



DAY
Five

Foster 
VC Kids

Ventura County Children & Family Services

Day *Five* At-a-Glance

Section	Time	Materials	Activities
Review, Ice Breaker and Introduction to Day 5	45 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 5.1-5.3 • Participant Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icebreaker Activity – Customs
Positive Parenting for Resource Families	2 Hours 15 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 5.4-5.30 • Participant Guide 	
Homework Assignment	10 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant Guide 	
Wrap-up	5 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 5.31 • Evaluation 	Complete Evaluations

About Day Five

Overview

Day Five of the 21st Century Caregiving: Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training focuses on building a healing home that promotes a sense of safety and well-being. During this session, emphasis will be placed on how childhood trauma impacts behavior and how emotional regulatory healing can guide effective behavior management and growth for children and families. Participants will examine the issues that impact a child's behavior and what to expect at different developmental stages. You will review effective techniques and resources for managing behaviors while providing support for the child in healing and recovery from trauma and loss of attachment. Additionally, you will explore how the team works together to address behavior management and support your positive parenting efforts.

Case Studies: You will be utilizing case studies throughout the remainder of the training so that participants may have the opportunity to apply their learning.

Real Cases: You will want to make it clear to the participants that all of the case studies used in this curriculum are de-identified families with any identifying information altered or removed.

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Identify the factors that impact a child's behavior and describe the underlying reasons behind a child's behavior.
- ✓ Revisit how childhood trauma impacts behavior and how emotional regulatory healing can guide effective behavior management and growth for children and families.
- ✓ Identify the goals of behavior management.
- ✓ Identify effective techniques and resources for managing behaviors while providing support for the child in healing and recovery.

Trainer Preparation

In addition to the Trainer's Guide, Participants' Guides, and PowerPoint Slides, Day Five will require the trainer to locate and prepare the following supplemental materials:

Evaluation Form:

- See appendix for the evaluation form to be completed by the participant.

Attendance Form:

- See appendix for the attendance form.

Resources

Attachment, Separation, and Placement (2008)

<http://www.ocwtp.net/PDFs/Trainee%20Resources/Preservice/904ho.pdf>

This pre-training handout from Ohio Child Welfare Training Program provides a basic understanding of how separation and placement affects children in placement.

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Curriculum Resource for Parents (2010)

<http://www.nctsnet.org/products/caring-for-children-who-have-experienced-trauma>

This training from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network is designed to help Resource Family understand the link between trauma and their children's often baffling behavior, feelings, and attitudes. It gives Resource Families practical tools to help their children move forward from their traumatic pasts, to recognize and reduce the impact of their children's traumas on themselves, and to seek useful support from others.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

(<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/child/>) This site provides comprehensive information on cognitive, social and emotional development for children from birth to 17 years of age and provides tips for positive parenting and safety.

From Chaos to Calm: At the Intersection of Mind/Brain/Body/Soul

<http://www.coaching-forlife.com>

This training from Juli Alvarado at Coaching for Life, LLC is for parents and professionals who have dedicated their lives to the fact that there is no child beyond the hope of healing. This training teaches us how to provide care that focuses on long term healing from trauma, not just behavior modification.

PRIDE: Preservice Training for Prospective Parents and Resource Families (2009)

PRIDE, developed by the Child Welfare League of America and Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, is designed to strengthen the quality of family foster care and adoption services by providing standardized, structured framework for recruiting, preparing, and selecting Resource Families and adoptive parents. The PRIDE training includes nine preservice training sessions.

Review, Ice Breaker and Introduction to Day Five

Materials

PPT 5.1-5.3

Participant Guide

Flipchart Paper/Markers



45 Minutes

Presentation –Review

- **Review** *Day Four of training. Briefly cover the following:*
 - *Normalcy and*
 - *Cultural-Competence.*
- ▶ We have asked you to explore your own responses to loss as well as to anticipate how you would support and nurture children and their biological parents through the case planning journey to permanency.
- ▶ We then spent some time talking about normalcy and the teen experience.
- ▶ I am sure you had some thoughts about all of these issues since we last met. I'd like to ask you to sit with two other participants (not your partner) and discuss the following questions to get us grounded for today.

ASK

Now that you know more about the fostering/adoptive experience:

? What excites you most?

? What worries you most?

- **Review** *Day Four Homework.*



PowerPoint Presentation – Day Five Learning Objectives (SLIDES 5.1-5.2)



21st Century Resource Familying :
Foster VC Kids Professional Resource Family
Training Day 5

SLIDE 5.1

PowerPoint Title Slide: PowerPoint Title Slide: 21st Century Caregiving: Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training. (Day 5)

SLIDE 5.2

PowerPoint Slide: Day Five Learning Objectives

- ▶ The learning objectives for Day Five of the 21st Century Caregiving: Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training include the following:
 - ▶ Identify the **factors that impact a child's behavior** and describe the **underlying reasons behind a child's behavior**.
 - ▶ Revisit **how childhood trauma impacts behavior** and **how emotional regulatory healing can guide effective behavior management** and growth for children and families.
 - ▶ Identify the **goals of effective behavior management/discipline**.
 - ▶ Identify effective techniques and resources for **managing behaviors** while providing support for the child in **healing and recovery**.



SUMMARIZE

- ▶ While it is important not to barrage children with rules as soon as they come into your home, clearly defined and communicated rules and structure are important for a child's safety and well-being. For children with a trauma history, your ability to help them create internal ways to regulate their emotions and behaviors will be one of the most crucial ways that you can be of lifelong value to each child in your care. This will be the foundation of our discussion today.



Icebreaker Activity – Family Rules and Customs



INTRODUCE the Activity

- *Post Slide 5.3 as you introduce this activity.*
- ▶ Before we get started with today's topic, I am going to ask you to think for a minute about rules that you had in your family as a child.

PURPOSE of Activity

- *Prepare for the day of training.*
- *Allow participants to reflect on their own family rules and customs.*
- *Allow participants to explore how foster children come with their own set of family rules and customs.*
- *Allow participants to begin to explore how to help foster children fit in with their family.*
- *Allow participants the opportunity to continue to grow in comfort with one another so that they may continue to share and participate more freely.*

DIRECTIONS for Activity

Say:

- ▶ Families have rules, although often family members would not describe them as 'rules' per se, but rather as customs. Let me give you some examples.
- **Instruct** and ask participants to raise a hand if you had this rule.
- ▶ Let's see how much we have in common.
 - ▶ Make your bed when you get up.
 - ▶ Call Adults 'Miss' or 'Mister' before their first name.
 - ▶ Take your shoes off when you come home.
 - ▶ Clear your dishes after you eat.
 - ▶ Eat everything on your plate.
 - ▶ Eat your vegetables before you can get up from the table.
 - ▶ Try one bite of everything.
 - ▶ No dessert until you finish your plate.
 - ▶ Do your homework first thing after school.
 - ▶ Do your homework first thing after dinner.
 - ▶ Do not answer the door to strangers.
 - ▶ Lock the door after you come in.
 - ▶ Do not swear or curse
 - ▶ Children can only watch children's television and movies.
 - ▶ Children go to bed at a certain time.
 - ▶ Children cannot play outside without an adult.
 - ▶ Wear a seat belt at all times.
 - ▶ We do not go into each other's rooms or use each other's things without permission
 - ▶ Do your chores on Saturday morning.
 - ▶ The family eats dinner together.
 - ▶ The television cannot be on during meal times.

Say:

- ▶ Thank you for participating in this activity.

Ask:

? What did we see in the room?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Some of these rules are familiar to some of us and funny or strange to others.
- ❖ We may have had the same rules but with different consequences.

Ask:

? How often did your family talk about these rules?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Most of us do not talk about these rules unless someone new enters the scene or unless a member of the family struggles with a particular rule.

? Why?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Because when people are raised within a household, they come to know the rules through their growing up. These rules are simply assumed and the family just 'does things this way'.

Say:

- ▶ As children are brought into your home, they will be coming from their own set of rules, even though you may think that children in a family with abuse and neglect who come into foster care do not have rules. Some of the rules, or customs that may exist within the child's family of origin might include:
 - ▶ Don't make X (family member) angry.
 - ▶ Take care of yourself and your siblings.
 - ▶ Don't talk about what happens in our home.

- ▶ Take care of your parents.
- ▶ There is never enough food, so eat when you can.
- ▶ If you run out of clothes, find someone else's clothes and wear them.

Ask:

? How do you think that some of these rules might impact a child who then comes into foster care?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Children's 'jobs' in the home may vary.
- ❖ Being 'the child' can mean something different within each family.
- ❖ Children may learn to be either very passive or to be very adult like which represents a big change upon coming into care.
- ❖ Children may not understand concepts your family has about personal property.

Say:

- ▶ One of the complicated aspects for children entering your home is that they may assume that the rules will be the same as at home. And as you think about our conversation, these rules and customs may clash in a way that is very uncomfortable for your family and for the children in your care. One complication of the transition into your family will be that you may not think to explain your rules or customs until they are violated: in other words, because these are not rules you regularly discuss, you may not even realize you have a rule or custom until a child in your care breaks it.
- ▶ Think about times when you broke a rule, but you did not know it was a rule. Does anyone have an example of such a time? (i.e. parking in an illegal spot that was not marked, going into the wrong door or area in a workplace, calling someone by their first name when you should have said 'Mr. or Ms.').

Ask:

? How did you find out this was a rule?

? How did you feel about breaking the rule?

- *Elicit responses and briefly discuss.*

Say:

- ▶ Most of us would feel both embarrassed or upset and also angry: angry that we didn't know the rules up front. You can see the dilemma we face as Resource Families: how do we possibly introduce a lifetime of unspoken rules and customs so that children who have been traumatized and are in the midst of loss can understand how to fit in with our family?



Prepared Flipchart

In order to provide quality behavior management, it is important to get beneath the rules and to think about a structure that will help children in your care do two things:

- **Post** the following on a flipchart and read:
 - *Know and feel that they are being cared for in a household with enough structure to keep them safe and productive.*
 - *Understand the values that drive the rules in a context of caring for the members of the family.*



Prepared Flipchart

- ▶ Most rules are based on values. Many family rules are focused on transitions, building a nurturing environment, and preparing family members to be productive. Let's think about some of the times and events that rules are built around:

- **Post** the following on a flipchart and read:
 - **Physical needs.**
 - ✓ *Mealtime and food.*
 - ✓ *Toileting and Bathing: privacy, hygiene.*
 - ✓ *Sleep routines: getting up and going to bed, napping.*

- **Social needs of the family.**
 - ✓ *Caring and consideration for others.*
 - ✓ *Respect for others and their property/physical space.*
 - ✓ *The roles of adults and children.*
- **Interacting with the world.**
 - ✓ *Getting ready to leave the house (morning routine, family outings).*
 - ✓ *Coming home.*
 - ✓ *Friendships and relationships.*



- Refer participants to **Participant's Guide Day Five: Family Rules and Customs Worksheet**.

Say:

- ▶ When we think about these three areas, it is clear that we each have many rules, spoken and unspoken. Let's take a moment to notice the rules you have in place in your family. On the **Family Rules and Customs Worksheet**, you will find a place to note some rules and customs you have.
- **Instruct** participants to note their family rules and customs.
- **Allow** 5 minutes for participants to complete the rules and customs section of their worksheet.

Say:

- ▶ Now let's look back at some of our rules. If we were to explain our rules to someone new in our family, they might sound something like this:
 - ▶ You can't wear your shoes in the house
 - ▶ You can't stay up late.
 - ▶ You can't eat until meal time.
 - ▶ You can't play until your work is done.

Say:

- ▶ The job of rules is to restrict behavior as well as to lay out the pathway to success.

Ask:

- ? So if we meet each child at the door, upon that moment of profound loss and transition, and then we list out the eighteen things that 'you can't' do here, how might that be for the child?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Overwhelming.
- ❖ Sounds like it's not much fun around here.
- ❖ What can I do?
- ❖ Am I really welcome?
- ❖ Will you keep me if I break the rules?

Say:

- ▶ As we work through these two next sessions, we will first identify what exists in our households now and then we will identify the important ways that behavior management and safety planning fit into our ideas about welcoming and caring for children. In the next session, we will briefly talk about safety, sexuality, and other issues that can be difficult to manage. We will also do some work here and at home to plan for how to welcome children and convey our values, customs, and rules without overwhelming children with restrictions.

Say:

- ▶ Now that we have made some notes, I want you to begin to think (in pencil) about which of these rules are
 - ▶ **RULES** (*everyone has to do this to make the household 'work', there are consequences to violating this rule.*) and which are
 - ▶ **CUSTOMS** (*we all do this, and children in our care may choose to do it too. We think this way of doing things works best, but if they have a different custom, that is okay.*)

Trainer's Note: *The following example is a sample discussion on rules versus customs, please use your own example if you wish.*

- ▶ For example, in my household, when we lived out of state, we took our showers at night so that our hair would not be wet for a cold, snowy walk to the school bus. When the weather warmed up, we automatically started taking our showers in the morning before school and work again. This is something everyone in the family did. Was it a rule or a custom?
 - ▶ In our house it was a custom: someone could have lived with us and chosen to take a shower in the morning or evening all year long.
 - ▶ HOWEVER, in other families, this may have been a rule, depending on the adult's opinion about the health concerns with going outside with wet hair.
 - ▶ AND this could be a rule for little children, as they may not have a choice about their routine, but a custom for older children who can bathe and shower without the supervision of an adult.
- ▶ When we moved to California, we left that custom behind for the most part, but I still notice that my children shower at night when they anticipate a cold spell. This is an example of a custom that was handed down. I never questioned it. I passed it on and probably explained it to each child at a certain age, and we don't speak of it but we do it.
- ▶ For a child entering our family, this may seem very curious: and we can imagine how that child, looking at us from the outside and trying to figure out how to fit in, would first assume that we shower at night if they came to us in the winter and that we bathe and shower in the morning if they came to us in the summer.
- ▶ Finally, this could have been a custom in my house and a rule in your house. We all have different styles and we have different ideas about what it takes to run a household successfully.
 - **Allow** participants to identify their rules and their customs for a couple of minutes.

Say:

- ▶ Now that you have had a moment to think about your rules and customs, let me add another element of complexity to our conversation.
- ▶ Looking over these rules, would any of them be difficult for the children in your family to follow? If you have children, are there childhood ages when a particular rule seemed difficult for your child to follow?
- ▶ The answer is probably "yes" (*you may seek examples*). The reason for this, as we discussed in our normalcy discussion, is that as children grow and develop skills, they are better able to accomplish tasks. For example, sitting still at dinner is easier for some children than for others and is generally easier for older children than for younger children.
- ▶ In other words, there are certain basic assumptions of ability that are underneath our rules. Let's take something silly, for example, what if I were to go live with a family with acrobatic skills and their rule is that you must walk the tightrope from the kitchen to the table before supper. Now that is silly, but why is it silly?
- ▶ Most people would not have the ability to follow that rule (or custom) because most of us have never learned to walk a tightrope.
- ▶ The same example can be applied to some of the rules that you may have in your home: they are rules (or customs) that work and remain because most people have the ability to follow them. Most of the people in your family, and possibly for multiple generations, have had the opportunity to practice the skills required, and the family has an unspoken agreement that as children 'come up', they will be prepared to follow the rules that are appropriate for their age and role in the family.

Ask:**? How many of your rules involve managing emotions and behaviors?**

Sample Response:

- ❖ Many rules, such as no hitting, no talking back, no yelling and being able to think about how your actions impact others are based on managing emotions and behaviors.

**SUMMARIZE**

- ▶ As we think today about behavior management, I want us to keep in mind that the children who will be entering your homes and families may want to follow the rules, but may be unprepared to do so. The work we discussed in earlier modules around emotional regulatory healing taught us that children who have experienced trauma may vacillate between extremes of completely detaching and dissociating from their emotions and becoming completely overwhelmed with emotion or past experiences to where they struggle to have any regulation.
- ▶ We are going to approach behavior management with the idea that the first assumption we should make when children struggle with behavioral expressions is that their behavior is somehow linked to their experiences with trauma, including abuse, neglect, loss, and removal.
- ▶ When we start with empathy and the ability to seek to understand, we will have a better chance, over time, of helping children learn to understand themselves, and to manage and regulate their own behavioral reactions to what is going on inside.

**TRANSITION**

- ▶ Now let's keep our list in mind as we think through the behavior management pieces we will be working on today and next week.

Positive Parenting for Resource Families

Materials

PPT 5.4-5.30

Participant Guide

Flipchart Paper/Markers



2 Hours

Resources:

PRIDE:

*Pre-service Training for
Prospective Foster and
Adoptive Parents by CWLA*

*Juli Alvarado's
model of Emotional
Regulatory Healing.*

*Arousal/Relaxation Cycle
from Separation and
Attachment, by
Dr. Vera Fahlberg*

Presentation –Introduction to Topic

- ▶ Although many of you have parented a child before, **parenting a child who has experienced abuse and neglect requires a new set of skills.** During this section, we will explore behavior management and discipline strategies that meet the needs of the child as well as promote the safety and well-being of the child and the foster family.
- ▶ **Providing loving, positive behavior management** is not only the expectation of Foster VC Kids, it is in the best interest of the child and **helps promote both short-term behavior modification and long-term healing goals.**
- ▶ We will examine the **factors that impact a child's behavior** such as age, personality, physical and emotional development. Most importantly, in our approach to behavior management, our primary focus will be that **behaviors are often linked to their experiences with trauma, including abuse, neglect, loss, and removal.**
- ▶ We will review effective behavior management techniques including ***Emotional Regulatory Healing***, so we can **help children learn to regulate their emotions and behaviors.**

Ask:

- ? **Why do you think the topic of managing children's behavior is such a challenge, especially for Resource Families?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Sometimes Resource Families can feel that others have higher expectations than they can meet.
- ❖ Children placed with Resource Families have experienced traumas and inconsistencies in their young lives, so understanding rules and expectations is difficult for them.

- ❖ Children placed with resource families experience a loss of control, anger, sadness or other emotions which can result in extreme behaviors.
- ❖ Instilling behavior management and facilitating responsible behavior in children is complicated by their diverse and special needs.
- ❖ When children are first placed there is an urgency to get to know and establish a relationship with them. This can be difficult to accomplish when Resource Families must use disciplinary techniques during this period in order to respond to children's unacceptable behavior.
- ❖ If you have children of your own in your home, you are going to be bridging what has worked for your family in the past and what will work for children with a history of trauma to create a unified family and approach.
- ❖ Incorporating a new child or children into your family and household requires extra planning for change.



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDES 5.4-5.18) Understanding the Meaning of Child Behavior



SLIDE 5.4

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding the Meaning of Child Behavior:
Normal Behavior

- ▶ While a foster child's behavior is often driven by other factors, **they are still children who go through the same developmental stages as other children.**
- ▶ **Normal behavior in children depends on the child's age, personality, and physical and emotional development.** Knowing what to expect from your child at each age will help you decide whether his/her behavior is normal.



SLIDE 5.5

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding the Meaning of Child Behavior: The Questioning Process

- ▶ **When you are struggling with behavior that children are engaged in, your first question should be:**
 - ▶ **“Is this normal for a child of this age?** Other parents, online resources, the social worker, and school staff are great resources to find out what is within the range of normal. Since children develop so differently, try to be flexible with what you read and hear. If a behavior concerns you, follow up. It is also important to remember that many annoying, or less preferable behaviors, are very age-appropriate.
- ▶ **If behavior is troubling you and does not appear to be normal, work with your social worker and service providers to find out if there could be a medical or easily explained reason** behind what you are seeing.
 - ▶ For example, is our ‘four year old’ struggling with a medical problem that makes her wet her pants? This is less likely because it happens related to a specific transition, but finding out for sure is important before jumping to conclusions.
- ▶ **The next set of ideas that you will explore, within your family and with your team, is whether the behavior may link to trauma.**



SUMMARIZE

- ▶ As children grow through each stage of development, they are exploring the world around them, testing limits and providing many challenges for parents. This is true for all children. Sometimes, we assume a behavior is problematic because a child has faced the trauma of abuse, neglect and removal, but many behaviors our children are displaying are simply normal behaviors for their age.
- ▶ As a Resource Family, it is important for you to understand the normal behaviors for the child's age, so that you can gauge your response and determine if there is a deeper issue with the child's behavior you need to address or for which you need additional support.



▪ Refer participants to Participant's Guide: ***Developmental Stages and Behavior and Positive Parenting Tips.***

- ▶ These development charts provide an overview of a child's expected physical, cognitive/language and psychosocial development based on age.
- ▶ When you are faced with a troubling behavior, you can use these charts to help you identify the normal stages a child goes through to help you determine the right course of action.

Ask:

? How can we use trauma-sensitive care to guide our parenting choices?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Allows us to understand how trauma drives child responses so that we can empathize with what the child is experiencing.
 - ❖ Allows us to adapt and modify our parenting choices to provide emotional regulatory healing not just behavior modification.
- ▶ Let's look at some other tools to help you understand the meaning of your child's behavior.



SLIDE 5.6

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding the Meaning of Child Behavior: Questions to Ask Yourself

- ▶ All parents struggle with some of the things their children do. While there is no magic formula that will work in all situations, it is helpful to understand the kinds of issues that impact a child's behavior. If you understand these issues and know what to expect at different developmental stages, your reactions will be wiser and it will be easier to create an environment that supports and nurtures your child.
- ▶ Understanding what motivates behavior is the first step towards dealing with the behavior.

- ▶ When your child's behavior is troubling, ask yourself:
 - ▶ **Again, is this a growth or developmental stage?** Each new phase of growth or development brings challenges for the child and the child's caregivers. For example, growing independence in the child's second year is often accompanied by challenging behavior (such as the "No " phase). Feeding and sleeping problems may occur during developmental transitions, and it helps if caregivers are extra patient and loving in their responses. It's best to give the child choices, use humor, and be firm but supportive.
 - ▶ **Is this an individual or temperament difference?** Not all children of a certain age act the same way. Some progress developmentally at different rates, and all have their own temperaments that may account for differences in behavior. Being aware of a child's tendency to be shy, moody, adaptable, or inflexible will help you better understand the child's behavior in a specific situation and impact the way you approach the behavior.
 - ▶ **Is the environment causing the behavior?** Sometimes the setting provokes a behavior that may seem inappropriate. An overcrowded living or childcare arrangement coupled with a lack of toys can increase aggression or spark jealousy. Look around your home to evaluate it in light of your child's behaviors and see the environment from a child's viewpoint.
 - ▶ **Does the child know what is expected?** If a child is in a new or unfamiliar territory or is facing a new task or problem, he/she may not know what behavior is appropriate and expected. Perhaps this is the first time a two-year-old without siblings has been asked to share a toy. Developmentally he does not truly understand the concept of sharing, so it is up to the parent to explain calmly how other children will react. Patience and repeating the message over and over again are necessary as children rarely learn or master a new response on the first try.
 - ▶ **Is the child expressing unmet emotional needs?** Emotional needs that are unmet are the most difficult cause of behavior to interpret. If a particular child needs extra love and attention, rather than withhold that from her, it will be helpful to find ways to validate and acknowledge the child more frequently.

Ask:**? What are some basic and emotional needs that motivate behavior?**

Sample Responses:

Basic:

- ❖ Food.
- ❖ Clothing.
- ❖ Shelter.
- ❖ Safety.

Emotional:

- ❖ Need to connect to one another and to belong.
- ❖ Need for attention and recognition.
- ❖ Need for power or control over our environment.
- ❖ Need to pursue activities we enjoy and the freedom to do so.

**SLIDE 5.7**

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding a Child's Behavior: Typical Behaviors at Initial Placement

- ▶ Children will usually display one of two behaviors at placement.
 - ▶ The child will start off with problematic behavior at the initial time of placement. The parents then will see a decline in the frequency and severity of the behavior in a fairly short period of time.
 - ▶ The child will seem to be very withdrawn, quiet and well behaved. This is sometimes called the *honeymoon period*. The child will then start to act out in a few days or weeks. Younger children can have emotional outburst with amazing energy.

Ask:

? When a child displays problematic behavior because of placement, what needs do you think could be potentially motivating this behavior?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ The child does not know what is expected or what is normal in your home.
- ❖ The child is seeking power and control over his/her environment.
- ❖ The child holds a wish that if s/he is acting inappropriately, the agency will return him or her to his/her parents.
- ❖ The child needs to find out if you are committed for the long haul: if you can accept their 'worst' behavior.
- ❖ The child cannot maintain emotional regulation due to the experience of grief, loss, and anxiety related to removal and placement.



SLIDE 5.8

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding a Child's Behavior: Stages of Grief

- ▶ Remember that these children are experiencing many different feelings and are going through the grief process. Every child handles the stages of grieving differently.
 - ▶ Stage 1 = Shock and Denial
 - ▶ Stage 2 = Anger
 - ▶ Stage 3 = Bargaining
 - ▶ Stage 4 = Despair/Depression
 - ▶ Stage 5 = Understanding

Ask:**? How can grief manifest itself in behavior?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ A child might have emotional outbursts.
- ❖ A child might show a regression in behaviors.
- ❖ A child might be withdrawn.
- ❖ A child might be aggressive.
- ❖ A child might seek attention.

**SLIDE 5.9**

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding a Child's Behavior: Linked to Trauma: Emotional Dysregulation and the "Hijacked" Mode

- ▶ Children in your care may seem like they are trying to push you and push your buttons. They are testing their boundaries and trying to see if they can trust you. **Remember most of the other important adults in their life have let them down, what is going to make you different?**
 - ▶ For example, let's say you are fostering a child who is four years old and has learned to use the toilet most of the time. You notice that this child seems to do very well with using the toilet instead of wetting her pants most of the time... EXCEPT when your family is in a rush and you are trying to get her to school, to visits, or to events.
 - ▶ Having been familiar with non-traumatized children, you may read this behavior as telling you that she will not be rushed. You might see this as purposeful and stubborn sabotaging.
- ▶ **Remember that trauma-sensitive care assumes something different:** *that when children who have been traumatized are triggered to have anxiety, fear, or strong emotions, their brains go into a different and 'hijacked' mode. Therefore the behavior we see may impact us but is most likely a result of emotional dysregulation rather than negative intent.*

Ask:

? With that view, how could we understand the wet pants differently in a trauma-sensitive context?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Transitions create anxiety.
- ❖ Going from home into the world creates a feeling of being threatened.
- ❖ Being rushed and having a chaotic environment triggers an unconscious response and loss of physical control.

**SLIDE 5.10**

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding a Child's Behavior: Linked to Trauma: Expanding Our Thinking Beyond Cause and Effect

- ▶ **Parenting children without a traumatic background is based on a simple set of wiring for cause and effect.** At times, when children who are not traumatized engage in inappropriate behavior, the adult understands the need to teach: to help the child use her/his cognitive abilities to manage emotion and responses so that behavior is adapted in ways that suit safety and socialization.
- ▶ As we can see, the framework of cause and effect and teaching works best when people are operating with both emotional and intellectual perspectives.
- ▶ **In using a trauma-sensitive approach, we may need to expand that thinking so that we can help children:**
 - ▶ **Gain mastery and regulation over themselves simply to stay present, first, so they can then**
 - ▶ **Apply rational thought and awareness of emotions for optimal functioning.**



SLIDE 5.11

PowerPoint Slide: The Child Means Well...

- ▶ **We need to remember that our first assumption should be that the child means well and is struggling to cope and manage unmanageable experiences.**



Resource:
Arousal/Relaxation Cycle
from Separation and
Attachment, by
Dr. Vera Fahlberg

SLIDE 5.12

PowerPoint Slide: Arousal-Relaxation Cycle

- ▶ One model for explaining understanding behavior is based on work by Vera Fahlberg, who used a ***cycle of Arousal-Relaxation to help explain the needs that drive behavior.***
- ▶ The Arousal-Relaxation Cycle is based on our understanding that trust, security and attachment are strengthened when a consistent adult caregiver repeatedly meets a child's needs.
- ▶ As the child moves through the cycle, which occurs multiple times each day, the child expresses a (***need***), experiences tension (***arousal***) and receives comfort, which relieves tension and promotes contentment (***relaxation***).
 - ▶ For example, when we addressed attachment earlier in training, we discussed that **children feel a need**, such as hunger, discomfort from being wet, etc., **and use signals to express their needs.**
 - ▶ **When a child's need is met rather quickly, or when it is a minor need, the expressions (arousal) may be small and short:** a whimper rather than a wail, or a calling-out cry rather than a tantrum and the child reaches **relaxation.**
 - ▶ **When, however, needs are high and the response is not accurate or timely, children begin to lose emotional regulation.** The **arousal stage** of the cycle becomes more and more pronounced.

Ask:

? For those of you who have raised or cared for children in the early years, can you think of times when the child literally moved from expressing a need to being completely dysregulated: seeming to emotionally fall apart?

- *Elicit responses and discuss briefly.*



SLIDE 5.13

PowerPoint Slide: Arousal-Relaxation Cycle: Pronounced Arousal Stage

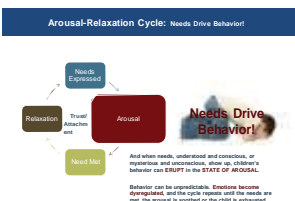
- ▶ **As a caregiver, we may then meet the need and soothe the child so that he/she can regain control, however there are also times when, although the need is being met (the bottle or breast being offered) it seems to be too late to calm the child easily. The state of arousal is so extreme that relaxation, or being soothed and regaining regulation and emotional control, takes a long time** and may actually take until the child exhausts him or herself into sleep.



SLIDE 5.14

PowerPoint Slide: Arousal-Relaxation Cycle: Learning How to Get Needs Met

- ▶ Using the Fahlberg Model, we can understand that this cycle plays out in all of us: *the process of consciously understanding and revising the ways we meet needs has to do with the ability to stay emotionally and intellectually present, to identify our needs, and to select a behavioral expression and solution that best work for us.*



SLIDE 5.15

PowerPoint Slide: Arousal-Relaxation Cycle: Needs Drive Behavior

- ▶ Children who have experienced trauma may develop junk behavior as a way of working, or struggling through their own arousal and relaxation cycle.

- ▶ **Needs drive behavior.** But needs are not always evident, logical, or easy to understand. In fact, both children and caregivers may struggle to identify and understand the needs beneath behavior.
- ▶ **And when needs, understood and conscious, or mysterious and unconscious, show up, children's behavior can erupt in the state of arousal.** Behavior can be unpredictable. Emotions become dysregulated, and the cycle repeats until the needs are met, the arousal is soothed or the child is exhausted.



SLIDE 5.16

PowerPoint Slide: Arousal-Relaxation Cycle: Learning the Dance of Attachment for the Traumatized Child

- ▶ Let's walk around the cycle of need from the perspective of both a non-traumatized and a traumatized child beginning at the top.
- ▶ **Primary needs for all children are to be accepted, loved, and nurtured.** Needs common in traumatized children include the need for connection, belonging, control over their environment, to be safe from abandonment or rejection and to be able to manage their emotional pain and anger.
 - ▶ **Non-traumatized child:** A non-traumatized child's expression is to seek affection, to ask for a hug, try to gain approval, reach out for adults who matter.
 - As we learned in Day Two: the wiring that non-traumatized children operate out of means that in distress as well as in low arousal states, a child will tend to seek affection and love and nurturing.
 - ▶ **Traumatized child:** A traumatized child may act this way as a well-learned behavior from living in the world, however the act of being close with adults can be a trigger. Imagine the child who, when she/he reaches out, is then triggered by the adult response into a hijacked state.
 - The response can be swift and counter-intuitive to adults. **Learning the dance of attachment requires overriding the brain's wiring and being able to manage unmanageable emotion and dysregulation.**

Ask:

- ? What have you seen or experienced in children who are traumatized when they need or are offered affection and nurturance, if this is a trigger for them?**

Sample Responses:

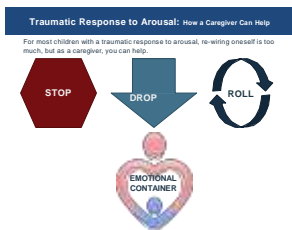
- ❖ Shutting down (freeze)
 - ❖ Running away (flight)
 - ❖ Aggression and acts that push others away (fight)
- **Note** that some of the responses the group will offer mirror the survival skills that the hijacked brain engages in under attack.

Ask:

- ? How do you think that traumatized children can manage and recover from the hijacked responses s/he may have when aroused?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ They need an environment that limits triggers.
- ❖ They need an emotional container; a responsive environment where others can tolerate their behavior and handle their strong emotional reactions, especially when triggered.
- ❖ They need someone to help them learn to calm and respond instead of becoming aroused to the point of hijacking at every trigger.

**SLIDE 5.17****PowerPoint Slide: Traumatic Response to Arousal: How a Caregiver Can Help**

- ▶ For most children with a traumatic response to arousal, re-wiring oneself is too much, but as a caregiver, you can help.
- ▶ **Behavior that comes out of the arousal state may be desperate and extremely dysregulated:** children's behavior may have a desperate note to it based on the compelling needs children have to resolve their aroused and uncomfortable state.
- ▶ **Some triggered behavior is unconscious.** Helping children to

manage their emotions, when they are reacting from a primal emotional response and based on wiring, requires that we **Stop, Drop, and Roll**, and that we serve as an **emotional container** for the child's experience.

- ▶ Behavior may escalate as children become a part of the family; indicating a deeper need and question:
 - ▶ *"I think I can trust you. You say you can accept me, but I just have to check for sure..."*



SLIDE 5.18

PowerPoint Slide: Understanding a Child's Behavior: Trauma Triggers

- ▶ Children's problem behavior can usually be linked to a trigger. When your child acts out think about what happened before the behavior began. Watch for a pattern in the behavior. For example the child might misbehave right after a visit with their biological parents or if a project at school has to do with their family. By observing your child and even documenting your child's behavior pattern you can start to identify your child's triggers.

Ask:

? What types of environmental factors in the foster home could cause emotional triggers?

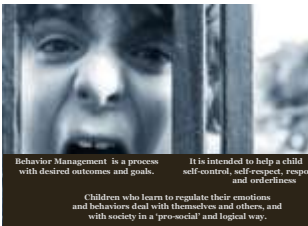
Sample Responses:

- ❖ Mealtime, bedtime, bath time and other rituals that may represent prior experiences of abuse or conflict.
- ❖ Sights, sounds, and smells that are reminders of prior experiences.
- ❖ Conflicts among family members.

- ▶ Remember our example of the wet four year old: There could be any one of several triggers that occur when the family is trying to rush and to get out of the door. As the caregiver, you can notice your own dynamics to try to change the level of arousal at transitions. In the end, you may find that it has to do with your family's energy, or patterns, or volume. Or you may find it is simply the act of leaving home: a safe place.
- ▶ Uncovering triggers takes a team effort and close observation. Work with school and the team to identify when behavior goes easily for a child in your care, and when things begin to deteriorate. Between managing the environment and working with professionals to provide help in calming the child, you may be able to turn difficult times and experiences around.
- ▶ You may find a notebook is helpful in tracking behavior and finding out when the child needs additional support and calming.



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDE 5.19-5.21) Goals of Effective Behavior Management



SLIDE 5.19

PowerPoint Slide: What is Behavior Management?

- ▶ Behavior management is a process with desired outcomes and goals. It is intended to help a child develop self-control, self-respect, responsibility and orderliness. Children who learn to regulate their emotions and behaviors deal with themselves and others, and with society in a 'pro-social' and logical way.



SLIDE 5.20

PowerPoint Slide: The Goals of Effective Behavior Management

- ▶ The behavior management process has several important goals, including:
 - ▶ **Protecting and nurturing children's physical and psychological well-being.** This ensures that children do not experience physical pain or discomfort, and that their self-concept, of which self-esteem is a part, is protected and enhanced.
 - ▶ **Advancing children's development.** This includes enhancing the child's physical, emotional, intellectual, social and moral development, as well as considering the child's uniqueness and development status.
 - ▶ **Meeting children's needs.** Needs are what drive people to behave. Behavior management should be focused on helping children meet their needs in an acceptable way.
 - ▶ **Teaching ways to prevent and solve problems.** Behavior management is not something you do when a child does something unacceptable. Behavior management involves teaching a child to solve problems by modeling and learning from previous experiences. It includes structuring an environment to prevent problems from occurring.
 - ▶ **Maintaining and building the caregiver/child relationship.** Children grow through nurturing, accepting, trusting relationships with adults important to them. Methods used as part of the disciplinary process should not damage this crucial ingredient to healthy growth and development
 - ▶ **Helping children develop self-control and responsibility.** Behavior management should provide children with the capacity to control impulses, to use their internal rules for governing conduct, to make decisions, and to encourage them to take responsibility for their actions.
 - ▶ **Producing the desired behavior.** Adult intervention should result in the effect that is desired. It should not contribute to avoidance behavior, fear, or the opposite of what is considered to be the goal of the disciplinary process.



SLIDE 5.21

PowerPoint Slide: Behavior management vs. Punishment

- ▶ Behavior management is not punishment.
- ▶ We use the phrase 'behavior management' because punishment, or even discipline, carry an idea of creating a negative consequence that will deter children from repeating undesirable behavior.
- ▶ If we take the trauma-sensitive view, we always start with the question of whether the behavior we are seeing is a direct outgrowth of the child's traumatic history.
- ▶ When behavior and emotional dysregulation are a result of traumatic events, the child is not 'choosing' their behavior as much as reacting to external events.
- ▶ Therefore, we would rather understand, and then when realistic, help the child understand how the behavior today is a response to something from the past, and can be changed in the future.

Ask:

? What are some examples of punishment?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Inflicting pain through corporal punishment, such as slapping and spanking.
- ❖ Ridiculing or threatening a child.
- ❖ Imposing suffering such as withholding food or isolating the child.
- ❖ Grounding or removing privileges

Ask:

? Which forms of punishment are acceptable and which are not? Why?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Some forms of "punishment", such as taking away privileges, are acceptable when used appropriately.
- ❖ Some forms of punishment, such as corporal punishment, are not acceptable because they do not accomplish the goals of behavior management. They are prohibited because of the serious harm they can do to the child's development. Corporal punishment is also a violation of the children's rights and Title 22 regulations.



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDE 5.22-5.23) Behavior Management Practices

**SLIDE 5.16**

PowerPoint Slide: Prohibited Methods of Behavior Management

- ▶ This is a good time to discuss the Foster VC Kids expectations relating to behavior management.
- ▶ The following methods of behavior management are prohibited:
 - ▶ Using corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, etc.).
 - ▶ Delegating behavior management or permitting punishment of a foster child by another child or adult not known to the child.
 - ▶ Withholding meals, clothing or shelter.
 - ▶ Allowing children to be subjected to verbal abuse or derogatory remarks about themselves and family members.
 - ▶ Using time outs in a constraining, locked, poorly lit or poorly ventilated room for any period of time.
 - ▶ Use of time-out for excessive periods of time.

- ▶ Subjecting children to cruel, severe, humiliating or unusual punishment.
- ▶ Interference with the implementation of the Case Plan, Child's Needs and Services Plan, or any other case plan as punishment.
- ▶ Denying a child contact or visits with his/her family as punishment.
- ▶ Using physical exercise as punishment that is excessive and/or may endanger a child's health, or so extensive as to impinge on time set aside for schoolwork, sleeping or eating. Kneeling, standing with arms outstretched, and pushups are examples.
- ▶ Threatening a child with removal or with a report to their social worker, the Judge, or other authorities as punishment.
- ▶ Punishing children for bedwetting or errors that occur during the toilet training process.
 - Techniques for working with children who are not yet toilet trained should be discussed with the social worker prior to accepting an untrained child. Problems in training should be communicated to the social worker if they occur.

Ask:

? Based on what you have learned about children in foster care and the goals of behavior management, why does Foster VC Kids have high expectations for discipline and behavior management?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Physical punishment has negative effects on traumatized children
- ❖ Children who are in need of family foster care have had serious losses, including loss of significant others, health and/or self-esteem. Most often, these losses result from neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or emotional abuse.
- ❖ Some children have lived for many years with inappropriate physical punishment and abuse, leaving them with emotional scars. The trauma from this abuse cannot be overcome quickly. Physical punishment does not help a child to overcome emotional, mental, and physical effects of past abuse.
- ❖ For some children who have experienced severe physical punishment, a spanking would do little to change behavior.
- ❖ Other forms of physical and emotional punishment (such as humiliating a child, withholding food, threatening to stop visits with parents) do not make sense for children who already have been hurt so badly that they needed to be separated from their families.
- ❖ Many children who have been subjected to cruel and/or extreme punishments will not respond to punishment unless it is abusive or severe. Others will overreact to any form of punishment.
- ❖ Using physical discipline WILL result in a Foster Care Complaint and abuse report.

Ask:**? What do you think happens if these behavior management expectations are not met by a Resource Family?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ The child's social worker will address it with the Resource Family.
- ❖ A referral to the RDS team for more education and support may be made.
- ❖ Referrals for additional training will be offered.
- ❖ A plan to support the Resource Family in utilizing more appropriate parenting will be developed to ensure that partnership agreements and expectations are met.
- ❖ Depending on the violation, a complaint may be generated. Remember, a violation of the child's rights is a violation of the RFA Written Directive. Depending on the nature of the complaint, a referral to the child abuse hotline may also be made. At this time, licensing investigation will be initiated. Please remember that any allegation of a violation of the written directive must be investigated to ensure the safety of children in foster care. For more information on complaints, please see your Orientation materials or visit <http://www.fosterfamilyhelp.ca.gov/PG2995.htm> for more info.

Ask:**? What should you do if you are having a problem handling a child's behavior?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Ask for help. Contact the social worker, RDS worker, RFA Worker, or PPE for assistance in handling problematic behavior.
- ❖ Training such as the SET Program at Kids & Families Together, TheraPlay, Triple P seminars and other positive parenting classes can help identify strategies to teach new behaviors.
- ❖ Involve the biological parent so that you can gain

insight into a child's culture and background, developmental level, temperament, needs and triggers. Additionally, some of the behaviors may be the result of the child being torn because of his/her love for their parents. Involving the biological parents can help address problem behaviors that result from these feelings because the child sees you working together.



SLIDE 5.23

PowerPoint Slide: Acceptable Methods of Behavior management

- ▶ Foster VC Kids expectations are that caregivers will use behavior management strategies that treat children with kindness, patience, consistency and understanding, and with the purpose of helping the child develop responsibility and self-control. They must help each child learn that he/she is responsible for his/her behavior by teaching them the natural and learned consequences of their behavior. Caregivers should use positive methods of behavior management which can include, but may not be limited to the following:
 - ▶ **Reinforcing acceptable behavior**, for example: praise, special privileges and treats, extra hugs and kisses, additional time spent with the child, stars, smiley faces on a door or bulletin board.
 - ▶ **Verbal disapproval of the child's behavior**, never the child, for example: "I don't like ball throwing in the house."
 - ▶ **Loss of privileges**, for example: taking a toy away, restriction from television viewing. These should be reasonable timeframes.
 - ▶ **Time in** with the child. Help the child by taking a break with you so that you can support him/her in calming down. Practice breathing or relaxation with the child.
 - ▶ **Redirecting the child's activity**, for example: removal of a sharp object and replacement with a safe toy.



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDE 5.24-5.29) Responding to Child Behavior



SLIDE 5.24

PowerPoint Slide: Effective Behavior Management Techniques

- ▶ The goals of effective behavior management have, at their heart, the purpose of helping a child develop self-esteem and self-control.
- ▶ We will now discuss three categories of effective behavior management techniques. These are:
 - ▶ Promoting Positive Behavior,
 - ▶ Promoting Self-Control, and
 - ▶ Responding to a Lack of Self-Control



SLIDE 5.25

PowerPoint Slide: Effective Behavior Management Techniques: Promoting Positive Behavior

- ▶ You can promote positive behavior by:
 - ▶ Listening to children,
 - ▶ Asking questions,
 - ▶ Providing encouragement,
 - ▶ Modeling,
 - ▶ Praising desired behavior, and
 - ▶ Rewarding appropriate behavior.
- ▶ You can accomplish this by:
 - ▶ **Practicing good communication.** The ability to listen, reflect feelings, and ask appropriate questions.
 - ▶ **Building on a child's strengths.** Using honest verbal and non-verbal praise, sharing positive feelings and smiles, rewards, and supporting/encouraging children.



SLIDE 5.26

PowerPoint Slide: Effective Behavior Management Techniques: Promoting Self-Control

- ▶ You can promote self-control by:
 - ▶ Using planning and preparation as a means to help organize family life and avoid situations where children act out-of-control.
- ▶ You can accomplish this by:
 - ▶ **Setting rules and stating expectations**, which help guide children's decisions about behavior.
 - ▶ **Developing schedules and routines for getting tasks done**, such as chores related to mealtime or times for getting homework completed.
 - ▶ **Preparing children for stressful situations**, which will help the child determine ahead of time how he/she may feel.
 - ▶ **Modifying the environment**, which might be as simple as putting breakables out of toddlers' reach or, with teens, ensuring that alcohol is locked up.
 - ▶ **Use of Play**. Play can be a powerful tool to build attachment and practice self-regulation in a non-threatening way.

Ask:

- ? **How can you help a child feel comfortable with rules, expectations, schedules and routines?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Clearly stated and thorough expectations.
- ❖ Giving the child time before overwhelming them with rules and chores.
- ❖ Where appropriate, involve the child in the decision-making process and providing them with choices. For example, would she like to set the table or clean up after dinner?



SLIDE 5.27

PowerPoint Slide: Effective Behavior Management Techniques: Responding to Lack of Self-Control

- ▶ You can respond to a lack of self-control by:
 - ▶ **Give yourself a time-out.** When a child lacks self-control, the first thing you need to do is to maintain your own control and gain composure. Remember to STOP, DROP, and ROLL as we learned in Day 2.
 - ▶ **Establish consequences for behavior** – which includes time away from preferred activities and loss of privileges.
 - ▶ **Explore alternatives.** This empowers a child to make better choices.
 - ▶ **Make commands or requests to modify behavior** – which includes verbal disapproval of the child's behavior.
 - ▶ **Remove the child from the situation** – which promotes immediate safety. This includes redirecting.
 - ▶ **Give the child a time-out or time-in** – which allows a child the opportunity to regain control and change the behavior.



SLIDE 5.28

PowerPoint Slide: Behavior Management and Support

- ▶ In our discussion, we have identified the difference between behavior management and punishment, as well as identifying good goals to assist you in your parenting decisions.
- ▶ Based on our earlier work to understand trauma, we also know that the behaviors children manifest while in your care may well have their root either in normal developmental phases or in the specific impact and re-experiencing of trauma effects.
- ▶ As a result, as a foster caregiver, your role will be to both
 - ▶ Manage the behavior you see, and
 - ▶ Support the child in healing and recovery from traumatic events or disrupted attachment.

- ▶ Managing the behavior will include creating an environment that is already conducive to healing and to helping traumatized children 're-wire' themselves to be able to live with others in a safe and peaceful manner, where they will not be harmed, harm others, nor be exploited.
- ▶ Supporting the child in healing and recovery will include helping the child work towards being able to self-calm and to build strong and durable attachments with you and with other caregivers and family members.
- ▶ For this reason, when you find yourself noticing behavior, the first question you will want to ask is which approach you will take:
 - ▶ Behavior management.
 - ▶ Support, or
 - ▶ A mix of both.
- ▶ In addition, it is important to remember that you are not alone. The behaviors that children in your care exhibit, and their experiences, can be best addressed with the help and insights of the team that surrounds each child.
- ▶ Having all of the team on board as you determine effective interventions will assist the child by providing continuity in response, which, as we recall, is a key feature of attachment strategy.



SLIDE 5.29

PowerPoint Slide: When Positive Parenting is Not Enough

- ▶ Based on our understanding of the trauma response and how children whose emotional dysregulation interferes with their ability to respond to positive parenting, you will want to try something else.
- ▶ In fact, traditional and **positive parenting**, **focusing on setting limits and structure, may become such a trigger for children who have lived through trauma** that things may get worse during your attempts to intervene rather than getting better.
- ▶ Juli Alvarado coaches and counsels from Colorado and works extensively to support Resource Families in helping children with *Emotional Regulatory Healing*.

- ▶ Their approach includes **two critical factors: caregivers and children**. As Alvarado states, **Healing, especially related to emotional regulation, is relationship dependent**. As specialists who address issues of attachment, your ability to take care of yourself will enable you to help others heal.
- ▶ Sometimes all we can do is just be with the child and let them know we see they are in pain and are there to support them.
- ▶ **Children show their emotional dysregulation in many ways: through acts of aggression, detachment, and avoidance.** When faced with behaviors that stem from intense reactions, we, as adults, are likely to react in emotional ways as well: thereby matching and ‘upping’ the ante in confronting behavior that is upsetting or alarming. We can do this through anger or through expressing our own sadness and disappointment. Alvarado and Grantham offer us a way to re-focus ourselves so that we can attend to the child in front of us and assist him/her with emotional regulation. As mentioned in Day 2, the method they promote is:
 - ▶ **Stop:** Stop in your tracks, take deep breaths, and, as long as no one is in immediate danger, ask yourself to identify your feelings. Name your feelings and accept that they are yours and do not belong to the child.
 - ▶ **Drop:** Decrease the threat you may pose to the child. Get on a level at or below the child so that you don’t seem to be threatening. You do not want to trigger a perception of recurrence of previous trauma. Drop your energy level as well. Use your breathing to help you lower your level of intensity and set your reaction aside to focus on helping the child gain a sense of calm.
 - ▶ **Roll:** Roll with the needs of the child while allowing your own responses to be present. Without tolerating harm to yourself or the child, offer your support. Gauge your distance by the child’s needs for you to be near but not intrusive.



Case Study: Responding to Behavior

INTRODUCE the Activity

- *Post Slide 5.30 as you introduce this activity.*
- ▶ Now that we have reviewed the important tenets of behavior management and support, and linked them trauma and attachment informed care, let's revisit our children to see how we can best meet their needs through effective behavior management techniques which include promoting positive behavior, promoting self-control, and responding to emotional dysregulation and the trauma-response.

PURPOSE of Activity

- *To allow participants to apply their understanding of the effective behavior management techniques to address the sample behaviors of children at various ages and developmental levels.*

DIRECTIONS for Activity

- *Instruct participants to return to their case study groups.*
- *Refer participants to **Participant Guide Day Five: Children's Stories Updates and Behavior Management and Support Plan.***



Trainer's Note: *Because there are four children, you may model the activity with one child and assign the other three children to table groups. You may also wish to place the "behaviors and motivations" for each child on card stock instead of flipcharts.*



Prepared Flipchart

- **Post** the following on a flipchart and instruct participants to:
 - Identify what the child needs: behavior management, support, or both.
 - Identify how to best meet the needs of the children by applying effective behavior management techniques.
 - Identify how you could work with the team to effectively provide intervention and healing for this child.



Prepared Flipchart

- **Move** through each story in sequence.
- **Post** Jessamyn's Behaviors (the underlying causes and motivations are provided as talking points and do not need to be posted on the flipchart).

Say

- ▶ Jessamyn's behaviors include:
 - ▶ **Behavior:** Going to any adult without fear or reservation.
 - **Underlying Cause:** Impaired attachment with primary caregiver.
 - **Motivation:** Seeking attachment and connection.
 - ▶ **Behavior:** Lack of verbal expression.
 - **Underlying Cause:** Two things are possible/likely: lack of verbal communication to Jessamyn when with her parents and throat surgery.
 - ▶ **Behavior:** Does not cry or express needs.
 - **Underlying Cause:** Two things are possible/likely: she may just be a contented baby, or she may not have had the experience of adults meeting her needs: reference the yarn activity on Day 3.

**Ask:****? What does Jessamyn need?**

Sample Response:

- ❖ Support. Because her behaviors are not disruptive to her environment she will not need behavior management for these issues, however she will need support to be able to learn to differentiate and attach to caregivers and to learn expressive skills.

? How can you best meet her needs? (for support)

Sample Response:

- ❖ Ongoing assessment on developmental milestones.
- ❖ Build attached relationship.
- ❖ Attend to noticing and anticipating needs so that you can meet them.
- ❖ Model using language to identify needs and actions. for example, verbalizing your actions “Now it’s time for Jessamyn to eat, we are going to get something to eat, etc.”

? How can you best work with the team?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Ask for assistance in ongoing assessment from Eckerd, Healthy Start, the Medical Community involved in her care, and other community resources.
- ❖ Partner with Jessamyn’s mother to be consistent in how you respond to and assist Jessamyn. (Including any household member or paternal relative if they become involved).

Trainer’s Note: *Emphasize that Jessamyn’s behavioral response is not ‘difficult to manage’ because it makes her easy to care for: she doesn’t cry or express her needs; she will go to anyone. But referencing the attachment work in Day 3, we know that this is not what well-attached 10 month old children do, and that a sign of progress for Jessamyn will be to cry and to be more selective about the caregivers she readily accepts.*



Prepared Flipchart

- **Post Miguel's behaviors on a flipchart** (the underlying causes and motivations are provided as talking points and do not need to be posted on the flipchart).

Say

- ▶ Miguel's behaviors include:

- ▶ **Behavior:** Bedwetting and occasional urination in clothing.

- **Motivation:** Rule out a medical or developmental condition: children, particularly those who have been abused, may have undetected medical conditions. If the medical conditions are ruled out, this could be a sign of fear or of disconnection between mind and body. For Miguel, this will need to be worked on in partnership with the school as wetting pants could lead to alienation and bullying.

- ▶ **Behavior:** Aggression towards others.

- **Motivation:** to get his needs met and lack of experience with rewarding pro-social behaviors, witnessing DV.

- ❖ **Behavior:** Educational delays and school failure.

- **Motivation:** Preoccupied with worries at home when he was beginning school, lack of interaction to learn basics prior to entering kindergarten.



Ask:

- ? **What does Miguel need?**

Sample Response:

- ❖ **Behavior management and Support.** Because Miguel's behaviors are disruptive to his environment and success, he will need behavior management for these issues and he will need support to be able to effectively manage in society.

? How can you best meet his needs? (for behavior management and support)

Sample Response:

- ❖ Base interventions on bedwetting on input from medical and therapeutic personnel.
- ❖ Focus on a consistent and calm response to aggression with others. This can include time out as age appropriate, disapproval, and building empathy for others. The focus on the language used to correct aggression should be geared towards EVERYONE needs to be and feel safe.
- ❖ Provide supports and structures for remedial work on educational needs. This includes calming environments for after-school work and assistance in learning building block skills required for school success. This also includes reading with Miguel on a consistent basis.
- ❖ Use **Stop, Drop, and Roll** to help you work through the issues that Miguel presents.

? How can you best work with the team?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Ask for assistance from medical and therapeutic partners around bedwetting and incontinence. Ask Miguel's mother for ideas about what has worked in the past. Convey a non-judgmental and non-punitive approach to dealing with this issue, although it can be frustrating. Ask for help if you become too frustrated with this issue. Make sure Miguel has enough clothing to change into dry clothes and bedding when he does have an accident.
- ❖ Partner with therapeutic and educational team members around aggression. Make consistent rules between home and school and any other environment where Miguel interacts with other children. Maintain supervision to keep other children safe.
- ❖ Partner with his social worker, parents, and school/IEP program to make sure that Miguel's delays are assessed and addressed. Work with Miguel's mom, if she is able to help, to do homework and reading.



Prepared Flipchart

- **Post** Marisol's behaviors on a flipchart (the underlying causes and motivations are provided as talking points and do not need to be posted on the flipchart).

Say

▶ Marisol's behaviors included:

- ▶ **Behavior:** Tantrums.
 - **Motivation:** underlying fears and anger, emotional dysregulation due to abuse and neglect.
- ▶ **Behavior:** Triggered fear response to specific people: men who speak Spanish.
 - **Motivation:** re-experiencing of traumatic events with her father and step-father.
- ▶ **Behavior:** Controlling and bossy behavior, physical behavior management of other children.
 - **Motivation:** early experiences from watching domestic violence and from having to care for others at a young age.

Trainer's Note: It may be tempting to think about separating Miguel and Marisol due to their behavior: they are tough to manage together, and even if the Resource Family want them both in the home, it may be easy to have a favorite. Taking a systems view of these siblings (and Ibiza) is important because they are repeating their family system but trying to make it 'fit' in a world with adults who can keep them safe and who have not been in their lives in crucial times. They are watching Ibiza get some care that was denied to them. As a result, helping these two work through their challenges and challenging behavior together will be more helpful than seeing each of them as being completely separate, physically or emotionally.



Ask:

? What does Marisol need?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Behavior management and support.

? How can you best meet her needs? (for support)

Sample Response:

- ❖ **Behavior management.** Base interventions around **tantrums** on a calm and calming response on your part. Ignore junk behavior when possible, speak in a low and neutral tone, and reiterate any limit that you are setting. Stop, Drop, and Roll when appropriate. Separate Marisol from others during the tantrum, preferably NOT by physically moving her, but by having other children or family members move to a different space. Remain consistent and calm and make your expectations clear. For example: 'When you are ready to talk calmly with me, we can work this out.'
- ❖ **Support.** Understand that the **triggered fear response** to specific people: men who speak Spanish, is not personal to individuals Marisol is now interacting with and ask them to understand as well: give Marisol a sense of control over her physical and social interactions with men who remind her of a previous abuser (remember she did not have control over what happened to her in the traumatic events of the past), reinforce that you will keep her safe and will not force her to have interactions that have her re-experience her trauma.
- ❖ **Support and behavior management.** Pull forward the positive and pro-social skills that Marisol learned while 'parenting' her siblings, such as being a caring person, understanding her siblings and other children. Behavior management for anti-social, **controlling and bossy behavior**. Remind her that the adults are the caregivers and parents and that you will take care of concerns about others' behavior.
- ❖ **Behavior management.** Underscore that **physical behavior management** of other children is not acceptable behavior for her. Reiterate the rules of the house or school about physical safety and the need for all children to feel or be safe.

? How can you best work with the team?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Ask for therapeutic help on the triggered fear response.
- ❖ Ask for team support and continuity about rules for how Marisol can be of help (validating her skills) but how to minimize her controlling and bossy behavior, or physical behavior management in all settings.

Trainer's Note: *It is important to note that parentification becomes an identity for children in a neglecting or abusive family, and that there are pro-social skills that can be learned through parentification, however balancing retaining the positive with giving children a chance to experience being taken care of takes diligence and attention by the team.*



Prepared Flipchart

- **Post Birdy's Behaviors** on a flipchart (the underlying causes and motivations are provided as talking points and do not need to be posted on the flipchart).

Say

- ▶ Birdy's behaviors included:
 - ▶ **Behavior:** Withdrawal, non-engagement in family or social activities.
 - **Motivation:** Detachment and possible depersonalization due to traumatic childhood, response to multiple losses.
 - ▶ **Behavior:** History of self-injury and substance abuse.
 - **Motivation:** A response to childhood, both because of the difficulty in attaching when both parents are addicted and when the family is unstable. This includes exposure to sexual abuse by a non-family member as a result of neglect. In addition, Birdy likely used substances either directly or indirectly through exposure to environments where drugs were available and smoked. Her early exposure will make her both physically and emotionally

vulnerable to addiction. Although she may not be using or cutting now, welcoming her into the family needs to include planning for and preventing relapse in these areas.



Ask:

? What does Birdy need?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Behavior management and support

? How can you best meet her needs? (for behavior management and support)

Sample Response:

- ❖ **Support.** You can work with Birdy to identify the types of ways she can gradually **become more interactive with the family**. Identifying her interest in music as a way to engage her, there could be family or one-on-one activities you could do with her that let her guide your activities and the interaction. The same is true with **becoming more interactive with the community**: seeking opportunities to build on her interests and finding avenues that allow her to interact and connect, so that she feels that this is her home until she reunifies.
- ❖ **Support.** Planning and prevention of relapse of **behavior of self-injury** keeping diligent eye out for signs of potential return to self-injury, having an emergency safety plan for Birdy, including assessment of cutting and/or suicidality, supporting therapeutic interventions and enlisting Birdy's dad in these efforts.
- ❖ **Behavior management.** Insure that family rules prohibiting **substance use** are enforced, keeping alcohol inaccessible in the house, knowing friends and acquaintances and understanding if there are friends or acquaintances who could participate in relapse, helping Birdy manage temptation as she gets older.

? How can you best work with the team?

Sample Response:

- ❖ Ask for assistance in ongoing therapy and assessment by the therapeutic partners.
- ❖ Identify community supports, such as Alanon or Alateen, that could help Birdy deal with the impact of her childhood.
- ❖ Work intensively with Birdy's dad to support her in her efforts.
- ❖ Ask for financial and enrollment support in any programs in the community or school that would help Birdy become more connected.



SUMMARIZE

- ▶ All children, as a part of their development, will display behaviors that require behavior management in order to allow children to develop into healthy adults.
- ▶ Children who are in the Child Welfare system have the added burden of trying to manage traumatic experiences and complex attachment as they develop.
- ▶ When children are placed in your home, whether it is temporary placement or leads, eventually, to permanent placement, Resource Families play a key role in providing sufficient behavior management and support to assist children and youth in your home so that they can lead healthy and connected adult lives.
- ▶ Resource Families are not alone in helping children and youth learn to manage their behavior: the team is critical in providing both the foster family and the child in moving forward.



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDE 5.31) Modifying Your Own Response

SLIDE 5.31

PowerPoint Slide: Modifying Your Own Response

- ▶ Children who have been harmed either through abuse by adults or by neglect, when adults do not meet children's needs, are sensitive to adult responses to them. For this reason, the ideas set forth in this module about modifying your own reactions and responses are especially important.
- ▶ **Listen promptly and carefully to what children are saying and do not minimize the child's experience.** Many situations can be avoided if you attend to children's needs and listen to what they are telling you. Children who have experienced trauma may have needs that escalate very quickly.

Ask:

- ? **What kind of statements could result in minimizing a child's experience?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ "There's no need to be upset."
- ❖ "Come on smile. It's not that bad."
- ❖ "It this world, things aren't going to be perfect."
- ▶ **Be objective, non-judgmental, concise, consistent, and clear.** Emotionally traumatized children respond best to objective and clear guidelines. For a child who has lived with chaos, the relief of knowing what to expect is healing. When children misbehave or hurt one another, you will certainly find yourself responding in an emotional way. But in a world of dealing with traumatized children, you will need to put that anger somewhere else.

- ▶ **Try at all times to relieve the child's anxiety.** A symptom of post trauma is a high degree of anxiety. It is important to think of ways to lower a child's anxiety on a day-to-day basis. Unfortunately, the very nature of behavior management makes it stressful for children.

Ask:

- ? **How can you provide rules and consequences that are concise, consistent and clear?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Discuss and enforce rules objectively and clearly.
- ❖ Clarify the most important rules and consequences (especially around safety).
- ❖ Do not bend the rules.
- ❖ Make as few rules and consequences as possible.

Ask:

- ? **What can you do to you relieve a child's anxiety around behavior management?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Select a low stress time to talk about rules, expectations and consequences.
- ❖ Discuss and enforce behavior management strategies with a calm and soothing voice.
- ❖ Tell children you will keep them safe.
- ❖ Tell children that there will be consequences for following the rules, but it will not result in your being angry, hurting them or having them leave the home.
- ❖ During high stress times, try to ignore those behaviors that can be ignored.



SUMMARIZE

- ▶ Keeping these trauma-sensitive ideas in mind will assist you in behavior management with the children in your home.
- ▶ As we close up today, I have one more piece of work for us to do here and a piece of work to do at home with your family. If you have other household members or extended family who could help you think further about the structures you want to have within the household as you welcome new members in, please consult them as well.



- Refer participants to ***Participant's Guide Day Five: Family Rules and Customs Worksheet***.

- ▶ First, let's go back to the ***Family Rules and Customs Worksheet***.

Ask:

- ? Do any of these customs now seem to be rules for you?
- ? Any rules move over to customs?
- ? Any ideas about which rules may be challenging for children entering your household?
 - Elicit responses and briefly discuss.
- ▶ We are going to discuss all of our homework in a moment, but first, let's specifically address the homework as it relates to this activity.
- ▶ For your homework, I want you to plan a family/household meeting including anyone who is extended family who is in your home often or plays a family role in the household. *Note, this may include only those of you who are here together. If you are currently a household of one, try to do this activity with someone who was in your family of origin or who is a close friend, just to figure out if there are additional rules or customs you have not noted.

- ▶ Using your *rules and customs worksheet* in the *Participant Guide Day Five Homework* , interview the group about what they would describe as rules and customs.
- ▶ Ask the group to tell you 'Why' you have each rule or custom.
- ▶ Be ready to discuss your meeting with the group in our next session.
- ▶ We will use this list in the next session to think about how to build our safety plan with children as they transition into our homes.



TRANSITION

- ▶ Now, let's take a few moments to discuss the remaining homework assignments.

Homework Assignments

Materials

Homework Notebook
Day Five



10 Minutes



Presentation – Introduction to Topic

- ▶ Let's take some time to discuss this week's homework.
 - *Use this opportunity to explore how they can gain more knowledge about behavior management in foster care through their homework and field activities.*
- **Refer participants to *Participant Guide: Day Five Homework*.**
- **Explain this Assignment .** For this week's assignment, you will plan a family/household meeting including anyone who is extended family who is in your home often or plays a family role in the household. Interview the group about what they would describe as rules and customs. You will ask the group to tell you "why" you have each rule or custom.
- **Elicit questions and comments about the homework. Briefly discuss.**



SUMMARIZE

- ▶ Again, taking the time to complete this homework and field work will provide you an opportunity for self-reflection, a greater sense of fostering and will allow you to transfer the skills and knowledge you are building in the classroom.
- ▶ Remember to keep talking
- ▶ Additionally, the Foster VC Kids website has resources you can use.



TRANSITION

- ▶ Next session we will continue the discussion on parenting and touch on caring for children who have been sexually abused. We are also going to talk about common health conditions in foster care and educational needs of children in care.
- ▶ Let's wrap up for the day.

Wrap-up

Materials

PPT 5.32
Evaluations



5 Minutes



Presentation – Wrap-up

- **Process** the work day with the participants.

Ask:

- ? What did you learn from today's session?
- ? How will you integrate these new skills into your plan to become a Resource Family?
- ? What did you experience today that would not be useful to you as a Resource Family?

- **Elicit** responses and briefly discuss.

SUMMARIZE

- *Post Slide 5.32.*
- ▶ Today we learned about how childhood trauma impacts behavior and how emotional regulatory healing can guide effective behavior management and growth for children and families.
- ▶ Please continue to be open-minded and take advantage of this new learning experience. Also remember that this training is part of the mutual selection process and that ongoing assessment will continue throughout the training.
- ▶ Thanks for your input and participation and I will see you _____ (*date, time, and location of the next day of training*).

EVALUATIONS

If evaluations are being used they should be distributed and completed at this time.