned the “right” social skill for that situation. The more that parents use the **Stop & Think language** with their children, the more automatic the steps become.

[Have all attending parents say each of these steps while doing the hand signals.]

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Guided by the **The Stop & Think Parenting Book** and its DVD, parents learn the five Stop & Think steps and how to teach their preschool through elementary school children twenty important interpersonal, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills.

These skills include:

Listening, Following Directions, and Waiting for Your Turn . . .
How to Interrupt, Ask for Help, and Apologize . . .
Dealing with Teasing, Losing, Rejection, Fear, and Anger . . .
How to Accept a Consequence, Ignore Distractions, and Ask to be Included. . .
And more. . .

You can also use this format to create a skill that is not on this list.

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If your child were able to demonstrate these skills or behaviors more effectively and consistently, would this make your life easier? And. . . would the climate in your home be more positive and less stressed?

Let's watch the DVD to see how children can be taught the "Listening" and "Following Directions" skills so that you have a better sense of what Stop & Think instruction looks like.

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As you saw on the DVD, the Listening skill was taught using the **Stop & Think language**.

First, the child was asked to "Stop & Think." Then, she was asked if she was going to make "a Good Choice or a Bad Choice." She decided to make a Good Choice.

At this point, when teaching this skill, the child was specifically taught the steps or "Skill Script" to the Listening skill. These steps specifically answer the prompt, "What are my choices or steps?"

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For younger children, the steps to Listening are:

1. Eyes forward.
2. Hands quiet.
3. Mouth closed.
4. Ears open. [And then they are prompted to:
5. "Show me Listening."

During the teaching process, we try to get children to repeat the **Stop & Think language** and **Skill Scripts** as many times as possible. This helps them to memorize the skill so that it is part of their brain's internal language.

Eventually, all a parent will need to do is to say the prompt, “Show me listening,” and their child should quickly get into the Listening position.

But, we’re not quite there yet. After saying the steps to the Listening skill, the parent then tells the child to “Just Do It!”

And, after successfully demonstrating the Listening skill or behavior, the child is prompted to tell him or herself that she or he “Did a Great Job!”

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For the Following Directions skill, parents would teach their children to **Stop and Think**, and then ask if they are going to **Make a Good Choice or a Bad Choice**. Once they have decided to make a Good Choice, parents can teach the Skill Script to the **Following Directions** skill:

For younger children (preschool to Grade 3), these steps are:

1. **Listen** to all of the steps to the direction.
2. **Repeat** the direction to yourself or inside your head.
3. If needed, **ask** for the steps to be repeated or explained.
4. **Get ready** to follow the direction.

For older children (Grade 3 to Grade 6), these steps are:

1. **Listen** to all of the steps to the direction.
2. **Decide** if you understand the direction (**Ask** a question if you don’t understand)
3. **Rehearse** the direction inside your head.
4. **Get ready** to follow the direction.

Once the child is ready to Follow the Directions, he or she is asked to **Just Do It**. Finally, when successful, the child is prompted to pat himself/herself on the back and say, "**Good Job!!!**"

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REMEMBER:

When children make Bad Choices, this does not represent a failure. . . or bad parenting. . . or a bad child. It represents an opportunity to teach or re-teach skills, reinforce the use and importance of those skills, and to demonstrate consistently to children and adolescents that Good Choice behavior is expected.

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While teaching social skills is important, it is not enough if we want our children to consistently demonstrate Good Choice behavior. This is because some children—even though they have learned and mastered a skill—do not demonstrate it all the time.

Let's use an adult example here.

How many of you have the skill of “Driving within the Speed Limit”? [WAIT FOR THE LAUGHTER AND RESPONSE HERE]

Why— you ALL do? Notice that I didn't ask you if you DO drive within the speed limit. I asked you if you have that skill—and you ALL do.

Well, as long as we are there— when you DO drive within the speed limit, why do you do this?

[AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION HERE: ELICIT THE THREE PRIMARY ANSWERS— TO AVOID A CONSEQUENCE, TO ATTAIN AN INCENTIVE, AND DUE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS]

All right. So some of you drive within the speed limit to make sure that you don't get a ticket. That is, you make the Good Choice (driving within the speed limit) to avoid the consequence (getting the ticket). In fact, some of you have never gotten a ticket in your life, and yet that is your primary motivation for driving within the speed limit.

Some of you drive within the speed limit because there is a car in front of you doing the speed limit. That is an “environmental” reason. You really have no choice here— the environment is structuring or controlling your behavior.

Finally, some of you drive within the speed limit because it makes you feel safe or more comfortable. Thus, there are incentives for driving within the speed limit.

Well, children are no different than adults. Just because a child has learned and mastered a skill, they need to be motivated to use the skill. And, children are best motivated through meaningful incentives and consequences.

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Thus, children make good choices because they are either motivated **toward meaningful incentives** or **away from or to avoid consequences**. Critically, both incentives and consequences must be appropriate for the age and maturity level of your child, and they **should be used only to the degree needed for success**.

Meaningful incentives typically are identified by:

- * Observing what objects, activities, or interactions children at different age levels enjoy most
- * Asking other parents with same-aged children what the peer group is currently "into"
- * Watching TV, reading the newspaper, or consulting parents' or children's magazines to see what games or products are currently popular

Many parents are surprised that elementary-aged children are motivated most by "small" but more personally-meaningful things, such as time spent together; supplies to use for creative projects; and books, games, toys, or computer programs that are educational and fun. For younger children, stickers, coloring books, time on the computer playing games, baking cookies, or going to a movie with a parent are all good incentive ideas. For older children, a special magazine, a favorite dessert or restaurant "date," or getting to choose a video for a home "pizza party" might be considered.

[Show Segment #4 on the Stop & Think Parent DVD: "Using Rewards and Consequences" here.]

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Before leaving our discussion on the importance of Accountability and Motivation, let's review a few important research-based principles that, when used, will help this process work effectively with children. Consider the following:

1. Both research and practice have shown that children learn and develop best in environments that provide them with five positive interactions for every negative interaction. This is known as the 5-to-1 Rule.
2. In order for incentives or consequences to work best, children need to have mastered or near-mastered a skill.

For example, if I put a non-swimmer at one end of a swimming pool, and the toy that they most desire on the other end of the pool, and tell the child, "If you swim it, it's yours"— what will happen? Remember, the child is a non-swimmer. And yet, the child may be so motivated to get the toy, that she jumps in the pool. What will happen? She will drown!!!

Or, let's say that she realizes that she can't swim— but she really wants that toy! What results— frustration!

Remember, no amount of motivation—incentive or consequence— can change the absence or lack of skill. The only thing that can help a child who has not learned a skill is teaching. And if we continue to give consequences (e.g., taking away privileges or sending a child to Time-Out) when they truly have not learned a skill, then again, we will end up with a frustrated (e.g., angry or withdrawn) child.

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Next:

3. If we need to use consequences, we need to use the mildest consequence possible that will still get the job done.

If parents respond to a child's "Mild" offense with a "Major" consequence, what will happen if the child— some time later— follows with a "Major" offense. This leaves the parent either having to respond to the Mild AND Major offense with the same consequence, or it "forces" the parent to have to come up with an "Outrageous" consequence to deal with this newer Major offense.

Does this make sense?

4. Parents need to be careful to make sure that their consequences don't get too negative or intense. When this occurs, some children then continue to need at least the same level of (negative) intensity before they think that the parent "really means it."

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Finally:

Consequences are not the same as punishment. Consequences focus on correcting inappropriate behavior and motivating more appropriate behavior in the future. Punishment focuses on stopping an inappropriate behavior that has already occurred from reoccurring in the future.

Punishment also often models anger (or emotionality) because of the way it is delivered. And, it often does not model good problem-solving—that is, how to resolve a problem thoughtfully and logically—to children.

At the same time, some parents believe that punishment changes behavior. And yet, many parents have to continually punish their children. The inappropriate behavior never seems to stop. And yet— if punishment is being used as a "strategic intervention," shouldn't it work after two or three uses? When parents are constantly having to punish their children, they need to ask themselves:

1. If their expectations for their children's behavior are realistic and sensitive to the age and ability of the child;

2. If their child is not meeting their expectations because they have not learned and mastered the desired skills;
3. If there is a positive climate at home and if there are reinforcers that will motivate The child to “Make the Good Choice”; and/or
4. If they have been interacting with their child in such inconsistent ways that their Good Choice behavior simply hasn’t been completely learned (more on this later).

In the end, when children are living in an environment where they receive “Five positives for every negative,” consequences effectively communicate that they have made Bad Choices, while motivating them to make Good Choices in the future.

But critically, when consequences are used, parents still must hold their children accountable. To do this, we use the following “mantra”:

“If you Consequence, you must Educate!”

That is, when consequences are appropriate and parents use the mildest consequence needed to motivate a change of future behavior, after the consequence is over, parents still need to have the child positively practice the appropriate behavior that he or she should have done, at least three times as soon as reasonably possible.

In this way, the child is still held accountable for demonstrating or practicing the appropriate behavior. In addition, the positive practice of the appropriate behavior will increase the probability that it will occur the next time.

Let’s summarize briefly right now by identifying some benefits of using consequences instead of punishment.

[Some answers from parents might include that consequences:

1. **Teach children how to behave**
2. **Change behavior**
3. Teach children to control their own behavior
4. Help child to **learn to make good choices on their own**
5. Teach children **respect for themselves** and others
6. Help children learn society rules
7. Help children get along better with others]

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Positive Home Behaviors – All right. Now, let’s talk about something that we call the “Behavioral Matrix.” The Behavioral Matrix is a guide or roadmap that you can use to respond successfully to your children’s Good Choice behavior, and to the different “intensities” of their Bad Choice behavior. In essence, the Matrix helps you identify what appropriate behaviors at

home to positively reinforce, and how to respond to annoying, disruptive, or “anti-social” behavior.

First of all, relative to the Matrix, we need to talk about the importance of identifying things that your child does “right” in your home.

The purpose of this list is to help you think about and notice some of the good choices your child makes every day. The second part of the list identifies incentives that you might use to motivate your child to continue to make these good choices—or to recognize them when they make good choice.

Remember, our goal is to help our children to experience at least 5 positive interactions for every one negative interaction at home. How we recognize and reinforce our children helps to contribute to this positive to negative ratio.

What are some other incentives you can think of? Incentives could involve verbal praise, fun or special activities, or extra time to spend on a special thing, etc.... The incentives in this list were generated during past parent trainings. Let’s try to add at least one more to this list from today’s training.

[Add to generated suggestions to the list.]

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Level or Intensity 1 behaviors are the LEAST serious inappropriate behaviors—in essence, they are what we call “Annoying Behaviors.” For Annoying Behaviors, we do not use consequences (remember, these are “annoying” behaviors—not “disruptive” or “antisocial” behaviors). Instead, we recommend corrective responses as the MILDEST possible responses.

Let’s go over a few of the behaviors at Intensity Level 1, and then go over some possible corrective responses.

[Let a parent read the list of behaviors.]

Notice how this list compares to the previous slide? What other behaviors do you think could be listed here?

[Discuss any appropriate suggestions to this list.]

Now let’s look at some low intensity corrective responses that you could use with a child. These responses are roughly listed with the least intrusive response first. The less you need to do to get the behavior corrected, the better. Remember Rule Number 3 in the basics of accountability? It says that “When consequences are needed, we need to use the **mildest possible** consequence (or, here, response) possible to motivate the child to make a “Good Choice.”

[Have a parent read the Corrective Response list.]

[You may want to give an example here...For example: A child wanting to stop at McDonald's or asking for everything while shopping--- Instead of the answer Automatically being "No," the parent could use a brief Corrective Response.]

Critically, when using Corrective Responses, parents need to teach them to their children before using them. This way, for example, children will understand even the non-verbal Corrective Responses (the "Look"), what their behavioral expectations are, and what will happen if they respond with a Good Choice, or continue to make a Bad Choice.

While we are not going to detail the entire Behavioral Matrix, understand that continued Intensity 1 Annoying behaviors may "add up" over time to an Intensity 2 Disruptive behavior. In general, for Intensity 2 behaviors, parents need to have consequences that are meaningful and effective with their child to motivate a change of behavior and hold them accountable for good behavior. We have already discussed the importance of consequences, so let's move on.

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While teaching Stop & Think Social Skills is important, and motivating children to use these skills (while holding them accountability for demonstrating Good Choice behavior) is necessary, this is still not enough. Parents also need to be Consistent.

Consistency is important primarily because children—even though they resist it at times—want their lives to be structured and predictable. They also want to know that their parents' responses to their good and bad choice behavior will be dependable and fair. When parents are inconsistent—either an individual parent over time or two parents responding to the same situation in different ways, children either become confused, or they learn to distrust the information being provided.

As inconsistency increases, children become unmotivated and unresponsive, manipulative, frustrated, or angry. Haven't you seen children manipulate one parent against another — maybe asking one parent for permission to do something, because they know the other parent definitely will say no?

Think about situations in your own life **where you did not know how someone was going to respond to you.** Weren't you initially confused, then hesitant to approach them, then angry that you had to worry about their response? Eventually, didn't you just start to avoid the person altogether so that you didn't have to deal with them at all?

Clearly, consistency is a critical component of discipline, behavior management, and self-management. But, consistency is more of a process than something you teach (like skills) or provide (like incentives and consequences). Indeed, consistency occurs when parents teach, model, and reinforce the Stop & Think Social Skills in basically **the same way over time and**

across different circumstances. And, consistency occurs when parents respond to both Good Choice and Bad Choice behavior in similar ways over time.

Slide 28

While there are many areas where parents need to be consistent, let's identify—or re-identify—a few key ones.

First, parents need to be consistent in what they expect their children to do. Moreover, parents' expectations need to be consistent over time and across different settings and situations--week days, evenings, mornings, and weekends; at home, in the mall, at church, in friends' homes; and, for example, with guests, extended family, and at public gatherings.

Second, parents need to be consistent together with all of their children. While parents will need to have behavioral expectations that are appropriate for different-aged children, this still means that parents should have a "home discipline game plan" that they will follow together. And, it also means that they will discuss the game plan every so often with each other and in "family meetings," to see how they are doing, and if they need to add to, change, or adapt the game plan.

Finally, and again, parents need to be consistent across their children— but, at the same time, they need to be sensitive to differences in their children's age, skills, and abilities.

While parents need to be consistent in their behavioral expectations at home, they need to recognize that how and how well their children meet these expectations may differ across age, skill, and ability. Parents also need to recognize that the incentives and consequences that they use for Good Choice and Bad Choice behavior will differ across their children's age, interests, and maturity.

Ultimately, a major goal of parenting is to increase children's social, emotional, and behavioral skills— while preventing, decreasing, or eliminating high levels of inappropriate behavior.

Slide 29

To summarize:

[Pointing to the left-hand side of this PowerPoint]

If children do not have skills mastered, parents need to teach them those skills.

If children have not mastered skills, then incentives and consequences (other than to motivate them to learn the skills) are not going to work.

At this point, consistency is almost irrelevant.

[Pointing to the right-hand side of this PowerPoint]

If parents and others are inconsistent with and across their children, then the accountability system of incentives and consequences will not work as desired—indeed, the children may become confused, frustrated, manipulative, angry, or withdrawn.

At this point, we will not get the skills or behaviors that we want—or will not get them consistently.

Slide 30

All of the information that we have discussed today comes from **The Stop & Think Parenting Book: A Guide to Children's Good Behavior**. This book is written specifically for parents, but it is most successful when parents are guided through the process by parenting experts or parent educators.

The Stop & Think Parenting Book: A Guide to Children's Good Behavior comes with a calendar and recommended schedule to help parents organize their teaching, forms to help them track their children's progress, and Cue Cards with helpful reminders and "Parenting Points." This is a complete package—written in language that parents can understand, focusing on skills that children need, and presented in an organized, step-by-step fashion that will help parents and children both be successful!

The **Parenting Book** also has a DVD with nine segments (see PowerPoint). At different points in the **Stop & Think Parenting Book**, parents see a picture of a camera that cues them to watch a specific segment of the DVD. Already, we have viewed Segment #2 on "Listening and Following Directions—The Basics," and Segment #4 on "Using Rewards and Consequences."

Let's view one more segment—one that is requested by many parents— that focuses on children's emotions.

[Show Segment #8 on the **Parenting** DVD.]

Slide 31

The last use of the **Stop & Think** process for parents is when they need to use it "on the fly" when behavioral situations come up.

First of all, it is important for parents to understand what their goals are when they are wanting to change their children's behavior. While some of the goals on this powerpoint slide overlap, sometimes parents want to decrease a child's inappropriate acting out behavior. At other times, they want to increase a non-existent behavior, or a behavior that does not occur often enough. At still other times, they want to change their child's emotional response to something—for example, decreasing times when they get really angry, or times when they just emotionally "shut down."

Let's read through these possible "targets" for behavioral change, and think about some examples in your home for one or two of them.

[Allow time for this activity and discussion.]

Critically, it is important to note that when we are trying to decrease or eliminate a child's inappropriate behavior or emotion, we almost always want to establish or increase a child's appropriate or "replacement" behavior.

Slide 32

A "Replacement Behavior" is an appropriate behavior that is the "opposite" of an inappropriate behavior. When talking about Replacement Behaviors, we want to describe what we **want the child to do**, rather than what we want the child to stop doing.

Thus, we never (or try not to) use the words "Not," "Stop," or "Don't" when describing a Replacement Behavior.

In addition, in order to help our children understand exactly what we want them to do, we need to describe the behavior in a concrete way—so the child can actually "see" themselves do the behavior. For example, instead of asking the child to be "nice," or "polite," or "responsible," or "honest," we need to describe the behaviors that someone would see if they were behaving that way.

Slide 33

Let's practice a little bit, and come up with some replacement behaviors for these behaviors or situations on the powerpoint slide. Remember, we do not want to use the words "Not," "Stop," or "Don't" when describing the Replacement Behavior.

[Allow time for this activity and discussion.]

Does anyone have another problem behavior that you would like to discuss relative to its Replacement Behavior?

Slide 34

Now, let's use the five **Stop & Think** steps to guide a child to stop demonstrating an inappropriate behavior, and replace it with an "opposite," appropriate behavior.

[Have parents choose an inappropriate child behavior, and then its appropriate Replacement Behavior--identifying the specific steps of the Replacement Behavior. Then have them practice (or roleplay with a partner using the Stop & Think language (putting the steps of the Replacement Behavior in the third step) to guide the partner into saying and behaviorally demonstrating the appropriate behavior.]

Slide 35

To summarize, here are some questions to ask yourself throughout the Stop & Think process. These questions will help you focus on areas that may need extra attention or additional work with you and your children. Notice that these questions basically summarize what we have discussed today.

Who would like to read these questions?

[From page 8 in the book]

Any questions or comments?