



Perspectives on Demand Avoidance: Is it PDA, or something else?

A two-day virtual conference hosted by POPARD, in collaboration with ACT

Session 2:

Collaborative & Proactive Solutions:

Moving from Power and Control to Collaboration and Problem -Solving

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Presented by

Ross W. Greene, PhD



PARADIGM SHIFT/KEY THEME

- 1. Emphasis is on **problems** (and solving them) rather than on behaviors (and modifying them)...
 - Concerning behavior is simply the signal by which a child communicates that they are having difficulty meeting certain expectations (not unmet needs)
 - Concerning behaviors can be "lucky" or "unlucky"
 - Behaviors are not the only observable, objective, quantifiable data...unsolved problems are too
 - This will require different assessment practices

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PARADIGM SHIFT/KEY THEME

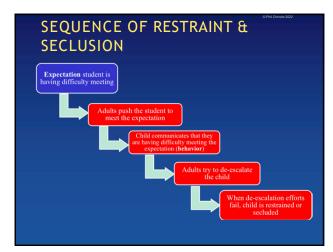
- 2. The problem solving is **collaborative**, not unilateral
 - Something you're doing with the kid rather than to them
 - Even if the kid can talk but won't or won't talk because they can't
 - Kid is still "accountable" (a lot more so than if they are passive recipients of our imposed solutions and consequences)
 - T-I-M-E?

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PARADIGM SHIFT/KEY THEME 3. The problem solving is proactive, not reactive • These kids are predictable, if we answer two questions: • Why do some kids respond so poorly to problems and frustrations? • Answer: Secause they're lacking the skills to respond more adaptively (e.g., flexibility/adaptability, frustration tolerance, problem solving, emotion regulation) • When do kids exhibit concerning behavior? • Answer: When they're having difficulty meeting certain expectations • Once unsolved problems are identified, intervention can be largely proactive

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THE (non-exhaustive) LIST OF LATE Take a break Calming corner Coping strategies especially the ones teaching kids how to cope once they're already frustrated De-escalating Restraint and seclusion Discipline referral Detention, suspension, expulsion, paddling

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PARADIGM SHIFTS/KEY THEM	ES
4. Kids do well if they can	
If the kid could do well, they would do we	ell
 Not True: Attention-seeking Manipulative 	
■ Coercive	
Unmotivated	
Limit-testing	
5. Doing well is preferable	
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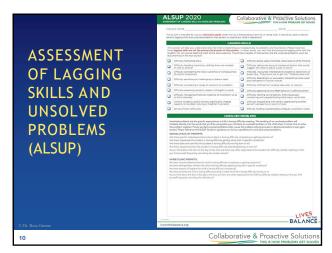
Flexibility/adaptability Frustration tolerance Problem solving Emotion regulation These are the global skills that help us respond to problems and frustrations adaptively Many skills can be taught through direct instruction, but these may not be among them But these skills are enhanced by engaging kids in the process of solving problems collaboratively Unsolved problems are the targets of intervention in the CPS model...not lagging skills **Collaborative & Proactive Solutions**

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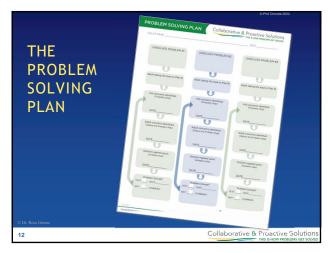
Identify lagging skills and unsolved problems Helps make intervention proactive rather than reactive...otherwise, you're in "perpetual survival mode" or "walking on eggshells"

KEY HELPER ROLES IN CPS

- Lagging Skills: Help adults view kids through more compassionate, accurate, productive lenses
- Unsolved Problems: Help us focus on the problems that are causing concerning behaviors rather than on the behaviors (behavior data can be informative, but only tells us that a child is having difficulty, not what they're having difficulty with)
- Solve problems collaboratively and proactively
 - Promotes a problem-solving partnership
 - Engages kids in solving the problems that affect their lives
 - Produces more effective, durable solutions
 - Simultaneously enhances skills







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OPTIONS FOR HANDLING <u>UNSOLVED</u> PROBLEMS
PLAN A: Solve the problem unilaterally
PLAN B: Solve the problem collaboratively
PLAN C: Put the expectation on hold for now
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PLAN A Solve the problem unilaterally ■ The adult decides what the solution is and imposes it, often accompanied by adult-imposed consequences ■ Tive decided that..." ■ PLAN A causes concerning behaviors ■ PLAN A is not a partnership ■ PLAN A does not involve kids in solving the problems that affect their lives ■ PLAN A provides no information whatsoever about the factors making it difficult for the kid to meet a given expectation...solutions arrived at through Plan A are "uninformed"

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PLAN C Put the expectation on hold for now Not about giving in or giving up...it's about prioritizing (and stabilizing) – expectation management rather than behavior management PROACTIVE C: a don't bring it up an agreed-upon interim plan for putting the expectation on hold for now EMERGENCY C: "OK" Good parenting and good teaching mean being responsive to the hand you've been dealt Collaborative & Proactive Solutions

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Р	LAN B
S	olve the problem collaboratively
	Empathy Step Gather information from the child about what's hard about meeting the expectation
2.	Define Adult Concerns Step Identify adult concerns
3.	Invitation Step Collaborate on a solution that is realistic and mutually satisfactory
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GOAL: Gather information from kids so as to understand their concern or perspective on a given unsolved problem...especially, what's making it hard for them to meet the expectation. INTRODUCTION: The Empathy step begins with the words "I've noticed that" followed by an unsolved problem and an initial inquiry ("What's up?")

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PLAN B The Empathy Step What happens after "What's up?" The kid says something The kid says nothing or "I don't know" The kid says, "I don't have a problem with that" or "I don't care" The kids says, "I don't want to talk about it right now" The kid responds defensively ("I don't have to talk to you!")

PLAN B The Empathy Step

The Kid Says Something

DRILLING STRATEGIES:

1. Reflective listening and clarifying statements
2. Asking about the who, what, where, when of the unsolved problem
3. Asking about the situational variability of the unsolved problems
4. Asking kids what they are thinking in the midst of the unsolved problem
5. Breaking the problem down into its component parts
6. Discrepant Observation
7. Tabling (and asking for more concerns)
8. Summarizing (and asking for more concerns)

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PLAN B The Empathy Step I Don't Know/Silence WHAT TO DO: Don't freak ("I don't know" and silence are typical) Keep drilling FIGURE OUT WHY: Adult Factors You used Plan A You used Emergency Plan B instead of Proactive Plan B The unsolved problem wasn't worded according to the guidelines Child Factors The kid doesn't trust you and/or the process yet (they have a lot of experience with Plan A) The kid really doesn't know The kid has lost faith and doesn't see the point in talking anymore Strategy: "Was it always so?" The kid needs time to think (adults better get comfortable with silence) The kid is having difficulty putting their thoughts into words Strategy: Educated guessing/hypothesis testing

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PLAN B The Define Adult Concerns Step GOAL: Enter the adult's concern or perspective into consideration in a way that doesn't cause the child to feel that their concerns are being dismissed or disregarded (beginning with "The thing is..." or "My concern is...") WHAT'S HARD: Adults frequently don't know what their concerns are...adult concerns are related to why it's important that the expectation be met: How is the unsolved problem affecting the kid? How is the unsolved problem affecting other people? (e.g., health, safety, learning, fairness)



PLAN B The Invitation Step

- Goal is to demonstrate to kids that you're as invested in getting their concerns addressed as you are in getting your own concerns addressed
- You don't know where the plane is landing before it takes off (no preordained solutions)
- If there are multiple concerns that cannot be addressed by the same solution, prioritize which concerns are going to addressed in this Plan B and which may be addressed in a subsequent Plan B
- Before agreeing on a solution, give conscious, deliberate consideration to whether the solution is realistic and mutually satisfactory...if not, refine the original solution or think of alternatives (one solution at a time...no brainstorming)
- Goal is to solve the problem so it doesn't arise again...not to come up with a solution for what the kid should do in the heat of the moment when the problem recurs (don't use the word "when" in the Invitation)
- Battling over solutions define a power struggle (a win/lose proposition)...solving problems collaboratively is a win/win proposition

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