Teaching strategies for foster care students with behavior problems

Nikki Ann Console
TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR FOSTER CARE STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

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by
Nikki Ann Console
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Approved by:

Robert London, Chair, Integrated Studies

Samuel Crowell, Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to research behavior problems of children in Foster care and to identify teaching strategies and techniques for teachers who have Foster children in their classrooms and experience difficulties working with them. The project examined the types of behavior problems displayed by abused children. As part of the study, I developed a curriculum based on values to help these students develop social skills.

The students involved in this study were one male and one female fourth grade student. Each child displayed many different personality traits. Their behaviors were also very different, yet neither child displayed healthy and appropriate behaviors for their age. The results of using the strategies and techniques along with teaching the curriculum unit supported the hypothesis that the methods were somewhat effective.

In addition, teachers who presently have or have had Foster children in their classrooms were interviewed to find out their opinions on what can help them work more effectively with Foster children with behavioral problems. The results of the interviews revealed that teachers need to know strategies and techniques to help them better
educate students in need. Teachers that I interviewed indicated that the number of students with behavioral problems are increasing, but the outside support is not. Hopefully, the strategies, techniques, and ideas for working with these students identified in this study will make their future experiences much easier and less stressful.

The curriculum unit developed for this project centered on teaching certain morals and values. Teaching morals and values has been an area that has been generally neglected by most teachers. Taking the time to teach social skills and values can result in improvement in most students' attitudes, thoughts, opinions, and actions. Helping Foster children to learn appropriate behaviors can also help the other children too. I believe that the values taught in the curriculum unit are desirable qualities to nurture in all students.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

During my ten years in teaching, I have experienced many situations involving Foster care students in which I questioned how I should react. Wanting to do the best job possible for my Foster care students, I choose in this project to research strategies, techniques, and information to better help my Foster care students. My own experiences and witnessing other teachers' experiences in teaching Foster care students with behavioral problems generated my interest in how to better meet their educational needs, and cope with their different personalities and sometimes difficult behaviors.

I wanted to learn practical principles, strategies, techniques rather than quick fixes and short term actions. When having Foster care students with behavioral problems in my classroom, I felt a need for a resource for guidance on a daily basis. I needed to know the reasoning behind different behaviors and how to guide the students into a positive, caring management of their own behavior. I needed to understand the beliefs that motivate their
misbehavior, rather than just describing their behaviors. In the past, when having Foster care students with behavioral problems, I felt the only person who could serve their needs was the school counselor. So when situations arose in the classroom, I just sent the student to the counselor’s office. I passed the problems on to the counselor. Without daily interventions, the behaviors would only stop temporarily. Later, the same or another disturbing behavior would resume, so I would send the student back to the counselor. I did not feel that the students were receiving the appropriate support and guidance required for positive changes to develop.

As the number of children in the foster care system increases each year, the chances of having a Foster child in any given classroom is continuously increasing. Having Foster children as students, teachers may face many difficult and new experiences in handling their different behaviors. According to George and Van Voorhis in a recent study, slightly over 13% of the foster care population were labeled as emotionally disturbed, and 60% had behavior problems, and 66% of the emotionally disturbed were severely emotionally disturbed (1992). Foster children may
have past experiences of neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, prenatal drug abuse, homelessness and/or abandonment. The results of these experiences can have devastating effects on these children. Removing these children from their parents and placing them in the foster care system creates another form of trauma in their lives. Clearly, any child who is removed from a familiar setting and placed in a new environment with strangers will require at least a period of adjustment (Geroski & Knauss, 2000).

A teacher’s approach to teaching these children can be more effective if they are aware of some methods of dealing with the emotional state of these students. There are effective strategies, techniques, and interventions when dealing with these children suffering from severe emotional trauma. A teacher cannot change the past experiences of their Foster student, they can only look at the present and provide an opportunity to be successful (Anderson, p. 32).

Children coming from homes of abuse, neglect, or violence within the family are influenced by their negative environmental conditions. Emotional and cognitive disruptions in their early lives can impair brain development in the nerve connections and neurotransmitter

Lacking basic stimulation techniques, stability, and predictable nurturance, these children are unable to develop optimal cognitive, language, and personal socialization skills. To develop into a psychologically healthy human being, a child must have a relationship with an adult who is nurturing, protective, and fosters trust and security (A. A. P., 2000, p. 10). Abused and neglected children usually do not bond with anyone. They have not experienced a healthy attachment with a parent, other family members, or even close friends. Developing this attachment can help the child to overcome the stress and trauma of abuse and neglect (A. A. P., 2000).

Children coming from physical and mental abusive situations can develop involuntary actions of their bodies when their brains respond to stress. These children usually respond to stress in a hypervigilant, fearful manner. They might just freeze and not do anything. Even if asked to do something, they will not respond. This behavior could be misunderstood and thought of being
defiant. If the child has experienced repeated multiple traumatic events, they might display behaviors of hyperactivity, anxiety, mood swings, impulsiveness, and sleep problems (A. A. P., 2000).

Foster children may have a wide range of behavioral problems. Physically abused children can act fearfully, aggressive, noncompliant, or impulsive. They also seem to have low self-esteem. They may have difficulties with peers and making friends. Their actions towards others may be harsh or erratic because of their upbringing. Their actions have been learned behaviors from watching their parents. They may have learned negative behaviors to get attention or assert power. Once learned, these patterns are often carried into their relationships with others (Geroski & Knauss, 2000).

According to Altshuler (1997), many children in foster care are at risk for school failure on the basis of low socioeconomic status, race, or ethnicity, and/or special education needs. A large majority of children in foster care change schools often. Many demonstrate a variety of academic difficulties, including weaker cognitive abilities, and poorer academic performance and classroom
achievement. These difficulties result in grade retention for many foster children. Both abused and neglected children are retained twice as often as children that have not been abused or neglected (Ayasse, 1995, p.11). Which can further damage their self esteem.

However, even with more than their share of problems, they also have a variety of abilities, talents, and interests that can be built upon given the right conditions and support. Overcoming their bad experiences and uncertainties of their future living arrangements, Foster children need to meet the challenges at school and education. With a knowledgeable and nurturing teacher, the child can have a better chance of facing these challenges. Their teacher and other support people can make a remarkable difference in their lives.

A current problem facing most teachers is their inexperience and the lack of training and schooling in how to teach deal with their Foster care students with difficult behavioral problems. How does a teacher deal with these different behaviors? No matter how much outside support the teacher might receive, the teacher must deal with the child and their behaviors and problems on a daily
basis. How the teacher reacts to the child’s behavior will determine the outcome of the child’s progress and the teacher’s sanity.

There is a need for a handout or pamphlet with helpful information, strategies, and techniques when a situation arises when the teacher needs assistance in resolving ongoing problems with Foster care students displaying abnormal behaviors. Busy teachers need printed material with recommended strategies and techniques developed by researchers in this field. Teachers may also find that a curriculum stressing moral development is needed for ongoing support in the psychological development of these students in need.

In summary, many children in Foster care demonstrate behavioral problems in school settings including aggressive, demanding, anxious, and overly complaint behaviors (Altshuler, 1997). With the proper knowledge and preparation, teachers can meet the challenges of severe behavior problems. Knowing how to help these children, teachers can make their learning situation be a successful one. My goal is to inform teachers in how to work more effectively with elementary Foster care students with
behavioral problems. Specifically, the purpose of this project is to develop a handout and a curriculum unit for the development of important skills for Foster care students with behavioral problems.

Although I have presented a scary picture of some of the behaviors that teachers may face with Foster children with behavioral problems, I do not want teachers to be hesitant about receiving a Foster child into their class. I want to help teachers, if the situation arises for which they do not know how to react or what to do. I want to help resolve those overwhelming feelings. I want teachers to feel confident when a situation arises in which inappropriate behaviors are displayed.

In the remainder of the chapters for this project, I will describe how I completed my project, evaluated the effectiveness of the project, and drew conclusions from the data. In chapter 2, the review of the literature, I will further explore the needs and behaviors of Foster care children. I will explain the different kinds of abuse that Foster children tend to experience. I will describe the three types of disruptive behavior common in Foster children and their characteristics and causes. I will
explore method to help children overcome disruptive behaviors. I will describe Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development which describes the appropriate stages of social development. Understanding the stages will help teachers to know what is needed for the Foster care student to develop into a psychologically healthy human being. Then I will explain what teachers can do to help their Foster students experience success in school.

I will inform teachers and other readers about the kinds of abuse and what effects it may have had on a child. This will help teachers to understand the behaviors they may see in their classrooms. Having this background information about the characteristics and effects of abuse can help assist a teacher in determining what avenue of support may be needed for a Foster care student.

In chapter 3, methodology, I will describe the methodology for developing a handout with strategies and techniques for teaching Foster care children with behavioral problems and developing a curriculum unit that will teach values and social skills. I will describe the methodology for assessing student’s improvement through a checklist of targeted behaviors, and measuring the
effectiveness of the curriculum unit by the means of a written assessment. I will end the methodology chapter with a description of the process for teacher interviews concerning their perceptions concerning the teaching strategies and techniques for working with Foster care children with behavioral problems.

After the methodology in chapter 4, I will discuss the results for each component of the methodology. Specifically, I will summarize (1) the development of the handout and the curriculum unit, (2) the development and administration of a checklist of observable behaviors, (3) the development and administration of an assessment for the curriculum unit, and (4) the open-ended questions for the teacher interviews. The handout will summarize the major points in the Review of Literature. The curriculum unit will focus on the building of values and social skills. The checklist of observable behaviors will measure the effectiveness of the strategies and techniques and used with a couple of Foster care students. The curriculum unit assessment will measure effectiveness of the curriculum unit implemented in a class. The teacher interviews will report the evaluations of the effectiveness of the
techniques and strategies included in the handout and the curriculum unit.

In chapter 5, I will describe my conclusions for this project and recommendations for further research. This chapter discusses the effectiveness of the techniques, strategies, and activities which were found to be useful to educators when working with Foster care students with behavioral problems.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate research that has been done in the area of Foster care children with behavioral problems in order to establish guidelines for working effectively with Foster children in a regular K-6 classroom context. First, I will give a general overview of the current Foster care system in the United States. Then I will focus on the areas of behaviors, abuse, and specific methods, procedures, strategies, curriculum, and techniques for helping these Foster children to improve their lives by addressing the following eight questions:

1. What are the different kinds of abuse that Foster children tend to experience?
2. What are the three types of disruptive behavior common in Foster children?
3. What are the characteristics and causes of the three types of disruptive behaviors?
4. Are there methods to help children overcome disruptive behaviors?
5. What are some other types of behavior disorders?
6. What are the stages of the Psychological Development Theory that are required for children to develop into Healthy adults?

7. Can Foster children be helped through gaining insight on their developmental stage and their personal setbacks?

8. What can teachers do to help their Foster care students achieve success in school?

The Foster Care System

What is the foster care system? It is a governmental agency that finds temporary housing for children who may be experiencing parental neglect, abuse, or exploitation. The largest portion of these children stay in the system for many years. The foster care system is a big system, and is getting bigger. The foster care system has continuously failed for the majority of its children since its origin (Burley, 2002). In the past and in the present, the only time that public interest seems to be generated is when a horrible death or excessive life-threatening abuse occurs to a child in foster care. Currently, many positive changes are being made in the system, and hopefully this
trend will continue. Foster care has grown rapidly in recent years.

In 1989, the federal government spent $1.2 billion dollars on reimbursing state spending on foster care. It is estimated that by 2004, federal spending on foster care will reach $6.2 billion dollars, an increase of over 420% within 15 years. As federal funding for foster care has increased, so has the number of children entering the foster care system.

In 1989, the number of recipients receiving foster care assistance was 156,871 per month. By 2004, it is estimated that the number will increase to 386,300 per month, an increase of almost 150% (Moyers, 2002). The increases in the population of Foster children are due to (a) an increase in the number of infants who are born exposed to drugs, (b) changes in child abuse reporting trends, and (c) the spread of HIV (Chamberlain, 1999).

With the increasing number of children entering the system, educators need the skills and strategies to deal with and better educate foster children. It is estimated that between 60 and 85 percent of children in foster care nationwide have significant mental health problems (Burley, 14
Chamberlain (1999) reported that over 80% of Foster children have developmental or emotional problems, and over fifty percent of the children have problems in both areas. Whether the child has emotional problems from their past family life, or from the trauma of being taken away from their family, these children may present their teacher with new challenges and obstacles to overcome when attempting to teach them. The mental state of these children tend to be far less than stable. Most can agree that these children need special services, but the foster care system is failing to provide necessary mental health treatment and services. "We know that given the right tools, even children taken from the cruelest of circumstances have a remarkable resilience and ability to adapt," said Lew Hollman, Director of the Center for Law in the Public Interest. "Providing those tools are not only the right course, it is the most efficient course, relieving human suffering, but also strengthening our society and using scarce resources wisely" (Burley, 2002, p. 2).

In order to treat children within the foster family setting, foster parents need to be trained in behavioral management and treatment strategies (Chamberlain, 1999).
Training foster parents can increase their skills as caregivers for disturbed children, and provide them with long term behavioral objectives.

Below, there is a poem written by a foster parent who shares her thoughts about foster children. While reading this poem, the author’s thoughts and perceptions of foster children are quite clear. She knows that her role in their lives is valued and appreciated, and she also knows that there will be obstacles to overcome.

Children Know...
You can look in their eyes, and see by the pain,
They’ve sailed some rough seas, and suffered in vain,
Their spirits are broken, their faith totally shattered,
And given up hope, their little lives mattered!
They’ve been on the front-lines, like soldiers of war,
Fought endless battles, with no chance to score;
There were no medals of honor, pinned on their chests,
And no way to escape, life's toughest of tests!
They've carried their burdens, without speaking
to others,
For the 'weight', is their own, fathers and mothers;
They've hungered far more, than there ever was
cause,
Yet accepted their fate, with little more than a
pause!
So remember, when one of these 'soldiers', are
given to you, They'll fight against everything
that you try to do;
But be persistent, don't quit, just stick to your
plan,
For the child in the "soldier", will seek your
gentle hand!
Slowly their minds, and their spirits will mend.
When they are secure, that you're their friend;
And that is the greatest gift, you could ever
bestow.
For when you give from the heart, all children
know!(Quarrels, S. Children Know... Retrieved
Foster children may have past experiences of neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, prenatal drug abuse, homelessness, and/or abandonment. The results of these experiences can have devastating effects on these children. Removing these children and placing them in the Foster care system can create another form of trauma in their lives. The mental state of many of these children is not stable. My greatest concern is that something needs to be done to help these Foster children who come from unfortunate homes. Studies show that 85 percent of convicted felons were abused children (California Department of Justice, 1994).

In the rest of this chapter, we will look at the areas of abuse and their likely outcomes in the victim’s behavior. With our understanding of the emotional scars of these children, we can help to begin their healing process. In addition, I will explore and discuss the similarities and the differences in techniques, strategies, and procedures discussed in the literature.
What are the Different Kinds of Abuse that Foster Children tend to Experience?

Widely advertised is the slogan, "It shouldn’t hurt to be a kid", yet children continue to be hurt everyday. Physical abuse is legally defined as a physical injury which is inflicted by other than accidental means on a child by another person. It can be cruel or inhuman corporal punishment or injury. Sexual abuse can include molestation, child sexual abuse, sexual assault, rape, indecent liberties, incest, statutory rape, child pornography, and sexual misuse (Malchiodi, 1990). Neglect is essentially the negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by a parent or caretaker under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child’s health or welfare.

Indications of physical abuse are bruises, abrasions, lacerations, or swelling caused by other than accidental means. The child may have belt buckle marks, handprints, cigarette burns, bite marks, and signs of pinches. These children are usually excessively passive, compliant, or fearful. Or their actions may mimic harsh or erratic actions learned from watching their parent. They may have
learned negative behaviors to get attention or assert power (Geroski & Knauss, 2000).

Some indications of neglect include that the child is lacking adequate medical or dental care, the child is always sleepy or hungry, or the child might be dirty or inadequately dressed for the weather. Some other characteristics of neglected children are passivity, withdrawal, depression, and apathy (Geroski & Knauss, 2000). At times, some children of neglect will go from happy to greatly distressed with little warning and without an apparent precipitating incident (Chamberlain, 1999).

With the ever increasing use of illegal drugs, more children are being placed in foster care because of parental neglect. Neglect can have very profound and long-lasting consequences on all aspects of child development—poor attachment formation, under stimulation, development delay, poor physical development, and anti-social behavior. Limited communication between the parent and the child makes it more difficult for the child’s brain to make connections that facilitate language and vocabulary development, resulting in the impairment of communication skills (A. A. P, 2000). Neglected children typically
suffer in cognitive performance and academic achievement, resulting from their inadequate brain stimulation at an early age.

Indications of sexual abuse include detailed and age-inappropriate understanding of sexual behavior. The child may act sexually inappropriately towards another child, demonstrating their knowledge of lewd acts. The child may wear torn, stained, or bloody under garments (Geroski & Knauss, 2000).

The majority of the children placed in the Foster Care System are children who have been severely abused. Therefore, it should be no surprise that the emotional state of foster children is typically far from being normal. The obvious signs of a troubled child is his/her behavior. Most foster children have chronic behavior problems. They need help in learning how to behave both in school and outside of school. Conditions in the home, such as ineffective parental discipline, lack of parental involvement, parental criminality, child abuse and/or neglect, and rejection can predict early onset and chronic patterns of antisocial and disruptive behavior (McEvoy & Welker, 2000). "Mental health service is eight times higher
among children in foster care than among young receiving Medicaid benefits under Aid to Families with Dependent Children" (DosReis et al., 2001, p. 3).

What are the Three Types of Disruptive Behaviors?

The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders defines three types of serious disruptive behaviors in children including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), and conduct disorder (CD) (Bloomquist, 1996).

The federal government, in Public Law 94-142, defines a behavior disorder or serious disturbance as follows:

...a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance: --an inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; --an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; --inappropriate types of behaviors or
feelings under normal circumstances; --a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. (Skiba, R. J. & Peterson, R. L. 2000, School Discipline at a Crossroads: From Zero Tolerance to Early Response. Exceptional Children, 66, p.335).

What are the Characteristics and Causes of Disruptive Behaviors?

The cause of ADHD appears to be primarily biological or neurodevelopmental. These children may have subtle abnormalities in parts of the brain that are responsible for maintaining attention, screening out distraction, and regulating motor activity (Bloomquist, 1996). Children with ADHD are continuously paying attention for short spans of time to everything that is going on around them. They are unable to screen out distractions. If a child is diagnosed with ADHD, about 30-40 percent of the time the child will also have ODD (Chandler, 2002).

There are many different terms used to describe behavior disordered students, such as emotionally
disturbed, disruptive, aggressive, emotionally handicapped or conduct disordered. The common behaviors that lead to a referral for services include defiance, uncooperativeness, shyness, withdrawal, passivity, self-consciousness, fearfulness, and anxiety (Taylor-Greene, et al., 1997). After the referral process is finished, the disorder is labeled.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder is the most common psychiatric problem in children. Children who have Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) tend to be noncompliant, irritable, and continuously displaying a negative mood. They may violate rules, throw tantrums, argue with authority figures, annoy others, blame others for their own problems, and swear often. Researchers are not clear about the specific cause of ODD, but they believe that ineffective parenting contributes to the development of ODD. Parents of ODD children are often too harsh and inconsistent, and/or are ineffective in their discipline practices (Bloomquist, 1996). According to Chamberlain (1999), prenatal exposure to alcohol and drugs, as well as neonatal malnutrition, may contribute to behavior disorders.
According to Jim Chandler, MD (2002), the criteria for ODD are: A pattern of negativistic, hostile, and defiant behavior lasting at least six months during which four of more of the following are present:

1. Often loses temper.
2. Often argues with adults.
3. Often actively defies or refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules.
4. Often deliberately annoys people.
5. Often blames others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior.
6. Often touchy or easily annoyed by others.
7. Often angry and resentful.
8. Often spiteful and vindictive.

Many times, the disturbance in behavior causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning. Research shows antisocial behavior may lead to aggressive and violent actions (Leone, et al., 2000). Chandler's research (2002) shows that no one knows for certain the cause of ODD, but if a parent is an alcoholic and has been in trouble with the law, their children are three times as likely to have ODD. Eighteen
percent of children with ODD have either an alcoholic or criminal parent. According to Chamberlain (1999), research on infants of maternal depression, maternal absence and separation has shown that the lack of emotion regulation often results in ODD.

There are four main paths that a child with ODD will take. First, there will be some children who outgrow it. Second, some ODD children will turn into children with Conduct Disorder. These children usually have a biological parent who is a career criminal and has very severe ODD. Third, the child may continue to have ODD without developing new types of problems (e.g. CD, anxiety, ADHD). Fourth, they may continue to have ODD, but also acquire an anxiety disorder, ADHD, or a depression disorder (Chandler, 2002).

ODD is characterized by aggressiveness, but not impulsiveness. ODD people typically annoy you on purpose, whereas ADHD people usually do things without thinking. Although ODD children can sit still, they can be more difficult to live with than ADHD children. ODD children can be destructive and disagreeable on purpose. They are those student who purposely push your buttons. They are
rarely sorry for their actions, and often believe nothing is their fault. They may trick, bully, or lie to others.

CD is an even more serious childhood psychological disorder than ODD (Chandler, 2002). According to Bloomquist’s 1996 research, children with Conduct Disorder (CD) display a persistent pattern of violating the rights of others and accepted social norms and rules. Children with CD may be aggressive, steal, sexually violate others, run away from home, be truant, and/or be substance abusers.

The causes of CD are both biological and environmental. Children with CD may have a variety of neurological difficulties and may have higher levels of the hormone testosterone. Children with CD are likely to have parents with psychiatric problems. Their parents are often antisocial, depressed, or substance abusers. Other difficulties, such as divorce of one’s parents, low parental support, and financial problems in the family have also been found to contribute to the development of Conduct disorder. Family relationship’s and/or peer relationship’s influences may be related to the development of CD (Bloomquist, 1996).
Research done by the Mental Health Association of Westchester (MHA) (2002) has shown both biological and environmental causes for Disruptive Behavior Disorders. Youngsters most at risk for Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Conduct Disorder are those who have low birth weight, neurological damage or ADHD. Youngsters may also be at risk if they were rejected by their mothers, separated from their parents, and/or not given good foster care. Also, youngsters at risk of having ODD or CD are those who have been physically or sexually abused, or even raised in homes with mothers who were abused. Living in poverty can also put youngsters at risk ("What are Disruptive Behavior Disorders?" 2002).

According to Chandler, conduct disorder is just a more serious version of ODD. However recent research suggests that there are some differences. Chandler’s (2002) definition of conduct disorder is a repetitive and persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others or major society rules are violated. Conduct disorder behavior can include aggression to people and animals, destruction of property, deceitfulness, theft, or serious violations of rules.
Severe ODD can lead to CD. With CD, safety of others is a big issue. Children with ODD are annoying, but not usually dangerous. Children with CD can be very dangerous, and can cause their parents much worry. CD is considered by some to be the worse medical disorder in pediatrics (Chandler, 2002).

What could be worse? It is very common to see children with CD plus one or two additional neuropsychiatric diagnoses. The most common combination is CD plus ADHD. CD plus depression or anxiety is also very common. Conduct disorder and substance abuse is also common. The tendency for these disorders to occur together is called commorbidty (Chandler, 2002). Children can have one disorder, and then acquire another. If a child with one diagnosed disorder begins acting differently, a second diagnose should be done to check for new disorders.

Children with CD are three times more likely to smoke cigarettes, 2.5 times more likely to drink alcohol, and five times more likely to smoke pot than children who do not have CD. Recent studies of teenagers who committed suicide show that children with CD are three times more likely than regular teenagers to commit suicide (Chandler,
2002). Children with CD and depression are usually those who take their own lives. With all of their different behaviors, their parents do not usually catch the signs of depression until it is too late. It is common for children with CD to commit suicide without the parents being aware that the child suffers from depression.

The longer psychiatry problems associated with CD continue in childhood and in adolescence, the more likely they are to lead to personality disorders as adults. Personality disorders are labels used to describe people who have traits in their personality that cause them major problems. One personality group is those people who are strange, different, and keep to themselves. Another group is people who are dramatic, have lots of mood shifting problems, are forever getting into trouble, and whose lives are quite mixed up. They are often very difficult to get along with. Another group are people who are withdrawn, scared, and have to do things a certain way. If you have both a psychiatric problem and a personality disorder, it is much harder to get better (Chandler, 2002).

If interventions are not made, or help is not given, children with psychiatric problems grow up to have more
problems as adults. About 30% of conduct disorder children continue with similar problems in adulthood. Children who are 7 to 11 years old with CD have been reported to be twice as much at risk for adult antisocial behaviors than those observed after age 11 (Crowell, Evans, & O’Donnell, 1987). Also, it is more common for males than females to continue after 11 years old with these types of problems. Females often end up having mood and anxiety disorders (Chandler, 2002).

Are there Therapeutic Methods to Help Children with Disruptive Behaviors?

So what can be done for these psychiatric disorders? Well, according to Dr. Chandler, there has not been very much research done on ODD. In three years time, only nineteen articles were written on ODD. Whereas, there has been a lot of research on different treatment methods for CD. The bad news is that none have been found to be consistently successful. Some methods involve behavior modification, and a multi-system therapy where many interventions are used at the same time (Chandler, 2002).

Two different reports have shown two different results using medication. The Mental Health Association of
Westchester reports that no medications have been consistently useful in reducing the symptoms of ODD or CD (2002). Whereas, Rachel Klein’s research showed that antisocial behaviors specific to CD were significantly reduced by a stimulant known as methylphenidate. But the stimulant had no effect on the children’s ADHD symptoms (1998).

This project will be primarily concerned with methods that the classroom teacher can use, of course, one assumption is that the teacher will help insure that the child receives the proper therapeutic treatment to supplement classroom programs. The classroom teacher has no control of medications given to their students. Only a recommendation of seeing a doctor can be suggested.

What are the other Behavior Disorders?

In addition to the three identified disruptive behavior disorders, there are several other behavior disorders that include aggressiveness, depression, and mental illness. Aggressive children view the world as a hostile place. So these children usually do not have good social skills. They don’t know how to share, take turns,
cooperate, play games fairly, or express their feelings. Many aggressive children have been neglected and/or did not have caretakers who consistently met their emotional needs (Bloomquist, 1996). Many foster children grow into aggressive behaviors because of their early life experiences.

Is there hope for these children? According to Bloomquist (1996), many children with disruptive behavior disorders benefit from group therapy where they learn social and problem-solving skills. Research indicates that problem-solving training is only beneficial to children over 8 years old. This type of therapy is successful in reducing aggressive behavior, but not useful in improving the behavior of ADHD children because most of their behaviors are unintentional (Bloomquist, 1996).

What is helpful for children with ADHD? Bloomquist (1996) believes that psycho stimulants are effective. He states that about 70-75% of ADHD children respond positively to them. Medications, such as methylphenidate, dextroamphetamine, or premoline have shown to be effective in improving on-task behavior, academic productivity, social interactions, and parent-child interactions.
Recently, clonidine has been shown to reduce hyperactive and aggressive behaviors in ADHD children.

In 1997, in Seattle, Washington, a six-year-old foster child died from drug poisoning. The newspaper headlines read: "Drugging foster kids is cheaper than therapy". Many doctors routinely prescribed tranquilizers, mood-altering drugs, anti-anxiety drugs, and anti-depressants to foster children with a Behavior Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder, or Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder. They assumed a drug or several drugs would reduce the symptoms. And if they don't work, they would routinely increase the dosage. The causes of their disorders were left untreated, so many of these foster children became drug addicts, alcoholics, juvenile delinquents, or mentally ill and were unable to live normal adult lives (Stannard, 1997).

Foster children with behavior disorders usually do not get help until they are in the Foster Care System. Their biological parents usually will not seek help for them in fear of drawing attention to their home lives. Not knowing and/or not caring why their child is displaying abnormal behaviors delays the child from getting the help needed.
Financial difficulties and poor parenting skills are also contributing factors for these children not getting the help needed to overcome their problems. But after entering Foster care unnecessary drugging should not be a common practice.

What do most Foster children with behavior disorders need? According to Stannard (1997), they need to be taken off all junk foods and have improved nutrition. They need treatment for their neglected medical and dental problems. They need to be given love, and a healthy lifestyle with plenty of fresh air and exercise and a good school program.

What is a good school program? Before I answer that question and address what methods, lessons, and procedures can be used to help these children in need, I want to present the first five stage of Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development. This theory will help us to see what stage the child is at and what is needed to help them grow emotionally and socially. An overview of the first five steps of Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Developments shown in Table 1.
Table 1. The First Five Steps of Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>STAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-12 Months</td>
<td>Trust vs. mistrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant depends on adult For all needs.</td>
<td>Emergence of hope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
<td>Autonomy vs. shame and doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child asserts independence From adult.</td>
<td>Emergence of will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 Years</td>
<td>Initiative vs. guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child undertakes relationships In play.</td>
<td>Emergence of purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 Years</td>
<td>Industry vs. inferiority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child accomplishes tasks in school.</td>
<td>Emergence of competence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>Identity vs. identity confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent or youth defines Sexual and occupational roles.</td>
<td>Emergence of fidelity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Educational Psychology: Learning to be a Problem Solver. Wakefield, 1996
What are the Stages of Psychosocial Development Theory?

According to Erikson’s Theory, the first year of life is extreme dependency of an infant on another person for food, cleanliness, assurance, and love. A child tends to trust a responsive caretaker (often the mother), but distrust one who does not respond adequately on demand. As long as mistrust does not predominate, conflicting experiences of trust and mistrust are positively resolved through hope, which is a confident expectation that needs will be met (Wakefield, 1996). Looking at this stage of development, how many children in the foster care system received enough trust to develop hope? Many children do not achieve trust often enough due to poor child-rearing practices and/or neglect. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2000), which is consistent with Erikson’s theory, to develop into a psychologically healthy human being, a child must have a relationship with an adult who is nurturing, protective, and fosters trust and security.

The next stage, ages one through three years old, Erikson calls “early childhood” and is marked by the assertion of self. The toddler develops a sense of will by
learning independence. Autonomy means independence. Shame results from violating the expectations of parents, and if shame predominates, it can result in self-doubt. The conflicting experiences of autonomy and shame are positively resolved through the emergence of a sense of will, which motivates development of a point of view, an opinion, or a particular kind of behavior in response to social conditions (Wakefield, 1996). The previous description of the typical upbringing of Foster care children indicates a likelihood that self-doubt would develop.

The next stage, ages three through six years old, is Initiative versus Guilt which involves children learning to be more cooperative within the family unit. At this stage, children often want to help or do things on their own. Initiative implies insistence on achieving a goal, and the pleasure of the conquest. Guilt is experienced if adults too frequently block a child’s initiative, and predominant guilt can lead to inhibition. The internal conflict is positively resolved by the child through the development of purpose for action (Wakefield, 1996). Many Foster children give up trying at this stage. That is the reason that they
need to have positive reinforcements to take the risks of trying new things. They need to feel secure enough to take chances, instead of giving up, and thinking that they cannot do it. They need to break down the barriers of negativity and hopelessness.

The next stage is Industry versus Inferiority. In the elementary grades, children should come to feel competent. Industry means "a love to learn as well as to play". Children can feel a sense of inferiority when comparing themselves with others, but normally, the crisis is resolved through growing competence derived through accomplishments (Wakefield, 1996). Instead of gaining competence during this time, many Foster children only feel worse about themselves and more insecure as they age.

The last stage of the childhood stages of development is Identity versus Identity Confusion stage. The identity crisis is a characteristic of adolescence. Identity confusion is normal, but if it predominates, it can lead to rejection of any socially acceptable role or development of a negative identity. The positive resolution to the adolescent's identity crisis is the ability to sustain chosen commitments, which is called fidelity (Wakefield,
Many Foster children struggle with identity confusion because of the upheaval in their lives and their insecurities. According to Anderson (1996), teachers have been shown to have a unique position in assisting their students in finding their self-identity.

Erikson believed that a stage that an individual did not positively resolve should be dealt with therapeutically with an emphasis on the individual gaining insight that would result in behavioral change. He did not believe in trying to change the behavior directly (Anderson, 1996). Which means that problems or personal difficulties keeping the individual from developing need to be solved before the individual can advance to the next stage of development. For many Foster children, a new loving, nurturing home is still not enough. So for many of them, therapy is needed to help them regain what they lost in their troubled upbringings.

After Erikson developed the Theory of Psychosocial Development, an important extension of a psycho educational model was developed as a self-control training curriculum. It was developed by S.A. Fagen, N.J. Long, and D. J. Stevens in 1975. Their strategy uses instructional units
to teach students primarily skills, such as how to focus attention, anticipate consequences, and tolerate frustration. Their instructional units target areas that can help Foster care children learn the skills that they are lacking in an educational setting (Wakefield, 1996).

What can Teachers do to Help their Foster Care Students Achieve Success in School?

First, the teacher needs to provide these children with a positive learning environment. This will enable the foster child to be successful. Both the teacher and the child do not want the experience to be one of dread and frustration. According to Anderson (1996), the teacher has been shown to be influential in the motivation of students, and has a unique position to assist the student in finding their self-identity. Teachers need to recognize the impact they can have on their students’ lives, and they need to accept this responsibility by acting in the child’s best interest.

Foster children displaying abnormal behavior do not have a dysfunction which has overtaken their normal personality development. Rather a failure to receive or profit from various learning experiences can account for
their behavior. Teachers are influential in manipulating everyday lessons, curriculum, role plays, and the instructional environment to provide these Foster care children with the positive experiences that can result in desired social behaviors and moral development (Anderson, 1996).

The primary concern of all teachers should be to help students achieve success in school. In order to effectively accomplish this, many students need an integrated program based on the student’s specific educational and emotional needs. Foster children often need a program that promotes personal growth in the areas of self-esteem development, self-control, self-responsibility, direction, and academic achievement. The ultimate goal of humanity is to be happy. Although happiness is extremely difficult to analyze, the effectiveness of the interventions designed should improve the child’s life (Kennedy, 2002).

The primary cause of most misbehavior for children with serious behavioral disorders is revenge. The student is acting out of hostility against everyone. He/she is successful at instilling fear in people and destroying
property. This covers up and/or distracts the teacher from his/her many other failures in school. These actions would typically come from a child who has ODD or CD. This student is feeling a great deal of pain and frustration. He/she feels that they are the outsider and do not belong. This student needs to be recognized for any positive behavior. The student must be given opportunities to be trusted and must be recognized when a task is done well. Many times the destroyer wants to get caught. Confronting adults makes him/her feel powerful. Trust is a part of being in control of self. If this person feels he/she is trusted, he/she may begin to make decisions not to destroy ("Behavior," 2002). Winning your trust, he/she is building autonomy. Autonomy is the second stage in Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development.

Long lectures focusing on why the student has been destructive accomplish very little. Instead, talk about what is happening. Then, present the student with a definite plan that includes restitution. Talk about the issue. Always let the student tell you what his/her problem is. This student is probably hurting badly in some way ("Behavior," 2002).
Building trust is very important to Foster children because most of them have not learned to trust others yet. Even if they received love and nurturing from their biological parents, that sense of trust could have been destroyed when they were taken from their parents and placed into the Foster Care System. These children do not know who to trust.

They can be filled with anger and resentment towards everyone. A good way of building trust is arranging for the student to have a buddy. This buddy can be a member of the faculty, perhaps the custodian. This person should not be judgmental of the student, and should be a good listener (McEvoy & Welker, 2000). Remember the objective of this relationship is to build trust between the Foster care student and an adult.

Schools can help Foster care students develop resiliency by providing positive and safe learning environments. By recovering their personal strength and spirit, Foster children have a more positive view of their lives. An adult buddy can provide a sense of belonging and send the message that the youth is valued for his/her abilities (McEvoy & Welker, 2000).
According to Powers (1980), there is no universal formula for dealing with children during these critical developmental stages. What one must remember is that children are not 'little adults' but human beings in the process of growth and development. As such they do not perceive the world and its experiences, and are not equipped to do so, in the same way as adults. Their equipment is incomplete, and therefore their perceptions and feelings about many things are quite different from ours. They are fragile, yet plastic (Powers, 1980).

When dealing with sexually victimized children, trust is certainly an issue, particularly with adult figures. There are many powerful emotions experienced by a child who has been sexually abused. Feelings of guilt and responsibility for what has transpired are common. Clinicians are convinced that sexual abuse of the parent-child category can result in long-term effects on the child's self-esteem (Malchiodi, 1990). Reversing the effects of this kind of abuse requires long term intervention and treatment by a therapist.

Teachers can create a safe and secure learning environment. Teachers can also accept the child for who he
or she is. Try not to show surprise or angry at the child when he/she is expressing their feelings through drawing. Drawing pictures is a common expression or release of their inner most feelings. The child needs to know that people care about them without being sexual. Having a sexually abused child in your classroom can be a very sensitive situation. Be sure to make the appropriate referrals to the site counselor or to the district personnel. The child can also express anger if he/she does not think that their teacher is intervening or helping. Drawing, painting, working with clay, and the use of puppets provide abused children a means to act out angry feelings (Malchiodi, 1990).

If the child has just been taken out of an unhealthy and cruel environment, and placed into Foster care, the classroom teacher can help to start the healing process. But the teacher should not be expected to handle the situation alone. First, the teacher needs to start the pre-referral procedure. The teacher will need to identify the problem, gather any helpful information, and make special modifications to the classroom environment and instruction (Wakefield, 1996). The teacher should make a
referral to special services. Remember that the child knows that they need help. A committee should be formed to decide whether or not the child has a disability that interferes with school learning.

The teacher may experience long periods of time when no assistance is rendered. Or if you are lucky, the committee, the school psychologist, the school counselor, the Foster parents, and/or the social worker may devise a plan to help you cope with the problems that are foreseeable in the future. No matter how much outside support the teacher might receive, the teacher must deal with the child on a daily basis.

In 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized to require the IEP team to consider using Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) to address behavior that impedes the child's learning and/or the learning of others. PBS is an approach that is characterized by long-term strategies to reduce inappropriate behavior, teach more appropriate behavior, and provide contextual supports necessary for successful outcomes (Kamps et al., 1995). In addition, IDEA requires that a functional behavioral assessment be conducted for a
student either before or not later than 10 days after a disciplinary action. A functional behavioral assessment (FA) ensures that the student’s behavioral intervention plan is designed to meet that child’s unique needs (Kamps et al., 1995).

FA and PBS have been shown to be effective in assisting students with challenging behaviors (Kamps et al., 1995). A referral must be made by the teacher to put PBS and FA into action. So do not ignore serious behavioral problems. Write the referral and request that the IEP team considers using PBS. PBS requires that services and programs are responsive to needs of the student (Kamps et al., 1995).

Some of the interventions of a PBS that are commonly prescribed following a FA include:

1. Increase teacher praise and reinforcement for appropriate behavior and peer interaction.
2. Decreased teacher attention for inappropriate or negative behavior.
3. More structure in classroom routines and rules.
4. Direct instruction of appropriate behavior and social rules.
5. Use of behaviorally appropriate role models.
6. Consistent, frequent reinforcement of prosocial behaviors.
7. Incidental teaching and reinforcement of appropriate behaviors; redirection of antisocial behaviors (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997).

Through appreciating positive behaviors and teaching new skills, a teacher can help students achieve many goals of appropriate behavior. A teacher cannot change the past experiences of their students, they can only look at the present and provide an exciting opportunity to be successful (Anderson, p. 32). Remember that their behavior is a result of their background and no fault of their own. Knowing how to respond and being confident that you can handle upcoming situations will decrease your anxiety and your feelings of frustration.

When teaching students with behavior problems, explain the positive behaviors you expect of them, not what you want them to stop doing. Also understand that behaviors are forms of communication. Often students use inappropriate actions to get attention, or escape a situation, which gets their needs met (Berry, 1994).
Remain calm and in control. Make eye contact and use the student’s name. Listen to both sides of the story privately. Do not jump to conclusions. Try to arrive at a solution by consensus. Be fair. Remember that you need to gain trust from your students. Show respect to every student in the situation and their feelings.

The six following strategies will help your classroom stay more focused, and you will spend less of your instructional time on discipline.

1. Move around the room.
2. Teach social skills.
3. Have a sense of humor. By integrating your own sense of humor, the students will be able to bridge a friendship with the teacher. The more the teacher shares themselves with their students, the more fun they will have. Teachers can ease and lighten delicate situations by adding a silly complaint or response.
4. Do not take bad behavior personally.
5. Look for causes of discipline problems. It is important to ask questions about the source of the problem, so a solution can be found.
6. Promote student responsibility. Have the class make
the classroom rules. Teach the importance of contributing back to the class. Let the students work in groups and help each other (Henley, 1997).

According to G. Roy Mayer's research in 2001, an emphasis should be placed on teaching these youngsters how to behave, not just punishing them when they do not. He believes that an instructional approach should take the place of reactive, punitive approaches. Both academics and behavior problems are learned and respond to similar teaching strategies. Teachers should teach replacement behaviors. They should frequently teach lessons that result in students learning acceptable behaviors (p. 11).

Teaching values to children can resolve many of the problems teachers face on a daily basis. With the growing number of social problems and lack of respect demonstrated by many students, not only can the foster children benefit, but also the rest of the class can benefit. Many students lack the social skills necessary to relate positively to peers (Mayer, 2001). Some Foster children have not yet learned how to pay attention effectively, comply with requests, negotiate differences, handle criticism and teasing from peers, or make appropriate decisions.
Many times, Foster children who lack social skills are punished by their teachers rather than taught the necessary social skills (Mayer, 2001). There are a variety of social skills training strategies and problems available to teachers. There are many different curriculum units that have been written to assist teachers in working with students who have a history of being rejected by peers, or who have a history of being frequently punished at school.

Tolerance will vary from teacher to teacher and from day to day, but teachers must always do their best to meet the needs of students. Teachers should not be afraid to ask for support from staff members, foster parents, and social workers. Knowing the reason for the behavior problem can help teachers to understand what is happening and why. Learning the triggers to the bad behavior will help teachers to set up management strategies. Avoidance of these triggers will allow teachers to follow their lesson plans without losing instructional time dealing with the misbehaving child. Obviously, the classroom teacher cannot make all changes that are needed to manage all behavior problems in schools, but it is certainly the classroom teacher who is nearest to the problem of the
individual child (Stone, 1990, p.19). Remember that teachers and parents are the key educators in each child’s life.

Although there are many approaches to dealing with the Foster child in the classroom, much of the research agrees that teachers need to treat them with care and trust. Teachers can use an expression of affection, such as a smile, a friendly greeting, or a pat on the back. Teachers also need to use praise and to be fair. Sutherland, Wehby, and Yoder’s research in 2002 showed that teacher’s praise had positive effects on reading and math achievement. It also increased task engagement and decreased disruptions (p. 4). Teacher praise in primary grade students can have positive effects on academic outcomes and classroom behavior.

Fairness is also very important when responding to unacceptable behavior. Children will resist changing their bad behavior for a teacher who appears to be unfair. Teachers should remain calm and confident, and not lose their composure. An over-reaction is likely to increase stress and tension for the teacher and not have a positive effect on the child’s behavior (Stone, 1990, p.56).
Teachers must constantly be in touch with their own feelings. They must be aware when they are about to lose control of their temper. They should avoid yelling, threatening, or waving their finger at the students. They also should never use sarcasm, arguing, or lecturing as a means of dealing with students (Anderson, 1996).

Teachers can help the student learn how to verbalize emotions. Repetition, patience, and coaching are required for the student to learn acceptable ways to handle and express emotions. It is also important to help a child find an activity that will help to calm them down then they get upset. For example, they could draw, write, listen to music, exercise, take deep breaths, or put their head down (Bagwell, 2001). One-on-one discussion needs to happen on a daily basis. Teachers can help the child to make good decisions, or understand how their action was inappropriate. It is important to let the child know that it is okay to make a wrong choice. Everyone makes mistakes. Foster children need to feel that there is hope in their future.

Teachers should not let the situation between them and the Foster child with behavior problems take up too much of
their instructional time. The interesting, well-organized and empathetic teacher is more likely to stimulate and motivate children, solve problems quickly and fairly and meet the needs of the children in the class (Stone, 1990, p. 31). For these teachers, children seem more likely to work hard. Then by working hard, the children can see success and value in learning, which should be reinforced by a smile or other positive sign.

This success can lead to improvement in behavior and achievement. A negative response from the teacher when a child is doing his/her best can reinforce any feelings of inadequacy and frustration, resulting in the child reverting to disruptive behavior. Teachers can make it a personal challenge to help Foster care students overcome some of their difficulties. Teachers have the opportunity to be a changing factor in a Foster child’s life by showing the child that there is hope and that they are special, that they are loved, and that they do matter (Bagwell, 2001). So working diligently with these students can be a great contributing factor to their success in life.

Many Foster care children do not want anyone to know that they are in Foster care. Older Foster children
sometimes feel embarrassed and need to know that there are others in similar situations. A teacher can help to make the child feel that their living situation is common and accepted as normal. Perhaps students can share the make up of their families, showing that there are many different family arrangements. For example, there might be blended families, single parent families, gay parent families, grandparents raising their grandchildren, and/or other family members raising their younger siblings or their siblings' children.

Realizing that they are not the only children not living with their biological parents can help them to overcome the grief and guilt of not being with their parents. These discussions can help Foster children over their feelings of isolation. The benefits of these discussions, lessons, and activities cannot possibly be measured. Foster children and other students with ill feelings about the awkwardness of their living situation can start to overcome their shame from learning that others share the same feelings.

It is important for a teacher to incorporate literature and music that can help their students build
good character and citizen traits. All children can relate to stories and learn a lesson at the same time. Lessons can include friendship, honesty, positive self-esteem, and social skills. Fables that teach a moral can also be very helpful.

Teachers can assist in helping the children to build friendships by sitting the Foster children with a child who has a warm friendly empathic personality. Most classes usually have a couple of those extra helpful, understanding students. Remember that Foster children need lots of smiles, hugs, winks, and words of encouragement. According to Jodi Bagwell (2001), educators have the opportunity to be the changing factor in a Foster child’s life by showing the child that there is hope and that they are special, that they are loved, and that they do matter (p. 6).

Teachers can use outdoor activities in developing trust and social skills. Research done on outdoor education programs for behavior disordered students has shown positive results. Outdoor education means that the process of learning takes place outside. Outdoor education enables students and teachers to interact in an environment free from the limitations of the classroom where they may
already identify with failure (Walker et al., 1996). Most curriculum areas can be taught outdoors. Many science lessons are more apt to the outdoor learning environment.

Outdoor education has shown to improve self-concept, social adjustment, academic achievement, and group cohesion. Outdoor programs can be simple activities at the school site or can be lengthy wilderness camping experiences. Nature study and environmental education have shown to be effective learning experiences for behavior disordered students (Walker et al., 1996).

It is no easy task to help these students work through their inappropriate behaviors, but remember that it is not their fault. They are most certainly the victim. By providing encouragement and trust, teachers can help re-do the childhoods that some Foster care children have lost.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

The goal of this project is to explore effective strategies and principles for teaching Foster care students with behavioral problems in kindergarten through sixth grade classrooms. Specifically, I will develop a handout with strategies and techniques for elementary teachers working with Foster care students, and will develop a curriculum unit for Foster care students consistent with the principles in the handout.

In this chapter, I will outline the methodology that will be used to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of the handout and the curriculum unit. The methodology will consist of four components: (1) develop a handout and a curriculum unit, (2) develop and administer a checklist of observable behaviors to measure the effectiveness of the strategies and the curriculum unit with a couple Foster care students, (3) develop and administer an assessment for the effectiveness of the developed curriculum unit implemented in a class, and (4) conduct open-ended interviews with three experienced elementary school
teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies and techniques included in the handout and the curriculum unit.

The handout will be developed by summarizing the major points in the Review of Literature. The Review of Literature will discuss the following topics: (1) What are the different kinds of abuse that Foster care children tend to experience? (2) What are the three types of disruptive behavior common in Foster children? (3) What are the characteristics and causes of the three types of disruptive behaviors? (4) Are there methods to help children overcome disruptive behaviors? (5) What are some other types of behavior disorders? (6) What are the stages of the Psychological Development Theory that are required for children to develop into healthy adults? (7) Can Foster children be helped through gaining insight on their developmental stage and their personal setbacks? (8) What can teachers do to help their Foster care students achieve success in school? The handout will focus on the strategies and techniques found to be useful in teaching Foster care students with behavioral problems. The handout will be developed to be used as a quick classroom resource.
for teachers; therefore, the handout will be no more than ten pages.

The curriculum unit will focus on the building of values and social skills. It will be developed by using reflection points from the book, Living Values: An Educational Program. The unit will be designed to develop personal, social, emotional, and cooperative social skills. The unit will be able to be taught to all elementary students, but the teaching strategies and methods of support will be consistent with the needs of children in Foster care.

The second step of the methodology is completing an Observable Behaviors Checklist for each Foster Care student. I will write the checklist by selecting behaviors that I had previously observed in Foster care students. The checklist of observable behaviors will be developed to gather information regarding students’ behaviors in a school setting. The checklist will include a wide scope of misbehaviors that can be targeted for improvement. The checklist will be shown to a professor for feedback. The checklist will be administered for each student in Foster care the first day of class, then again after the
strategies are used and the moral/values curriculum unit is taught. The results of this step of the methodology will be summarized.

The third step of the methodology is to write an assessment to give to the students to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum unit, including their character growth, what they learned, and what they thought was important. I will pick key objectives of the unit and I will ask clear questions. The assessment will invite the students to share their thoughts and feelings. The assessment should take about thirty minutes. It should measure the overall effectiveness of the curriculum unit.

The fourth step of the methodology is to have three teachers read and evaluate the effectiveness of the handout and the curriculum unit. After they have spent some time reading and reviewing the materials, I will conduct an open-ended, in-depth interview with each of the teachers. The interviews will be used to gather descriptive data about their perceptions concerning sources of support they use while teaching Foster children with behavioral problems. The interviews will be used to determine if the teachers believe that Foster children can benefit from
being taught the values and social skills curriculum unit. The interviews will also confirm or deny the value of use of the strategies and techniques described in the handout. The results of the interviews will be summarized.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS OF THE METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and techniques for teaching Foster care students with behavioral problems. I implemented a methodology consisting of the following steps: (1) developing a handout for teachers and a curriculum unit focusing on the behavior and social skills improvement of Foster children with behavioral problems, (2) creating a checklist of observable behaviors that can be targeted for improvement, (3) developing an assessment to evaluate their character growth, what they learned, and what they thought was important in the curriculum unit, and (4) conducting open-ended, in-depth interviews with teachers who evaluated the usefulness of the handout and curriculum unit when working with Foster children with behavioral problems.

In this chapter, I will discuss the results of implementing the methodology in my classroom. The chapter has been divided into four parts addressing each part of the methodology.
Part I

The first step of the methodology was concerned with the handout and the curriculum unit. I developed a handout with strategies and techniques for teaching Foster care children with behavioral problems. The handout was developed by summarizing the major points in the Review of Literature. It included a list of Changes Needed for Foster Care Children with Behavior Disorders and a list of Techniques and Strategies that Teachers Can Use in their classrooms. The handout is in Appendix D.

I developed a curriculum unit designed to develop personal, social, emotional, and cooperative skills. The unit encouraged the students to think, look at consequences, and to develop emotional awareness. The curriculum unit offered a variety of experiential activities and stories to help the children explore and develop personal and social values. I believe a partial solution to resolving social and behavioral issues is an emphasis on teaching values. Teaching values can result in students being more respectful to others, and show an increase in positive and cooperative personal and social skills. My aim was to deepen their understanding,
motivation, and responsibility with regards to improving their behavioral choices. Teaching all the lessons in the curriculum unit can be most useful, but picking a few can also be helpful, if you have a specific objective to teach. The curriculum unit is in Appendix E.

Part II

The second step of the methodology was concerned with the Checklist of Observable Behaviors (in Appendix A) that I had developed. I filled out the Checklist of Observable Behaviors. The checklist was written to gather information regarding a wide scope of misbehaviors that can be targeted for improvement. I observed each student several times during the day, both in class and at recess to complete the checklist of observable behaviors. Both student participants were fourth graders. The checklist helped to make the needs of the students quite clear.

The student participants of this study were one fourth grade Caucasian male student and one fourth grade Mexican-American female student. No background information was given about the length of time either student had been in Foster care, or the reason why they were in Foster care.
Filling out the checklist on the male student was much easier for me than the female. The most identifiable behaviors that he displayed were physical and verbal. He had two offenses of hitting another student and one offense of using bad language on the playground. He seems to have a very short temper. In the classroom, he finished his work extremely quickly, resulting in many errors. He shouted out three times without raising his hand, and his comments were not on the subject being discussed. He has one good friend, but he does not get along with many of the other students. He also wants to go to the nurse often, although nothing seems to be wrong with him. He has a desire to work with the computer. I believe that he was just trying to escape from doing his work. During cooperative group time, he participated very well, but he did not like anyone to disagree with him. He liked being in control, but he was not very nice to the other students.

The female student participant was extremely quiet. She barely spoke at all. She did her work on her own without talking to others. If she had a question, she would come and ask me. She would finish her work, and do a good job. During cooperative group time, she just sat
quietly. She only responded when asked a question. Her answer was usually short. I could tell that she felt most comfortable when working on her own. She was not friendly to other classmates at recess. She stayed by herself most of the time. She just walked around the playground, and did not join others playing. She did not seem to have a close friend. She seemed sad and lonely. She seemed distant and withdrawn. I do not remember seeing her smile.

The Observable Behaviors Checklist helped me to look at the needs of these two Foster children. Using the techniques, strategies, and guidelines that I researched, while teaching the values and social skills unit, I created a moral community in my classroom. Treating students with love and respect encouraged them to change their behaviors towards one another. I used cooperative learning to encourage teamwork, responsibility, and respect for different viewpoints. I taught strategies for resolving conflicts fairly.

After a month of having these Foster children in my classroom, I filled out the Observable Behaviors Checklist on each child again. The male student's academic work did not improve much. He still finished his work quickly. But
he did offer to help those students that wanted his assistance. He treated others more kindly and seemed to be friendlier to students outside his realm of close friends. He also became a better problem solver. He did not get into much trouble on the playground, and he stopped fighting.

The female student made some improvement in participating in class. She opened up a little more. She made two close friends in class. During cooperative group time, she showed more interest and worked better with her group. She even began to smile once in while. One day, she came up and gave me a hug at dismissal time.

So the Observable Behaviors Checklist made me aware of the problem behaviors that each student was experiencing. The focal point of the project was to provide strategies and methods for teaching Foster children. The apparent changes in the students' behaviors proved to be positive. The need for continued support is crucial for these students to be successful.

After only a month, both students' behaviors improved. Some of the results were dramatic, and some seemed to be in the process of were developing slowly. But
the overall results were gratifying to me. The checklists showed measurable changes in both participants. To be most effective, the values and behaviors that they learned need to be continuously reinforced. I hope that their next teachers will implement a character education curriculum or do lessons on morals and virtues. The strategies, techniques, and lessons taught in such a unit could help to preserve the principles and ideals of good citizenship. The use of good literature can also help the children to gain a deeper understanding of individual responsibility and social behavior. Within these books are ways for children to think through important issues, respect alternative views, and meet characters who model values which all citizens recognize and cherish.

Part III

The third step of the methodology was concerned with an assessment. After the curriculum unit was taught, an assessment was given to all of the students. The assessment is in Appendix B. The assessment was used to evaluate their character growth, what they learned, and what they thought was important. I developed the
assessment by picking key objectives of the unit. The questions were as follows: (1) The most important thing that I learned about life during this unit was... (2) After having these learning experiences, I have changed my thoughts about... (3) After experiencing this curriculum unit, I have respect for... (4) My favorite activity was... (5) I have the following responsibilities: (6) The most important thing that I learned about myself is.... The six questions were clear to students. The assessment took about thirty minutes. The assessment invited the students to share their thoughts and feelings. The students felt comfortable doing the assessment. They worked individually without asking many questions. The assessment addressed the overall effectiveness of the unit.

The assessment was given to 21 students. One student was an African American girl, and the rest were Hispanic students. Looking at the assessment, I drew many conclusions about what the students remembered most and what lessons made the greatest impact. The results of the assessment showed that the most important things that they learned about life during this unit were respecting themselves (5 votes), being peaceful (6 votes), being
responsible (3 votes), and handling anger (2 votes). They had many different answers for what had changed in their thoughts. The answers ranged from being mean (2 votes), being loving (3 votes), not respecting myself (3 votes), peace (2 votes), being friendly (2 votes), respecting others and responsibility (1 vote each). They had respect for themselves (8 votes), parents (7 votes), teacher (6 votes), others (6 votes), friends (4 votes), God (1 vote), and peace (1 vote). Their overall favorite activity was the story "Fire in the Jungle" (5 votes), then the stories "Lily the Leopard" (3 votes) and "The Two Birds" (3 votes) and "The Heart School" (3 votes). Their responsibilities included cleaning their room (7 votes), doing the best in school (4 votes), and helping their parents (5 votes). Respecting myself (11 votes) was voted the most important thing that they learned about themselves. Second was being good (4 votes), then third was that we are all different.

The students were not graded on the assessment so they could feel free to express their feelings without any pressure. The mood of the students after experiencing this curriculum unit was very positive.
The male participant was absent on the day of the assessment, so he did not take the assessment. I would have liked to see the results of his assessment, but he was absent for an extended time. According to him, he was on vacation. I am not sure what his Foster mother told the office clerk.

The female participant wrote that the most important thing that she learned was to respect herself. She also wrote that she has changed her thoughts about not respecting herself. She wrote that after experiencing this curriculum unit, she has respect for herself and everything else. So I can clearly see that she realized that one of her weaknesses was in the area of respect for both herself and others.

Her favorite activities included stories that I read to the class. The moral of both stories dealt with respect. One of the stories was about a leopard with pink spots who lacked self-respect, and the other story was about a little bird’s respect for the jungle. Her answers to the questions on the assessment show that the unit helped her to develop respect for nature, herself, classmates, and others.
The most important thing that she learned about herself is to do everything well. Her primary responsibility is to keep her room clean. So after being taught this unit on values, she appeared to be more respectful and she exhibited positive and cooperative personal and social skills.

Part IV

The final step of the methodology was the teacher interviews. After the curriculum unit was taught and all the assessments were completed, I started the interviews. The open-ended, in-depth interviews were used to gather descriptive data about the teachers' perceptions of sources of support they used while teaching Foster care children with behavioral problems. I also wanted the three teachers to evaluate the usefulness of the curriculum unit and the handout. The interviews were used to determine if the teachers felt that Foster care children could benefit from being taught the values and social skills curriculum unit.

The questions that I wrote for the teacher interviews were open-response questions to obtain data on how the teachers perceive their classroom behavior difficulties and
how they explain their actions or make sense of the challenging events in their classrooms. The interview questions are in Appendix C.

I used a standardized open-ended interview in which the participants were asked the same questions in the same order, and I gave each teacher ample time to answer. The interviews were informal and conversational. I wanted an open, honest interview.

The teacher participants were three K-5 grade teachers presently employed in a southern California public school district. All of the teacher participants were experienced tenured teachers. Each teacher had different personality traits. Each had different teaching styles. So I was looking forward to different perceptsives on the teaching strategies and techniques for Foster children with behavioral problems. I was also looking for other useful information from their experiences.

The purpose of the interviews was to obtain present perceptions, feelings, fears, techniques, and strategies of these teachers when dealing with Foster children in their classrooms. I also wanted to clarify future expectations and anticipated concerns of the teachers in this area.
Each interview took approximately ninety minutes. The interviews were completed one-on-one. Two interviews were conducted in a restaurant setting, and the third was conducted in a classroom. The interviews were conducted in a conversational tone to encourage elaboration of the participant's understandings and opinions. The primary data from the interviews was hand written. Immediately following the interviews, I typed up the answers and comments of each teacher. Then I wrote an interview elaboration of each interview session.

I summarized the responses and results of each interviewee, one at a time. With the interview process being conversational, the interviewees shaped the interview by focusing on the questions and topics of importance or of interest to them.

The first interviewee was a first grade teacher from Fontana Unified School District. She has taught for twelve years. We conducted the interview at a restaurant in San Bernardino. For the interview, I dressed in normal teacher attire. I was friendly, relaxed, and pleasant.

Before asking the questions, I briefly explained the purpose of the interview and ask whether she had any
questions or concerns. Then I started asking the questions directly from my list. Her answers were brief, but well thought through.

She (interviewee #1) found the handout extremely helpful in providing strategies and techniques in dealing with Foster children. It gave her a better understanding of why some Foster children display disruptive behaviors. She would add the following strategies to the list: teach your procedures, have structure, and be very conscious of your classroom arrangement. She would use the handout as a reference in the future because of the information about the different behaviors displayed and their causes. She found the points about building trust very beneficial.

She found that explaining the positive behaviors expected, not dwelling on what behaviors need to be eliminated to be the most useful strategy when working with Foster children with behavior problems. She found that taking the time to reteach appropriate behavior is time well spent. Teaching values can help students to realize their actions that needs change without being judgmental.

She believes that using literature to teach a new understanding of a moral or value can be a valuable tool
when the students have a difficulty perceiving that their behavior is not just or appropriate. Students may gain a better understanding of the concept being taught. Foster children often need to develop self control and responsibility. Lessons with the support of literature can help Foster children with behavior problems gain insight in areas that need change.

She (interviewee #1) said that she would teach the curriculum unit and refer back to the handout when working with Foster children with behavior problems. She would try to be more understanding and have patience with her Foster care students. She concluded that she realized that building trust has a significant importance in the development of positive behavior.

The second interviewee was a fifth grade teacher from San Bernardino City Unified School District. She has taught for six years. The interview also took place in a restaurant. The atmosphere was cheery and light. She is a very casual person. Her attitudes and outlook was much different than Interviewee #1. She was also much younger than Interviewee #1. She is single and has no children of her own.
She explained that teaching social skills provides a stable environment for the students. She believes in much oral communication between the students and the teacher. She makes great efforts in trying to relate to her students and their personal needs. After discussions or lessons, she allows the students to reflect on their feelings in their journals. This is the time she promotes individual outlets for their personal beliefs. She relates to her students well and tries to understand the personal views and opinions of her students. She tries to be accepting, yet she addresses areas of concern on a one-on-one basis. She uses compliments to decrease students’ misbehaviors.

Interviewee #2 said that she would definitely use the handout as a reference when she is teaching Foster children with behavior problems in the future. She has already given a copy of the handout and the curriculum unit to a fellow teacher who has ten Foster children currently in her class. The fellow teacher is in her first year of teaching. The new teacher was very grateful for the materials.

Interviewee #2 found the strategy of assigning a buddy to the Foster child the most useful strategy. She feels that having a buddy is a good motivator for the child to build
trust. The librarian, the custodian, a cafeteria worker can all be a positive companion for a child in need. Putting the needy child in a different non-threatening, non-judgmental environment allows the child to develop trust and self-esteem. She added that it is not a good idea to take away privileges from Foster children with behavior problems. This can destroy any progress that you are making.

Interviewee #2 didn’t believe that teaching the values/morals curriculum unit would improve the students’ morals, values, and behavior. She believes that teaching a moral or value is only necessary as a situation arises. She feels that there are different problems for different age groups of children. She believes that teaching the curriculum unit to younger students can make an impact, but not for fifth graders. She states that her students face problems like sexual harassment, rumors, and jealousy. She must take immediate action when the infraction happens. She only can hope that the Foster child has some previous moral teachings.

Although Interviewee #2 doesn’t believe that the morals/value curriculum unit would be beneficial to fifth
grade students, she does believe that literature can be useful. Teaching a moral or a value through literature provides an example which can expand understanding. Reading a story can supplement a lesson, lecture, or class discussion. Literature can also broaden their views and spark their interests. Foster children with behavior problems may need many examples before acceptance of their wrongdoings.

Interviewee #2 believes that reading the handout and curriculum unit will affect the way she feels about Foster children. She feels that the teacher needs to make the child care. If the teacher can make the child care, then they will see positive results. Role playing with the students can help them monitor their own behavior, but the behaviors will only change if the child cares. She finished the interview by saying that she truly enjoyed reading the materials, and she thought that they were great.

Interview #3 was a second grade teacher from Fontana Unified School District. She has taught for nine years. The interview took place in her classroom. The class was neat and well organized. The atmosphere was more formal.
Interviewee #3 was sophisticated and well dressed. She answered the questions directly and stayed focused on the topic. Her interactions with her students seemed much different than the previous interviewees, but her answers were very similar.

Interviewee #3 found the technique of finding the root of the problem rather than dealing with the issues to be most helpful for her. Investigating the child’s background to discover the needs of an individual student can be helpful in making the necessary changes for the child to develop and change. Interviewee #3 believes in making a counselor referral as soon as she realizes that the Foster child has a behavioral problem or an emotional problem.

She added that more time should be spent with a disruptive child during recess, and not during instructional time. She feels that the whole class should not be held up from learning while she is dealing with the Foster child’s misbehaviors. Her reactions to difficult situations is to remove the child or children from the room until she has time to make the appropriate decision.

Interview #3 says that she would use the handout as a reference when teaching Foster children in the future. She
feels that the handout helped her to realize what circumstances can cause Foster children to behave abnormally. It helped her to see that every Foster child can have different needs. Most importantly, the handout made her think about the importance of her own actions when dealing with children.

Interviewee #3 believed that teaching the values/morals curriculum unit would improve the morals and values of students, and improve students' behavior. She feels that the time spent on the unit would be beneficial to every student. She thought that the objectives of the unit were very appropriate for her class. She said that she would teach the unit in the near future.

Interviewee #3 believes that the literature is the strongest component of the unit. She feels that the stories emphasize the concepts being taught in the lessons. She knows that her students will enjoy the stories and learn from the morals of the stories. She feels that teaching the unit will have a positive effect on their lives. She concluded by saying that she will use both the handout and the morals/values curriculum unit as a resource in her classroom.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this project was to research strategies and techniques beneficial in teaching Foster care children with behavioral problems. Specifically, the purpose was to develop a handout and a curriculum unit to assist teachers in understanding Foster care children and the beliefs that motivate their misbehavior and how to better teach them. The primary points of the handout were for teachers to (1) teach social skills, (2) provide a program that promotes personal growth in the areas of self-esteem development, self-control, and self-responsibility, (3) build trust, (4) create a safe and secure learning environment, and (5) make necessary referrals to special services.

The primary objective of the curriculum unit was to provide Foster care children with behavioral problems with positive lessons that can result in desired behaviors. The objectives of the lessons included peace, respect, conflict resolution, love, responsibility, cooperation, humility, and honesty.
The effectiveness of this project were measured by an observable behaviors checklist given to two Foster children, an assessment of the curriculum unit by the students, and teacher interviews concerning the effectiveness of the strategies included in the handout and the curriculum unit. The results of the checklist showed that the students' behavior had improved after only one month of the interventions. The results of the assessment showed that teaching the curriculum unit helped develop their social skills. Finally, the results of the teacher interviews collaborated the need of specialized strategies and techniques when teaching Foster care children with behavioral problems.

This study revealed that using various teaching strategies and techniques along with teaching a set moral curriculum can result in positive growth in Foster care children. The research supports the hypothesis that Foster care children can benefit from the strategies and techniques used by the participating teachers. Several types of support are essential for the children’s success during this critical time in their lives. This study described the strategies and techniques recommended for
teachers of Foster children in need. It provided information and a curriculum unit on moral and value development. The findings supported previous research regarding the needs of Foster children. The teachers that were interviewed shared their experiences vividly and candidly.

The positive changes in the Observable Behaviors Checklist revealed how quickly these children can show growth and development. The effectiveness of good strategies and techniques can change the expectations we have of children with problems. Teaching morals and values, whether directly or indirectly, can prove to be beneficial to the student, the teacher, and hopefully society.

The project demonstrated that one way to work effectively with Foster care students with behavioral problems is to model values in our interactions with the children. Children need to acquire new understandings and attitudes towards the attainment of morals and values. The values can include: obedience, honesty, cooperation, thoughtfulness, trust, generosity, responsibility, fairness, compassion, courage, citizenship, perseverance,
caring, and respect. Whether you target only a few values, morals, or behaviors, your personal teaching goals and learning objectives can be met. The concept can be revisited when a situation arises when it is needed.

One partial solution to the dilemma of how to teach Foster children with behavior problems lies in treatment of each individual child. The flexibility and consideration of the teacher can create new possibilities for these children to be successful. There is no method that is a cure-all for teaching Foster children with behavioral problems, and improving their behaviors takes much hard work. Teachers will encounter many difficulties in teaching, and I hope that the results of this project will be helpful to educators working with Foster care students with behavioral problems. I hope that I have helped teachers by anticipating and resolving difficulties that they might experience in their context.

One limitation of this project is that it targeted primarily primary grade children. Moral reasoning changes as a child matures. What might work for a younger child may not work for an early adolescent. For example, the interview of the fifth grade teacher indicated that the
methods used for the fourth graders in this project may need to be adjusted for older students. This fifth grade teacher used interpersonal dilemmas about such issues as jealously, conflict resolution, and end of friendships, when such problems arose as the appropriate time for teaching moral and value development. The greatest change that I can identify within my findings was the lack of addressing specific behaviors. More research is needed to gather information to find solutions to everyday problems that can arise. Teachers can struggle with a wide range of misbehaviors that were not addressed in this project. Areas of concern can include bullying, cheating, clinging, foul language, spitting, tattling, and so on. This project did not identify common difficult behaviors that teachers can face when dealing with a Foster care child. Further research is needed to learn how to better address these possible misbehaviors.

On completing my research, I remain optimistic that Foster children with behavioral problems can be helped by a classroom teacher. I believe that children are increasingly affected by violence, growing social problems, and lack of respect for each other and the world around
them. Teaching the morals/values curriculum unit can be part of the solution to these problems. Since no single curriculum will meet the needs of all students, teachers should supplement with teacher-developed or teacher-modified lessons. The skills learned can directly improve the functioning of the Foster child and the quality of his or her life. Treating these children with dignity, respect, and having faith in their abilities can help them in every area of their lives.
APPENDIX A

COPY OF OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS CHECKLIST
Student's name_____________________________  Date____________________________

Observable Behaviors Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>seldom</th>
<th>normal</th>
<th>often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Finishes work  
2. Keeps hands and feet to themselves  
3. Uses bad words  
4. Hurts others  
5. Shouts out  
6. Participates in class  
7. Works well with others  
8. Pays attention  
9. Makes friends easily  
10. Displays confidence  
11. Stays on topic  
12. Smiles  
13. Shows affection  
14. Asks questions  
15. Shows interest  
16. Friendly  
17. Values learning  
18. Loses control of temper
APPENDIX B

COPY OF ASSESSMENT
Assessment

Student’s Name__________________________________________

1. The most important thing that I learned about life during this unit was....

2. After having these learning experiences, I have changed my thoughts about ...

3. After experiencing this curriculum unit, I have respect for...

4. My favorite activity was ...

5. I have the following responsibilities:

6. The most important thing I learned about myself is...
APPENDIX C

COPY OF QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER INTERVIEWS
Questions for Teacher Interviews

Interviewee’s Name____________________________________________

Date________________________

1. Do you find the strategies and techniques written in the handout helpful? Explain.

2. Do you have any strategies or techniques that you would suggest adding to the list?

3. Would you use the handout as a reference when teaching Foster children in the future? Explain.

4. Which techniques or strategies in the handout did you find most useful when working with Foster children with behavior problems?

5. Do you think that teaching the values/morals curriculum unit will improve the students’ morals and values, and improve students’ behavior?
6. Do you believe using the literature provided in the sample unit is valuable when teaching a new understanding of a moral or value? Explain.

7. After reading the handout and sample unit, do you feel that you would change how you will work with foster children with behavior problems?

8. If you were to use the handout and teach the sample unit to Foster children with behavior problems, do you feel that it would have a positive effect on their lives?

9. Any additional comments?
Teaching Foster Children with Behavioral Problems
Handout

Foster children displaying abnormal behavior do not necessarily have a dysfunction which has overtaken their normal personality development. Rather a failure to receive or profit from various learning experiences can account for their behavior. Teachers are influential in manipulating everyday lessons, role plays, and the instructional environment to provide these children with the positive things that can result in desired behaviors (Anderson, 1996).

The primary concern of all teachers should be to help students achieve success in school. In order to effectively accomplish this, many students need an integrated program based on the student's specific educational and emotional needs. Foster children often need a program that promotes personal growth in the areas of self-esteem development, self-control, self-responsibility, self-direction, and academic achievement. The ultimate goal of humanity is to be happy. Although happiness is extremely difficult to analyze, the effectiveness of the interventions designed should improve the child’s life (Kennedy, 2002).
The primary cause of most misbehavior is revenge. The student is acting out hostility against everyone. He/she is successful at instilling fear in people and destroying property. This makes up for his/her many other failures in school. This student is feeling a great deal of pain and frustration. He/she feels that they are on the outside of everything and everybody. This student needs to be recognized for any positive behavior. The student must be given opportunities to be trusted and must be recognized when a task is done well. Many times the destroyer wants to get caught. Confronting adults makes him/her feel powerful. Trust is a part of being in control of yourself. If this person feels he/she is trusted, he/she may begin to make decisions not to destroy (Behavior, 2002).

At first, long lectures about why the student has been destructive accomplish very little. Instead, talk about what is happening. Then, present the student with a definite plan that includes restitution. Talk about the issue. Always let the student tell you what his/her problem is. This student is probably hurting badly in some
way (Behavior, 2002). Addressing the problem and the solution can help the student learn by their mistakes.

Building trust is very important to Foster children because most of them have not learned it yet. Even if they received love and nurturing from their biological parents, that sense of trust could have been destroyed when they were taken from their parents and placed into the Foster Care System. These children do not know whom to trust. They can be filled with anger and resentment towards everyone. A good way of building trust is arranging for the student to have a buddy. This buddy can be a member of the faculty or other member or staff in school (e.g. the custodian.) This person should not be judgmental of the student, and should be a good listener. Remember the objective of this relationship is to build trust.

When dealing with sexually victimized children, trust has certainly been lost, particularly with adult figures. There may be many powerful emotions experienced by a child who has been sexually abused. Feelings of guilt and responsibility for what has transpired are common. Clinicians are convinced that sexual abuse of the parent-child category can result in long-term effects on the
child's self-esteem (Malchiodi, 1990). Reversing the effects of this kind of abuse require long term intervention and treatment by a therapist.

As the teacher, you can create a safe and secure learning environment. You can also accept the child for whom he or she is. Try not to show surprise or angry at the child when he/she is expressing their feelings through drawing. Drawing pictures is a common expression or a release of their innermost feelings. The child needs to know that you care about them without being sexual. Having a sexually abused child in your classroom can be a very sensitive situation. Be sure to make the appropriate referrals to the site counselor or to the district personnel. The child can also express anger if he/she does not think that you are intervening or helping. Drawing, painting, working with clay, and the use of puppets provide abused children a means to act out angry feelings (Malchiodi, 1990).

If the child has just been taken out of an unhealthy and cruel environment, and placed into Foster care, the classroom teacher can help to start the healing process. But the teacher should not be expected to handle the
situation alone. First, the teacher needs to start the pre-referral procedure. The teacher will need to identify the problem, gather any helpful information, and make special modifications to the classroom environment and instruction (Wakefield, 1996). The teacher should make a referral to special services. Remember that the child knows that they need help. A committee should be formed to decide whether or not the child has a disability that interferes with school learning. The teacher may experience long periods of time when no assistance is rendered. Or if you are lucky, the committee, the school psychologist, the school counselor, the Foster parents, and/or the social worker may devise a plan to help you cope with the problems that are foreseeable in the future. No matter how much outside support the teacher might receive, the teacher must deal with the child on a daily basis.

A teacher cannot change the past experiences of their students, they can only look at the present and provide an exciting opportunity to be successful (Anderson, p. 32). Remember that their behavior is a result of their background and no fault of their own. Knowing how to respond, and being confident that you can handle upcoming
situations will decrease your anxiety and your feelings of frustration.

When teaching students with behavior problems, explain the positive behaviors you expect of them, not what you want them to stop doing. Also understand that behaviors are forms of communication. Often students use inappropriate actions to get attention, or escape a situation, which gets their needs met (Berry, 1994). Remain calm and in control. Make eye contact and use the student’s name. Listen to both sides of the story privately. Do not jump to conclusions. Try to arrive at a solution by consensus. Be fair. Remember that you need to gain trust in your students.

The six following strategies will help your classroom stay more focused, and you will spend less of your instructional time on discipline.

1. Move around the room.
2. Teach social skills.
3. Have a sense of humor. By integrating your own sense of humor, the students will be able to bridge a friendship with the teacher. The more a teacher shares him/herself with his/her students, the more fun they will have.
4. Do not take bad behavior personally.

5. Look for causes of discipline problems. It is important to ask questions about the source of the problem, so a solution can be achieved.

6. Promote student responsibility. Have the class make the classroom rules. Teach the importance of contributing back to the class. Let the students work in groups and help each other (Henley, 1997).

Teaching values to children can resolve many of the problems teachers face on a daily basis. With the growing number of social problems and lack of respect demonstrated by most students, not only can the foster children benefit, but also the rest of the class. Many students lack the social skills necessary to relate positively to peers (Mayer, 2001). Some Foster children have not yet learned how to pay attention effectively, comply with requests, negotiate differences, handle criticism and teasing from peers, or make appropriate decisions.

Although there are many approaches in the ways of dealing with the Foster child in your classroom, much of the research agrees that you need to treat them with caring and trust. You can use an expression of affection, such as
a smile, a friendly greeting, or a pat on the back. You also need to use praise. Sutherland, Wehby, and Yoder's research in 2002, showed that teacher's praise had positive effects on reading and math achievement. It also increased task engagement and decreased disruptions (pg. 4). So teacher praise can have positive effects on both the academic outcome of a student and their classroom behavior.

Teachers have the opportunity to be a changing factor in a Foster child's life by showing the child that there is hope and that they are special, that they are loved, and that they do matter (Bagwell, 2001). So working diligently with these students can be a great contributing factor to their success in life. It is no easy task to help work through their inappropriate behaviors, but remember that it is not their fault. They are most certainly the victim.
Changes needed for Children with Behavior Disorders

1. improved nutrition
2. plenty of fresh air and exercise
3. learn to trust others
4. learn autonomy (independence)
5. reduce self-doubt
6. learn to be more cooperative within the family unit
7. positive reinforcements
8. feel secure enough to take chances (instead of giving up or not trying)
9. build self-esteem
10. feel more competent
11. group therapy

Techniques and Strategies that Teacher can Use

1. Teach social skills.
2. Role play (appropriate and inappropriate behaviors).
3. Read literature with moral content.
4. Provide a program that promotes personal growth in the areas of self-esteem development, self-control, and self-responsibility.
5. Recognize any positive behavior.
6. Give the child opportunities to be trusted.
7. Do not give long lectures about why the child has been destructive, instead talk about what is happening. Then present the child with a plan that includes restitution. Talk about the issue. Let the child tell you what his/her problem is.
8. Arrange a buddy for the child. This buddy can be a member of the faculty or staff (e.g. the custodian). This person should not be judgmental of the child, and should be a good listener. The objective of this relationship is to build trust.
9. Try not to act surprised or angry with the child.
10. Remain clam and in control.
11. Make eye contact and use the child’s name.
12. Listen to both sides of the story privately. Do not jump to conclusions. Try to arrive at a solution by consensus. Be fair.
13. Have a sense of humor.
14. Do not take bad behavior personally.
15. Look for causes of discipline problems. Find the source of the problem, so a solution can be reached.
16. Have the class make the classroom rules.
17. Use expressions of affection, such as smiles.
18. Give praise.
19. Make the appropriate referral for the child to receive extra support.
20. Promote student responsibility.
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APPENDIX E

CURRICULUM UNIT
If We Were All Peaceful

Introduction: Sing-- Teaching Peace all around the World

Teacher: Write these points on the board:

(Students write these points in their Learning Journal.)

*Peace is being quiet inside.

*Peace is calm and relaxed state of mind.

*Peace consists of positive thoughts, pure feelings, and good wishes.

Discuss/Share

Ask: If every single person in the world were peaceful inside, would this world be more peaceful? How?

Ask: What does peace feel like?

Introduce the Physical Relaxation exercise: Say, "Many people in the world today feel very stressed. Have you ever heard any adults say that they are stressed? Well, one of the ways to help get rid of stress and feel more peaceful is doing a Physical Relaxation exercise. When we get rid of some tension, we can be at our best. Let's try it."

Play some relaxing music.

Physical Relaxation Exercise
Say: “Sit comfortably... and relax... As you relax, let your body feel heavy and focus your attention on your feet... Tighten all your muscles for a moment... and then relax them... Let them stay relaxed... Now become aware of your legs, letting them be heavy... tightening the muscles... and then relaxing them... Now your stomach... Tighten the muscles for a moment... and then relax them... Free any tension... Be aware of your breathing, and let yourself breathe slowly and deeply... Breathe deeply, letting the air out slowly... Now tighten the muscles in your back and shoulders... and then relax them... Gently move your neck... first to one side, then the other... Relax the muscles... Now tighten the muscles of your face...your jaw... and then relax your face and your jaw. ... Let the feeling of well-being flow through your body... Focus again on breathing, taking in clear air, letting out any remaining tension... I am relaxed... in a state of well-being... and ready to be at my best.”

Closing Activity:

Have the students choose one color and draw peace.
Peace Slogans

Play the song: Teaching Peace

Discuss the Points:

*Peace must begin with each one of us. Through quiet and serious reflection on its meaning, new and creative ways can be found to foster understanding, friendships, and cooperation among all peoples.

*Peace is more than the absence of war.

*Peace is living in harmony and not fighting with others.

*Peace consists of positive thoughts, pure feelings, and good wishes.

*Peace begins within each one of us.

*To stay peaceful requires strength and compassion.

Activity:

Ask the students if they have other thoughts about peace. First, have them write the points in their Learning Journal. Then, have the class pick a slogan and make a poster to decorate the classroom and the school.

Closing:

If time permits, end with a relaxation exercise.
Peaceful Heroes

Review peaceful points written in their Learning Journals.

Activity: Have the student divide up in pairs and write a story about "The Peace Hero".

When they are finished, they can read their stories to the class.

Share and list "Characteristics of a Peace Hero or a Peacemaker".

Closing:

Have the students fold a plain white paper in half. On one half, have them draw peaceful colors and shapes, then on the other half draw angry colors and shapes.
Respect

Discuss/Share

* Who can tell me about respect?
* Who do you respect?
* Why is respect important?

Discuss the following points: (Have the students write the points in their Learning Journal.)

The first respect is to respect myself--to know that I am naturally valuable.

* Part of self-respect is knowing my own qualities.

Ask: *When do you feel good about yourself?
*When do you have a feeling of respect for yourself?

Confirm that when we do good things we feel good about ourselves.

Activity:

Ask: *What qualities do you admire in your friends?
*What qualities do you admire in your heroes (sport figures, performers)?

Brainstorm and list personal qualities (ex: being friendly, creative, gentle, witty, cooperative, confident, humble, loyal, sweet, loving, caring, sensible, honest,
artistic, patient, etc.) Then have them write 5 qualities that they have in their journals.

Closing:
Instruct the students to draw a picture of a time that they felt full of respect.
Write: “I am ____________________________”.
Respect Story

Read “Lily the Leopard” to the class. Then ask the following questions:

Why did they treat Lily without respect? (Lily was different.)

How did Lily feel when the others were mean to her?

How did the characters show disrespect?

How could the other characters shown respect?

How do children your age sometimes show disrespect? What types of things do they do?

How do you feel when that happens to you?

How do you feel when that happens to other people?

How do people show respect?

Why do people sometimes not act respectfully?

After answering the questions, write this point on the board.

*Those who show respect will receive respect.

Closing:

Have the students write the point in their Learning Journal. Then they can draw a picture to illustrate the story.
Lily the Leopard
by John McConnel

Lily the Leopard thought there was something gravely wrong with her. Unlike all the other leopards she knew, her spots were not black but pink. It would not have been so terrible if the other leopards had accepted her. But the other leopards would not accept her. In fact, even her own family shunned her. Her mother had cried upon seeing her baby daughter covered in pink spots, and her father and her two brothers, Julian and Ricky, were ashamed to have such a strange-looking leopard in the family. The other leopards in the neighborhood ignored her, laughed at her and sometimes poked at her, just because her spots were a different color from their spots. Sometimes she felt afraid and sad, and other times she got very angry. So she decided that she would stay alone most of the time. She spent her days lying in a bush, watching the other leopards frolic about. Even when they would occasionally call Lily to come out to play, she would remember their past insults and would growl low in response to their invitation.

It was not her fault she had pink spots! She was different and could not help it. Often she wondered why
the other leopards did not understand. She had done her best to rid herself of her pink spots. Lily tried scrubbing and washing them away. She tried bleaching them. Once she even painted them black, but the pink soon shone through the paint. Nothing worked. After a while, she realized that she was stuck with them. What else could she do?

One day, after four young cubs were teasing her, Lily decided to run away from home. She had had enough. She ran off into the jungle as fast as she could. Lily ran for hours, just stopping to rest now and then and to wipe the tears from her eyes.

Eventually, she came to rest in a clearing and fell asleep. She was awakened by the soft touch of a tongue on her nose. As she looked up, she saw the most amazing sight. Before her stood a great big leopard with bright green spots! Lily was so surprised by what she saw that she blinked twice just to make sure she was not dreaming. She had often had dreams of other leopards with different colored spots, but she never imagined that there actually were such leopards. The great leopard with bright green
spots told her his name was Lenny and asked her what she was doing so far from home. As he spoke, he seemed to glow with confidence and happiness. His eyes were filled with kindness, and so Lily felt safe and soon found herself telling her story.

Lenny quietly listened to her story. When she finished, he gave her a warm hug and helped her dry her eyes. He then smiled at her and said, “What you need is some self-respect”.

“I do?” asked Lily. “What is that?”

“Self-respect means liking yourself, even when others do not”, said Lenny. “It means appreciating all the special things about yourself”.

“There is nothing special about me, except these pink spots and I hate them!” she cried. “I am so strange and ugly. I wish I was never born! I hate these ugly spots!”

“Do not be silly,” said Lenny. “You are very special. There is no one like you in the whole world, and I can see that you have many good qualities.” Lenny paused for a moment. He seemed to be thinking. “I have an idea,” he said. “Let us make a list of all the things you like about yourself.”
“Okay,” said Lily, brightening a little. She sat for a few moments thinking and then said: “Well, I am kind and caring, and I try to be friendly. I help my mom and dad and I am very loving…” Lily paused for a moment, her voice trailing off. Lenny nodded his head eagerly in order to encourage her. Lily felt safe again and so she continued. “I have beautiful gold eyes, and I am a very fast runner. I am brave and strong and…”

Just then Lucy the Leopard appeared with Laura the Leopard. Lucy was covered with blue spots and Laura in purple spots. As soon as they saw Lily, they were delighted. They smiled grandly and leaped into the air. “What a lovely leopard you are, and what a beautiful coat you have!”

“Thank you,” Lily replied, smiling as she remembered there was much more to her than met the eye. Suddenly, she felt much better.

“It is okay to be different,” she thought. “In fact, I think my spots are rather pretty! If the other leopards do not like me because of my pink spots, that is because they do not know better. I am okay. I am glad I am unique.
Lily spent a few more hours playing with her newly and brightly colored friends. But as the sun began to set, Lily began to think about her family. They might be worried about her, she thought. Lily waved good-bye to Lenny and Lucy and Laura. She promised them, however, that she would visit them again soon and off she went. As she walked home, she watched the sun set. For the first time, she noticed the many brilliant colors in the sky. The sky was pink, blue, green, purple and orange. "How beautiful," she thought. "I wondered why I never noticed all those colors before."

When Lily finally arrived home, her mom and dad and two brothers ran to meet her. As they came closer to Lily, they noticed there was something different about her. She seemed to shimmer and glow. She held her head high as she trotted forward and smiled at them warmly. "She is really quite beautiful," they thought. And they wondered why they had never noticed that before.
Your Qualities

Activity:

Ask each student to write his or her name at the top of a paper. The objective is for students to pass around the papers, each writing the quality he or she sees in the person whose name is at the top. Everyone’s paper should be passed to everyone else before being returned to the rightful owner. Allow the students time to read their list of qualities for a few minutes before continuing.

Next activity:

Have the students write the following points in their Learning Journals:

* Part of self-respect is knowing my own qualities.
* Respect is knowing that I am unique and valuable.
* Respect is knowing that I am lovable and capable.
* Respect is knowing others are valuable, too.

Discuss these points and answer any questions that the students might have.

Objective: To identify qualities of the self.
Exploring the Effects of Respect and Disrespect

Say: In the next couple of days we're going to experiment with respect. I am going to give half of you these strips of green paper to wear around your upper arms, and half of you purple strips to wear around your upper arms."

Tell them in this experiment a "pretend" government has declared the green group to be the elite group. Elite means the best. The government notices that the green have a disrespectful attitude towards the purples.

First Activity:

Instruct the green group to show respect only to other greens while being disrespectful (in attitude, not words) to the purples. At the end of the time period remind them that this was for the purpose of exploring the topic of respect and disrespect. Inform them that tomorrow the government will be changing!

While doing the exploring activity, have the students do the next activity.

Next Activity: Me Mobiles

Have the students make a mobile about themselves. They can use their creativity.
Materials needed: string, paper, colored pencils, colored paper, markers, magazines, little sticks, stickers, and hangers.

Say: "Each object on the mobile should represent an aspect of you".

*Favorite pastimes/ hobbies
*Your qualities
*Your family
*What you like about nature
*Your favorite animals
*How you give to others
*What you believe in
*Your favorite food

(Teacher writes the categories on the board.) Students can add to the list. The next day, reverse the student's roles. The purple group is now the elite group. At the end of the next day, discuss and share the following questions:

*How did they feel as the elite?
*How did they feel as the non-elite?

*Would they like a world in which everyone has respect for everyone?

*How would the world be different?

The next day, distribute a whole rainbow of colored armbands. Now they are all princes and princesses from different kingdoms. Ask the students to give regard to everyone through their looks, attitudes and behavior. At the end of the day, discuss their feelings.

The following day, the students will continue to wear the armbands, however the rules have changed. The blue means that they have the best education, green means they are hard workers, purple means they have a good sense of humor, orange means that they are athletic, yellow means that they are good singers, etc.

At the end of the day, discuss what each group has in common? (All people have something to offer.)

Closing activity:

Have the students write a poem or a short essay on their experience. How did the experience change their outlook on differences in people?
Respect

Two Birds

Read the story, “Two Birds”.

Discuss/Share

*Why did the bird get upset?
*What did the other bird say that made it worse?
*Do you ever feel insulted?
*What did both birds find out?
*What can we learn from this story?
*How could the birds have responded differently so that they weren’t ready to fight?

Objective: To develop problem-solving skills and learn to listen to others.
The Two Birds
by H. Otero

Two birds were very happy in the same tree, a willow tree. One of them rested on a branch at the highest part of the willow; the other one was down below, where one branch joined another.

After a while, the bird perched in the highest part of the tree said, to break the ice, "Oh, what beautiful green leaves these are!"

The bird resting on the branch below took this statement as a provocation. He replied in a curt manner, "Are you blind? Can you not see they are white?"

The one in the highest part, upset, answered, "It is you who is blind! They are green!"

The other bird, from below with his beak pointed upward, responded, "I bet my tail feathers they are white. You do not know anything."

The bird at the top felt his temper flare up, and without thinking twice, he jumped down to the same branch as his adversary to teach him a lesson.

The other bird did not move. The two birds were so
close, they stood eye to eye. Their feathers were ruffled with rage. In their tradition, they both looked above before they started to fight. The bird that had come down from above said with much surprise, “How strange! Look at the leaves, they are white!” And he invited his friend, “Come up to where I was before.”

They flew to the highest branch of the willow tree, and this time they said together, “Look at the leaves, they are so green!”
Love Lesson

"The Four Thrones"

Read "The Four Thrones".

Discuss the story and the following points:
*The real law lives in the kindness of our hearts. If our hearts are empty, no law or political reform can fill them.
*Love is the value that makes our relationships better.

Activity:

Have the students write the points in their Learning Journal, and have them write a response to the story.

Closing Activity:

Have each student write his or her name on a small scrap of paper and put it in a box. Allow each student to choose one name from the box (not their own). During the next two days, each student is to write down positive behaviors and qualities about the student whose name they have chosen.

After the two days, each student will make a card and write down some of their positive notes. The students do not need to write their name on the card. They may want to stay secret!
The Four Thrones
by Wendy Marshall

Once upon a time there was four benevolent sovereigns who ruled the Earth. Each had great respect for the other, and the world was in harmony. At a sacred place of four thrones, the four rulers would meet to exchange news of their kingdoms.

But a time came when their people became bored with noble qualities. They wanted the thrill of winners and losers, the contrast of rich and poor.

The four sovereigns decided to leave their kingdoms and let their people rule themselves. They all agreed to silently wander the Earth and return as sovereigns only when all of the people wanted to live in peace and harmony again.

Many years later, when the Earth and its people had become spoiled by greed, ego, and selfishness, a young girl read the story of the four sovereigns. She realized this was not a fairy tale. She vowed that when she grew up, she would search for the four sovereigns and ask them to return to their kingdoms so that harmony could prevail in the world once again.
After many years of searching, she reached the high mountain foretold. There she found the four thrones that faced outward to the valley below. She waited there, since in the legend it was said that each year the sovereigns came to the place where the four thrones faced outward over the valley to meet and give news of their lands. Months passed.

One day, an old traveler came by and asked the young woman about her quest. The traveler listened intently. She then told her that the sovereigns would only meet her when she had learned to look within and let peace grow in her heart. They would meet her when her eyes radiated love, when her words were guided by wisdom and when her actions brought only happiness to others.

The traveler agreed to teach the young woman these lost arts, and the young woman studied diligently. On the day she was ready, the old traveler took her leave. At sunrise the next morning, four figures approached. Queen Wisdom took her place on one throne, and King Love, Queen Peace and King Happiness all assumed their thrones. The young woman entered the circle and told them of her quest.

As Queen Wisdom addressed her, she recognized that
this was her teacher, the old traveler. "Go back to your land and teach all who come to you the things you have been taught here. You are the seed that will bear the fruit of harmony throughout the earth once again. Keep courage. There will be many tests. But the seed of hope will soon grow, and when all hearts are ready, we will return."

"Remember, all human hearts contain beautiful qualities. Do not be fooled by bitterness and hatred. These treasures you have found within yourself will touch others deeply. Never stop believing in yourself and the task will be accomplished quickly."
Love Lesson

Love is Understanding

Opening:

Have the students write down these points in their Learning Journal.

* Love means I can be kind, caring, and understanding.
* Everyone in this room is lovable and capable of loving.
* Love is the value that makes our relationships better.
* Love is being a trustworthy friend.
* Love is caring, love is sharing.

Activity:

Have the students form pairs with someone they do not know. One student is to share something that he or she enjoyed doing when they were younger, or something that interests them. The other student is to listen. Then they exchange roles. Each person will share what they learned about their partner with the whole group.

Closing: Discuss/Share

* What do you have love for? (love for the self, friends, family, nature, animals, possessions, playing, sports, humanity, your own country, the world, etc.)
*What is love?
*What are some different kinds of love? (Brotherly love, platonic love, romantic love, love for your family, love for nature, etc.)
Tolerance

The Shorties and the Tallies

Read the story "The Shorties and the Tallies".

Activity:

Talk with the students about their feelings regarding the story. Discuss the following points and have the students write them in their Learning Journal.

* Peace is the goal, tolerance is the method.
* Tolerance is being open and receptive to the beauty of differences.
* Tolerance is mutual respect through mutual understanding.
The Shorties and the Tallies
by John McConnel

There was once a land where all the people were either short and fat or tall and thin. There was no one in between. The “Shorties” and “Tallies,” as they were called, did not like each other. Each thought himself to be better than the other. When the Shorties were talking among themselves about the arrogance of the Tallies, they would call them “beanpoles”. The Tallies would talk to each other about how stupid the “shrimps” were. The “beanpoles” and “shrimps” were always arguing and fighting, and there was no peace in the land.

The Shorties and the Tallies did not know each other very well. They never tried to be friends. Indeed, they both refused to have anything to do with the other. They refused to live next door to one another, used different shops, and their children even went to different schools. Separate businesses and even churches and temples were built to meet the needs of the Shorties and Tallies.

Demand grew for the land to be divided in two, and there was talk of war as the “beanpoles” blamed the “shrimps” for
problems in the land. Each side rushed to buy guns. The ruler of the land did not help. Most of the time he was interested in accumulating more wealth for himself. Sometimes he even blamed the Tallies for the problems of the land. As intolerance increased, even the children were told by adults that the other group was not good. The children of the Shorties were told to not make friends with the “beanpoles”, and the children of the Tallies were told not to make friends with the “shrimps”.

Then one day a strange thing happened. All the people of the land went blind. Not even one person could see anything. Everyone’s world was turned upside down in more ways than one. The people stumbled around, trying to find their way from the shops and the churches and temples. They were bumping into one another and tripping over each other. Little children, teenagers, and adults all needed help, and they helped each other. Adults conversed with anyone they bumped into to ask for help in finding their way. Little children were taken care of by older children, and mothers of both Shorties and Tallies helped each other find their children. Everyone wandered around blindly, not knowing where to go.
At first, the Shorties did not know they were sometimes being helped by “beanpoles,” and Tallies did not realize they were being helped by “shrimps”. They welcomed the understanding voices and the generous help. But as they helped each other with their hands, they began to realize that some of those kind hands were thin and long, and other kind hands were short and plump.

“Humph,” the Shorties named Miriam said to herself, “I bet that is the only nice beanpole out there.” But as Miriam tried to find her way to the store to buy food, she was again helped by another Tallie!

Ali, one of the Tallies, was also surprised. “Those shrimps are not all so mean,” he thought to himself one day when a Shorties helped him to find his little brother and little sister.

As one long week and another week passed, each person began to realize that the shape and size of each other’s bodies no longer mattered. They began to judge each person they met by his or her behavior instead of appearance, whether they were kind and gentle or mean-spirited. They began to appreciate their new friends and understand that a person’s character is much more important than the way he
or she looks, and that good qualities can be found in everyone.

With this realization, the hearts of the short, fat people and the tall, thin people began to melt. They were kinder to everyone they met. As they began to grow fond of their new friends, their sight returned just as suddenly as it had disappeared! They laughed with each other in their joy of seeing, and they promised never to be deceived by their eyes again.
Tolerance Lesson

A Rainbow

Concept: Compare the variety of races, cultures, and individuals to a rainbow. The rainbow would not be nearly as beautiful if it were missing one or two colors. In fact, it would not be a rainbow with only one color. The human family is like a rainbow; it comes with a wonderful variety of colors. Each culture and tradition has something to contribute.

Discuss and have students write down these points in their Learning Journals:

*The seed of tolerance, love, is watered by compassion and caring.*

*Those who know how to appreciate the good in people and situations have tolerance.*

Activity: Ask the students to make a rainbow.

Next Activity:

Each morning when I do a read aloud story about a different culture, I will have them write the culture’s name on a different ray of the rainbow. They can keep the rainbow paper inside their learning journal.
Responsibility

Get a Job

Purpose of Activity: To develop responsibility skills and to have the students develop ownership of their class.

Materials needed: A large piece of tag board, Velcro dots, markers

Activity:

Determine five daily jobs or tasks that could be handled by students. List these tasks/jobs on a sheet of tag board or poster board. Next to each job, place a Velcro dot. On small sheets of paper, list letters of the alphabet (for example A-D, E-H, I-M, N-R and S-Z.)

Place the opposite side of the Velcro dot on the back of each of the small sheets, and attach them to the chart. Explain each of the jobs to the students, and then tell them to find the job across from the small sheet that corresponds to the first letter of their first name.

Each day, as the students enter the class, they need to glance at the job chart to see what their responsibility is for that day. The students will always be in the same groups, so they should encourage each other and work together, and allow everyone to have an equal turn. Here
are a few jobs that I will try:

* Passing out the materials
* Cleaning the floor
* Sharpening the pencils
* Collecting the work folders
* Turning on and off the computers
* Straightening up the classroom library
* Erasing the board

Assessment:

Have the one member of each group report how well the group worked together and if everyone participated.
Problem Solving

Activity: Problem Solving Door

Purpose of Activity: To help guide students in solving a problem with a classmate.

Materials needed: A door or area with problem solving technique posted. Visual descriptions and pictures of different problem solving techniques.

Description of Idea:

The Problem Solver Door is designed for students in case there ever is a disagreement between two or more students. The students must go over to the door to solve the problem first before taking the problem to the teacher.

Problem Solving Techniques that are posted are as follows:

- Use an "I" message.
- Rock, paper, scissors method
- Listen to other person's reasoning, then tell your reasoning for your actions.
- Shake hands and take turns.
- Walk away.
- Apologize.
- Go to another game.
Responsibility

Trust Walk

Introduce the value of responsibility. Discuss the meaning of responsibility.

Have the students record these points inside their learning journals:

*Responsibility is doing your share.
*Responsibility is accepting what is required and carrying out the task to the best of your ability.

Say, "Today we will play with responsibility by having a trust walk". To do a trust walk, half the class wears blindfolds. One partner is responsible for carefully leading his or her blindfolded partner around, guiding physically as well as offering verbal information. They should help their partner to feel safe and comfortable. Do this outside for ten minutes, then reverse the roles. After returning to class, ask:

"How would you have felt if your partner were not responsible?"
Responsibility
Sharing Tasks
Say, “One basic definition of responsibility is doing your share.” Then read the story The Little Red Hen, which is an American folktale retold by many authors. Discuss the story and the tasks involved in making the bread.

Activity:
In groups of four, have the students think of a task. Then they need to assign roles for each student so the task can be completed. They can each draw a picture of their role. When they are finished each group will get up in the front of the classroom and present their task. Each person will tell the role of responsibility to get the task accomplished.

Closure: Have the students write the following points in their Learning Journals:
* Responsibility is doing your share.
* As a responsible person, I have something worthwhile to offer—so do others.
* Responsibility is accepting what is required and carrying out the task to the best of your ability.
Cooperation

Discuss and have students write these points in their Learning Journal.

* Cooperation exists when people work together toward a common goal.

* Cooperation requires recognizing the value of everyone's part and keeping a positive attitude.

Activity

Complete the following sentences:

I cooperate with the school when ____________________.

I cooperate with myself when ____________________.

__________________ is an example of cooperation.

To __________________ is necessary for cooperation.

Closing Activity:

Have a pair of students role play being cooperative and being uncooperative. (Role playing may be humorous.)
Humility Lesson

Read the story “Fairy Story”.
Discuss the story, then ask the following questions:
* Did you notice that the arrogant princess seemed only to have love for herself, while the princess who was loving and humble had love for everyone?
* Is there a relation between humility and love, or between arrogance and lack of love?
Discuss the points:
* Humility makes arrogance disappear.
* Humility is when I know my strengthens but do not brag or show off.
* Humility allows one to be great in the hearts of many.
Closure:
As the students to do something nice for someone at school every day for one week-- with the feeling of wanting to help without needing praise. As the week progresses, ask: “Was it hard or easy?” Discuss.
Fairy Story-A Play

By Students at West Kidlington School

Narrator: Once upon a time there were a king and queen. They lived and ruled together happily in a far-off land. They longed to have a child, and one day that dream came true. The Queen gave birth to a lovely son. They named him Rufus. On the day of his birth, the Fairy Godmother visited the King and Queen and said:

Fairy Godmother (FGM): I will grant you any wish for your beautiful new son. Ask and it shall be so.

Queen: We know what we wish for our son.

King: Yes, we wish great wealth for him; he should want for nothing that money can buy.

FGM: Your wish shall be granted.

Narrator: As Prince Rufus grew, he had every toy a boy could wish for. He had anything to drink or eat that he desired. He had every outfit and every sports item imaginable. But no one liked him. He became more selfish and demanding every day.

Rufus: Where is my new tennis racket? I want it now!

Servant One: Shall we play with your train set, Rufus?

Rufus: No! Go find your own train set. You are not
sharing mine!

Queen: Oh dear! Where did we go wrong?

Narrator: However, the Queen soon gave birth to a second child, a daughter. They named her Celia. On the day of her birth, the Fairy Godmother visited the King and Queen and said:

FGM: I will grant you any wish for your beautiful new daughter. Ask and it shall be so.

Queen: We know what we wish for our daughter.

King: Yes, we wish that she should have a great talent and so become famous in the land.

FGM: Your wish shall be granted.

Narrator: As Princess Celia grew, she became a wonderful singer and performed in front of the people in the land many times with her beautiful voice. But no one liked her. She had become boastful and big-headed.

Celia: Who cares if I am late for the concert? They will wait. I am much more important than they are, and I have to get my hair just right. Do you think that these shoes really go with this outfit?

Servant Two: Yes, Your Majesty.

Celia: Oh, what would you know? You are just a pathetic
servant with no talent at all.

Queen: Oh dear! Where did we go wrong?

Narrator: As time went on the King and Queen put up with their unbearable children, until one day the Queen gave birth to a third child, a daughter. They named her Joy. On the day of her birth, the Fairy Godmother visited the King and Queen and said:

FGM: I will grant you any wish for your beautiful new daughter. Ask and it shall be so.

Queen: We know what we wish for our daughter. We have learned by our mistakes with Rufus and Celia. We wish that she should be the most loving person in the kingdom.

FGM: Your wish shall be granted.

Narrator: As Joy grew, she became such a loving child that her parents loved her dearly in return. She loved animals and nature and all the people she met. Everyone in the kingdom loved her.

Joy: Hello, Mr. Baker. You must be busy. Would you like me to take your dogs for a walk? It is no bother. I am looking after Katie, and we are going to pick raspberries in the woods.

Mr. Baker: Thank you. That would be a great help.
Here are some iced buns to keep you going.

Joy: Oh, thank you. See you later.

Mr. Baker: What a joy she is!

Queen: We should have known. It is not the things a person owns or the talents they possess that make them nice to know and spend time with. It is their good qualities that count.
Humility Lesson

Change Place Game

The aim is for everyone to exchange positive statements and change seats. The teacher starts. For example, the teacher may say, “I’m going to change places with Troy because he is always smiling and that makes me feel good”, or “I’m changing places with Patty because she helped me out with a problem I had yesterday”. The spoken-to students then does the same with some else in the circle. Continue until each student has received a positive statement.

Closure:

Have the students create a personal symbol(s) that relates to the person that they have become. It can be like a shield. (e.g. peaceful, respectful, loving, tolerant, responsible, cooperative, humble, etc.)
Incredible Encouragers

Purpose: To teach students how to encourage their classmates in a positive way.

Materials needed: One large star, 30 or more stars around the larger star. On the large star write "Incredible Encourager" and on the small stars write "Incredible Encouragers".

Discuss with the students how we should give a compliment and positive feedback to our classmates. Share with the students all the different saying posted on the wall. If they can't think of something nice to say, they just have to look at the Encouragement wall and pick something off of a star.

Examples on the stars include:

I like the way you ... You are good at ...
Way to go on ... Nice job when you ...
That was fantastic when.... Super
Excellent Awesome
Great job
These encouragers are used daily during all subject areas.

At the end of the week, I will have the class secretly choose an Incredible Encourager for the week. I will write their name on the big star.

Objective: Positive interaction will increase among the class and it will become a part of their personalities.
Honesty

The Emperor and the Flower Seeds

Read "The Emperor and the Flower Seeds". Discuss the story, then discuss the following points:

* Honesty is telling the truth.
* A person worthy of confidence is honest and true.
* There is a deep relationship between honesty and friendship.

Have the students write the points in their Learning Journal, and then they can draw a picture of one aspect of the story.
The Emperor and the Flower Seeds

Unknown Author

Long ago, in this very kingdom, there lived an Emperor who loved nature. Anything he planted burst into bloom. Up came flowers, bushes and even big fruit trees, as if by magic! Of everything in nature, he loved flowers most of all, and he tended his own garden every day. But the Emperor was very old, and he needed to choose a successor to the throne. Who would his successor be? And how would the Emperor decide? As the Emperor loved flowers so much, he decided that flowers would help him choose.

The next day, a proclamation was issued: “All men, women, boys, and girls throughout the land are to come to the palace.” The news created great excitement throughout the land.

In a village not far from here, there lived a young girl named Serena. Serena had always wanted to visit the palace and see the Emperor, and so she decided to go. She was glad she went. How magnificent the palace was! It was made from gold and was studded with jewels of every color and type, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, opals and amethysts.
How the palace gleamed and sparkled! Serena felt that she had always known this place. She walked through the palace doors into the Great Hall, where she was overwhelmed by all the people. It was so noisy. "The whole kingdom must be here!" she thought.

There then came the sound of at least a hundred trumpets, announcing the arrival of the Emperor. All fell silent. The Emperor entered, clutching what looked like a small box. How fine he looked, so noble and elegant! He circled the Great Hall, greeting every person and presenting something to each one. Serena was curious about the small box. "What was inside?" she wondered. "What was he giving to everyone?"

At last, the Emperor reached Serena. She curtsied and then watched as the Emperor reached into the small box and presented her with a flower seed. When Serena received the seed, she became the happiest girl of all.

Then the sound of trumpets filled the Great Hall once more, and all became silent. The Emperor announced: "Whoever can show me the most beautiful flowers in a year's time will succeed me the throne!" Serena left for home filled with wonder over the palace and the Emperor.
clutching the flower seed carefully in her hand. She was certain she could grow the most beautiful flower. She filled a flowerpot with rich soil, planted the seed carefully and watered it every day. She could not wait to see it spout, grow and blossom into a magnificent flower!

Days passed, but nothing grew in the pot. Serena was worried. She transferred the seed into a bigger pot; filled it with the best quality, richest soil she could find; and watered it twice a day, every day. Days, weeks and months passed, but still nothing happened. By and by the whole year passed. Finally spring came, and it was time to return once more to the palace. Serena was heartbroken that she had no flower to show the Emperor, not even a little sprout. She thought that everyone would laugh at her because all she had to show for the whole year’s effort was a pot of lifeless soil! How could she face the Emperor with nothing?

Her friend stopped by on his way to the palace, holding a great big flower. “Serena! You are not going to the Emperor with an empty pot, are you?” exclaimed the friend. “Could you not grow a great big beautiful flower like mine?”
Serena’s father, having overheard this, put his arm around Serena and consoled her. “It is up to you whether you go or not,” he said. “You did your best, Serena, and your best is good enough to present to the Emperor.” “Just go and see.”

Even though she felt reluctant to go, Serena also knew she must not disregard the Emperor’s wishes. Besides, she also wanted to see the Emperor and the palace again. And so Serena traveled once more to the palace, holding the pot of soil in her hands.

The Emperor was happy to see the Great Hall filled with his subjects, all proudly displaying their beautiful flowers, all eagerly hoping to be chosen. How beautiful all the flowers were! Flowers were of every shape, size, and color. The Emperor examined each flower carefully and thoroughly, one by one. Serena, who was hiding in a corner with her head bowed down, wondered how he could choose, since they were all so lovely. Finally, the Emperor came to Serena. She dared not look at him. “Why did you bring an empty pot?” the Emperor asked Serena.

“Your Majesty,” said Serena. “I planted the seed you gave me and I watered it every day, but it did not sprout.
I put it in a better pot with better soil, but still it did not sprout. I tended it all year long, but nothing grew. So today I brought an empty pot without a flower. It was the best I could do."

When the Emperor heard those words, a smile spread slowly over his face, and he took Serena by the hand. Serena was frightened. She wondered if she were in some sort of trouble.

The Emperor led her to the front of the Great Hall, and turning to the crowd, he exclaimed: "I have found by successor—the person worthy of ruling after me!"

Serena was puzzled. "But, your Majesty," she said, "I have no flower, just this pot of lifeless earth."

"Yes, I expected that," said the Emperor. "From where everyone else got their seeds, I do not know. The seeds I gave everyone last year had all been roasted. It would have been impossible for any of them to grow. Serena, I admire your great courage and honesty to appear before me with the truth. I reward you with my entire kingdom. You will be the next Empress."
Honesty

The Miner and the Prince

Read the story "The Miner and the Prince". Discuss the story. Then say, "Sometimes there is pressure to be dishonest".

*Can you think of any examples?

Say, "Sometimes it is difficult to resist the pressure".

Ask:

*What things can you think of that would help you resist the pressure to ____________________________?

*What kinds of things could you say to yourself or to a friend if there is a temptation to be dishonest?

*Would it help you to resist the temptation if you looked at the consequences?

*What could happen as a result?

Closure:

Have the students draw a picture of their favorite scene from "The Miner and the Prince". Below the picture they should write why they liked it.
The Miner and the Prince

By Lamia El-Dajani

Ali was a miner who used to live with his family in a small house near the jungle. One day, Ali had an accident in the mine. His injuries prevented him from working in the mine. Life then became hard for him and his family. After his injuries began to heal, he started going to the jungle to find a way to feed himself and his family.

One day, Ali was in the jungle sitting beneath a tree, when suddenly he heard the sound of horses running very fast. He saw the Prince riding a horse and behind him a group of soldiers on their horses. They were chasing after a deer. As they disappeared and the forest became quiet again, he saw something on the path that the horses had galloped across. He picked up the object and found it was a very fine leather wallet. The Prince’s name was embossed in gold on the front of the wallet. He slowly opened the wallet and saw a large amount of money. Ali remained where he was in the jungle, waiting for the Prince and his soldiers to return so he could give back the wallet.

Slowly it became dark and the sun went down. As it grew
late and there was no sign of the Prince returning, Ali decided to go home carrying with him the Prince’s wallet.

Ali’s wife hurried to meet him, asking him about his day. He excitedly told her what happened and showed her the wallet. She too became very excited and happily said, “This is a gift from God to us.”

Ali was surprised. He protested, saying, “This money is not for us. It belongs to the Prince. I found it, so I must return it.”

His wife became furious and replied, “The Prince has a lot of money! We are in sore need. We should keep the money for ourselves.” She added, more softly, “Especially since we did not steal the money. We found it in the jungle.”

Ali decided not to argue with his wife. He put the wallet in the cupboard and sat with his family and listened as they continued to fuss about the event.

The next day, Ali woke up very early in the morning and slipped from the house before the rest of the family woke up. He took the bus to the city and searched for the palace. When he reached the palace, the guards stopped him at the gate and prevented him from entering to meet the
Prince. He had no appointment. They asked him why he wanted to meet the Prince, but he refused to tell the guards the reason that he needed to see the Prince. He just stressed that he needed to meet the Prince immediately about an important matter.

"I must meet with the Prince, I will not leave without seeing him," he said. They pushed him away, but he insisted on seeing the Prince. As the guards began to shout suddenly the car of the Prince approached the gate. Ali threw himself on the car and called out to the Prince. The Prince opened the window of the car and asked what he wanted. Ali handed the Prince his wallet.

The Prince, looking very surprised, asked Ali where he found it. Ali told him the story of the previous day in the jungle. The Prince then opened his wallet. One could see that he was astonished to find the money untouched. The Prince asked Ali, "Why did you not take the money?" Ali replied, "I cannot take something that does not belong to me." A gleam of respect appeared in the Prince's eye. The Prince took a large amount of money from the wallet, and with a nod of thanks, gave it to Ali.
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