

# Partnering with Caregivers

*Recognizing and addressing parenting challenges for at-risk infants, toddlers, and young children*

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# Overview

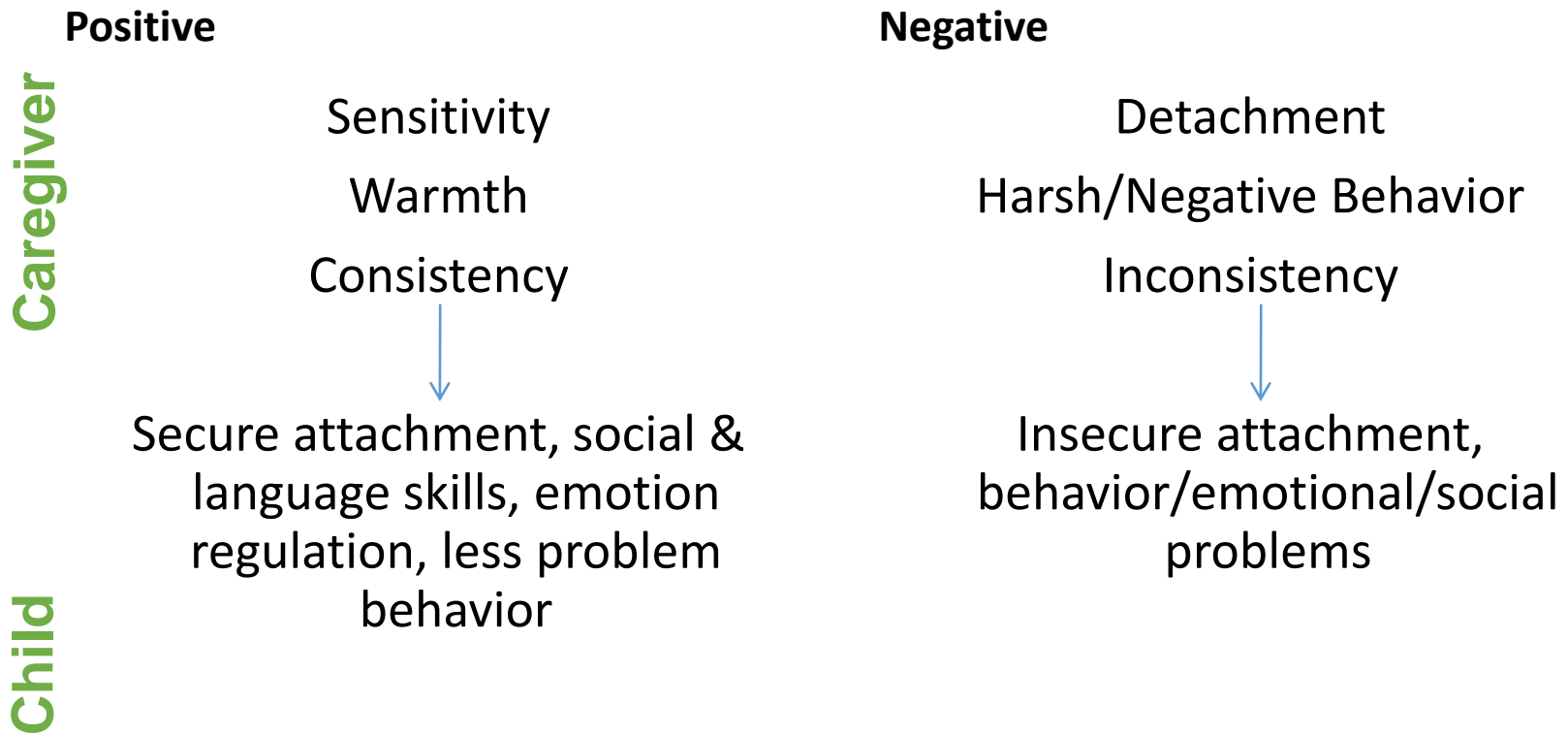
- Effective parenting practices
- Probing and identifying concerning parenting practices
- Tools for addressing parenting concerns with parents
- Resources

“She cries all the time!”

# Developmental Progression of Challenging Behaviors

- Infancy (Birth to 12 months)
  - (Excessive) fussiness/crying/colic
  - Disrupted sleep routines
  - Feeding problems
- Toddlers (1 to 3 years) and Young Children (3 to 5 years)
  - Aggression (pushing, hitting, spitting)
  - Tantrums
  - Self-injury (head banging, hair pulling)
  - Food refusal, eating nonfood items
  - Noncompliance/defiance
  - (3-5) Inattention, hyperactivity, separation anxiety

# Parenting



# Risk factors for Concerning Parenting Practices

## **Child**

- Age
- Physical and/or mental disability
- Temperament
- Behavior

## **Caregiver**

- Age
- Physical disability/Mental health
- Childhood history
- Education
- Low social support/Family conflict

## Social Environment

- Poverty
- Stress
- Neighborhood violence

# Screening for Parenting Factors

# Screening for Parenting

“From time to time, all children misbehave. Parents have many different ways of dealing with these problems.”

- How have you responded to/dealt with (problem behavior)?
  - *Appropriate expectations, rules, consequences and communication for age/developmental level?*
- What else have you tried? How long did you try it for? How did it work?
  - *Parents often give up when negative behavior escalates, not realizing that it often gets worse before it gets better!*



# Screening for Parenting

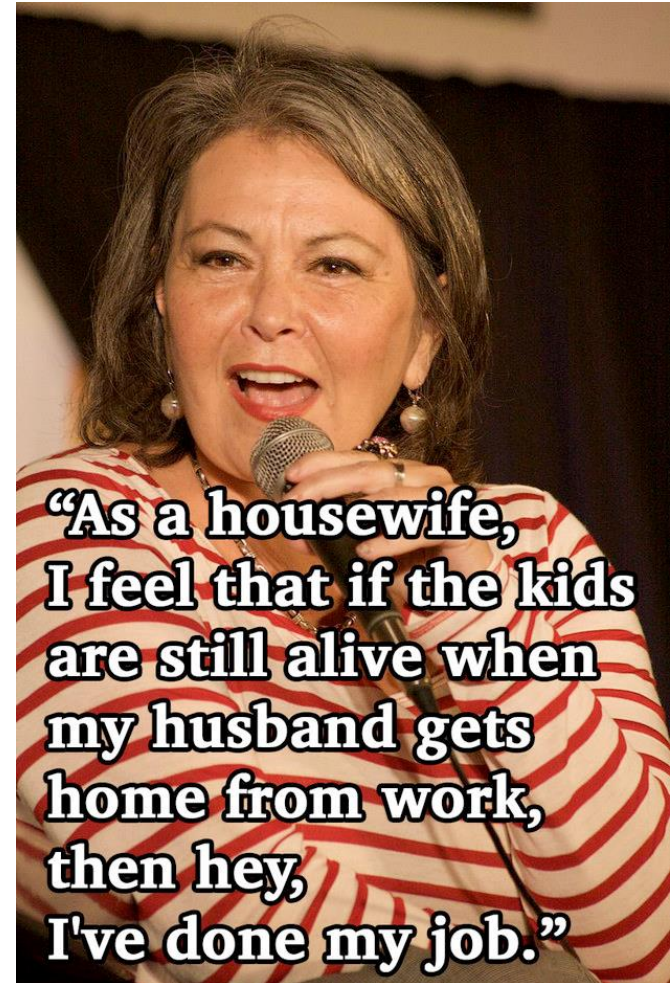
- Have you talked to anyone else about this? Child specialists?
  - *To inform referrals*
- If you're spending all this time doing X with child, how are you meeting X/Y need for yourself?
  - *Assessing parent stress and level of self-care*
- When child finally listens, what is it that gets them to do \_\_\_ at that point? How are *you* feeling by then?
  - *Repeating instructions? Giving in/bribery? Yelling? Threatening?*

# Tools for Addressing Concerning Parenting Behaviors

*“Parenting is the easiest thing in the world to have an opinion about, but the hardest thing in the world to do.” – Matt Walsh*

- Normalize and empathize!
  - “You are not alone...”
  - “It’s hard enough to take care of children, let alone children with \_\_\_\_\_ (challenging behaviors)!”
  - “I’m glad you recognize \_\_\_\_\_. You’ve done a great job checking out possible solutions.”
  - “I can tell how much you care about your child”
  - “If there is a superhero parent out there who is perfect 100% of the time, I have yet to meet them!”
- Provide hope!
  - “I’m glad you came in, \_\_\_\_ is something I can help you with/help you find resources for.”

Use humor!



# Brief, Solution-Focused Suggestions

- Managing parent stress through self-care
  - Put your own oxygen mask on first!
  - Routine self-care breaks throughout the day
  - Eat well
  - Get enough sleep (tag team with other caregivers)
- Infancy
  - Consistency is key! (daily routine)
  - Relationship is fundamental
    - Play with your infant (face to face interaction)
    - Take advantage of opportunities for positive interaction during routines
  - Responsivity – can't spoil an infant!

# Brief, Solution-Focused Suggestions

- Toddlers and Young Children
  - Consistency is key!
  - Catch being good with descriptive praise
  - Simple, clear rules
  - Provide/model acceptable alternatives
  - For consistent problems, anticipate and plan
  - Redirect
  - Label feelings and empathize
  - Time in/out
  - Planned ignoring

# When to Refer

- Child behaviors unlikely to desist without intervention:
  - Trauma
  - Child behavior problems
  - Child restricted affect
  - Child DTO/DTS and related behaviors
  - Parent-child relational problems
- Caregiver inconsistent parenting practices
- Caregiver mental health concerns (sometimes secondary to trauma history)

How to suggest?

“Strategies for managing difficult behavior” rather than  
“parenting skills”

# Evidence Based Treatments

- Evidence Based Programs Registry
  - SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices --  
<http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>
  - IES What Works Clearinghouse --  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/findwhatworks.aspx>
- Infants and Toddlers
  - Attachment/Relationship-based therapy
- Toddlers
  - Attachment/Relationship-Based
  - Behaviorally-based



# Evidence Based Treatments

- Young Children
  - Behaviorally-based parent management training
    - Triple P
    - Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)
    - Family Check-up
  - Mindful parenting

# Additional Resources

## For Providers

- [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)
- <http://effectivechildtherapy.org/>
- <http://www.triplep.net/glo-en/the-triple-p-system-at-work/training-and-delivery/resources/>
- *Evidence-Based Psychotherapies for Children and Adolescents*, by John Weisz, Ph.D., and Alan Kazdin, Ph.D.

# Additional Resources

## For Parents

- [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)
- <http://booksthathealkids.blogspot.com/>
- *The Emotional Life of the Toddler*, by Alicia Lieberman, Ph.D.
- *Raising your Spirited Child*, by Mary Kurcinka, Ph.D.
- *The Happiest Toddler on the Block: How to Eliminate Tantrums and Raise a Patient, Respectful, and Cooperative One- to Four-Year-Old*, by Harvey Karp, M.D.
- *Sleeping Through the Night: How Infants, Toddlers, and Their Parents Can Get a Good Night's Sleep*, by Jodi Mindell, Ph.D.
- *The Kazdin Method for Parenting the Defiant Child*, by Alan Kazdin, Ph.D.
- *1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12*, by Thomas Phelan, Ph.D.