Challenging behavior and aggression essay

Sociology, Violence

Challenging Behavior and Aggression

In your own words, compare and contrast challenging behaviors and aggressive behaviors using examples to illustrate your thinking. In your response, consider the types of behaviors, causes, and the influence of adult perspective on labeling the behavior.

Challenging behavior is a kind of behavior that can harm the child and others around him. It is disruptive, can hinder development, and prevents the child from learning or being successful at play. Children with severe learning disabilities can exhibit challenging behavior because of their lack of capacity to communicate, however challenging behavior is not only limited to persons with learning disabilities. The different kinds of challenging behavior are self-injurious behavior, property destruction, oppositional behavior, stereotyped behavior, socially inappropriate behavior, and withdrawn behavior. Examples are persistent screaming, verbal aggression, physical aggression, kicking, stealing, banging one's head, being withdrawn. These behaviors are considered challenging because the actors find it difficult to express their need, thus they resort to these forms of behaviors. It is a challenge for the carers because they have to understand the need that the child is trying to express. At the same time, the carer, such as the teacher is faced with the challenge of addressing the behavior and preventing it from becoming more aggressive.

Aggressive behavior is a kind of challenging behavior; however the difference lies in the intent of the actor. According to Anderson & Bushman (2002), aggression is " any behavior directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm."

Children or adults manifesting aggressive behavior often have a deliberate intent to harm, attack, injure, or control others. Examples of aggressive behavior is hitting, shoving, punching, and using words to belittle the object of aggression.

Explain how and where young children receive aggressive scripts for behavior and describe the characteristics of effective strategies that change or neutralize these scripts.

Children receive aggressive scripts from their homes, communities, and even from the mass media. When children grow up in households where domestic violence is prevalent, they begin to believe that hitting the other person, between spouses, siblings, or parent to child, is a normal occurrence. For instance, a child who witness someone slapping another because the latter touches his/her things, then when faced with a similar situation in the classroom, the child can immediately resort to physical aggression because the script for the behavior is already formed in his mind. The violence shows on TV can form or reinforce scripts of violence in a child's mind. Strategies that can effectively neutralize aggressive scripts have to be consistent, situation and age-appropriate, and must be understandable to the child.

Imagine that you are a preschool teacher responding to a parent who wants to understand the difference between anger and aggression. Explain the differences, including why aggressive behavior can be serious cause for concern.

Anger is an emotion. As such, it is neither good nor bad. " Anger has emotional, thinking and behavioral components" (Gurney, 2009; McKay et al

2003 as cited in Ford, Byrt & Dooher, 2010, p. 3). The behavior resulting from a person's anger is the one that can be a cause for concern. A child can be angry without exhibiting aggressive behavior. Some children cry when they are angry. Others would express anger by stating firmly " I am angry." Aggressive behavior, such as hitting others, banging one's head, and kicking furniture, can harm the child and others. If these behaviors are not addressed early the child may believe that actions like these are normal and acceptable. When he/she begin to have these notions it will be difficult to change his ways and he is prone to becoming more violent in the future.

References

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