

Behaviors and strategies for the home and school setting

[Family](#), [Mother](#)



Behaviors and Strategies for the Home and School Setting When children begin to start at a day-care or preschool it is a major change for the child and their family. This is the opening to a whole new beginning for the child. Educators usually choose education as a profession because they love children, but being a teacher is more than that. We need to look at children in the context of their family and the family in the context of the community. Teacher would then need to have a connection with the children, family, and community. In this paper I will discuss theories and concepts that support the child and their family. I will also discuss strategies teachers can use for different behaviors the children may have and what they can suggest to the family to help these behaviors as well. One very important factor that educators need to know is that all families are different. They have different cultures, races, ethnicity, socioeconomic level, and family structure, which all play into what these families are. We need to be aware of these things. Educators should make these families feel comfortable and they should respect them. They should also take interest in their culture or ethnicity so they will know how to make the child feel comfortable in the classroom setting. Encourage these parents to be involved in the classroom, bring a little bit of what their culture is like to the other classmates attention. Maybe encourage them to read a story about their culture to the class, or let the children try different foods that are normal to them. This can really make the family and the child more comfortable in the classroom. Parents could encourage their child to become familiar with foods, language, attire, whatever it may be, at home. This way the child knows about different cultures as well and has no reason to feel left out. All of these things have to

deal with the interactions of a child. Urie Bronfenbrenner came up with a theory to support all the interactions a child has, this is called "Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory." The first layer of Bronfenbrenner's theory is the microsystem. The microsystem is a child's closest interactions. These would consist of immediate family, teachers, peers, child care, and the neighborhood play area. The second layer of the theory would be the Mesosystem. The mesosystem is the interactions that the people in the child's microsystem have interactions with. Examples of these interactions would be; child care, school, local industry, religious or spiritual groups, neighborhoods, and home. The next layer of Bronfenbrenner's theory is the Exosystem. The layer is a broader layer that the child can be affected by. This may include; family networks, school board, local government, social welfare, work places, mass media, neighbors, extended family. The last layer of the ecological theory is the macrosystem, which is the largest of all the layers. This would include; values, laws, customs, culture, ideologies. Bronfenbrenner's theory is very honest and true. These are the interactions that children have and each one of these layers affect the child in some way. Teachers need to understand the influences that these children and their families may have on them. All educators need to take a family-centered approach to teaching. A family-centered approach takes the individual child and the group of children out of the spotlight and instead focuses on the children within their families. That means that parent involvement isn't something the teacher does in addition to the program for children, but that the program includes the family as an integral, inseparable, part of the child's education and socialization. Families, along with their children, are

the program.(Gonzalez-Mena 2009) This would mean that families and teachers need to become partners. They will have to compromise and work together to benefit the education the child receives. The child really acknowledges when their family and teacher are partners and it helps them strive and earn success with the education. I feel that often a child's family may feel intimidated by the child's teacher. The teacher should always make sure that the parents do not at all feel inferior to the teacher, but just as important. They are the other key to a child's future so they are just as much responsible and important. Teachers just need to be open with the parent and let them see them for who they are other than a teacher. This can help to bring the parent inside and make them more comfortable. Teachers should compliments parents for things they notice the parent has worked with the child on. This way the parents feel acknowledgement for what they have done. When parents and teachers work together they enhance children's emotional security, which facilitates development and makes it easier for them to develop and learn. The children also benefit by being understood better-their strengths and needs-as individuals and in their family context. Continuity between home and program can be another benefit as teachers and parents understand each other better. There's a better chance for cultural consistency as a result of the parent-professional partnership or at least an understanding of and respect for cultural differences. Children's identity formation is enhanced when children don't have to experience uncomfortable feelings around the differences between what they learn at school and what they learn at home. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Children really appreciate it when see a healthy relationship between

their teacher and family. They feel at peace and can focus on what is more important like their education. Children can also use their relationship between their teacher and the family as model for relationships they may have. Teacher will also deal with the families of children needing health and developmental services. When doing so, teachers need to appreciate families as families; recognize their wide range of strengths, concerns, emotions, and aspirations beyond their need for specialized health and developmental services and support. (Shelton 1994) When dealing with young children in early childhood programs one of the number one behaviors most children experience is attachment. Children become used to their family and when they are being left with someone else other than that they do experience attachment issues. Attachment is a lasting emotional relationship that begins to develop in infancy and serves to tie the infant to one or more people in his or her life. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Some children have positive relationships connected to attachment and other children have negative or no relationships connected to attachment. A child feeling attachment is something that is healthy. They have formed a bond or relationship to the person or people they are attached to which is a good thing. Some children may be too attached to something other than a person. This could be the TV, pacifier, a blanket, etc. Attachment is vital. It is a means of ensuring survival of the child and also of the species (Bowlby, 2000). It creates the caring (the feeling) that motivates the action of giving care. It ensures that nurturing and protection will be provided to the relatively helpless infant. But beyond physical survival, the first attachments provide the basis for all future relationships. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Children

also need to trust the person before and during attachment. This is a vital part of attachment, because the child needs trust. They need to have the feeling that they can rely on someone else for their needs and can have a joyful and special relationship with that person. Children who receive mistrust are probably more likely to have trust issues as an adult. It is important that teachers form a trusting and honest relationship with their students for that very reason. Some ways to help support parents in their attachment to their child are; Help make parents aware of their child's qualities and uniqueness. Encourage them to observe and to ask about what they see. Delicately point out any positive qualities that they may miss. You should also stay out of any sort of competition with parents. Don't set yourself up as the expert who's good at working with children-especially their child. When a child is acting out in front of the parent, avoid saying things like, " He only acts like that when you're here. He's fine with me. " (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Some families may not have a great bond or attachment with their children. Some reasons for this could be; They may be unhappy about the pregnancy or with each other, and those feelings may influence their feelings for the baby. The father may not be in a relationship with the mother-so any feeling for the baby on his part will necessarily be " long distance. " Also, Even for the mother, the reality of the baby may be fuzzy. It's hard to love someone you can't see or touch or interact with. When a child may have feelings of a negative attachment caregivers and teachers should focus on these children so they can feel the sense of a bond. Teachers can also help parents focus on their bond with their children by offering support and suggestions. An example would be for teachers to

suggest that parents spend quality one on one time with their children so their bond can grow. Young children are beginning to find out who they are, they are exploring to find themselves. When toddlers are going through this part of life it is also important to encourage self-help skills. This would mean that we would encourage them to do for themselves. There are many things toddlers are capable of, but have never tried to do on their own. Parents usually do not give a toddler the chance to try things on their own. Parents need to understand what their toddlers are capable of. Tell parents " modeling is a powerful teaching tool, with adults as well as with children. " (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) It is also important for us to give the toddler choices throughout the day. They need to be able to make their own decisions. This helps them feel empowered. Toddlers need to become good decision makers, but they need to opportunity to do so before they can. You can do this by providing options to the child, this way they do not have complete control, but they do feel like they are making their own choices. Teachers give choices to the children during play time by letting them have the choice of what to play with or who to play with. Teachers need to suggest the same for parents. Parents can give their children many more choices than they let them have. Some examples would be letting the child choose what outfit they may want to wear out of two choices provided, or choosing what they want to eat when the family may go out for dinner. These are suggestions a teacher can make. We also need to provide control to toddlers. This can be done by being gentle with the child, but not providing too much attention in a positive or negative way. Children need to feel that there is an adult in power over them, but they don't need to feel that when they are behaving in

a good way. We should also set limits with toddlers. Setting limits and enforcing them also empowers children by giving them freedom within those limits. You can think of limits as a fence around a pasture. The horse is free to graze within the fence. Without the fence his freedom would have to be limited by a rope, by vigilance, or by training—none of which gives the freedom of the fence. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Some children will do whatever possible to test their limits, but it is important to remain consistent with the child until they finally understand their limits. It is important that a child isn't given too many options or choices, because then they feel as if they are in complete control, which they are not ready for yet. Teachers can provide suggestions for families like setting limits for their child. They also need to know that the parent is in charge, but not in a demeaning way. Parents should also have a developmentally appropriate environment for their children. Not all families have the kind of living conditions that allow them to set up a developmentally appropriate environment, but when they see the one in the early care and education program, they may get ideas about how to make their living situation a bit more developmentally appropriate. Such an environment provides freedom for exploration with few prohibitions. Think of the difference between a toddler in a playroom set up for her, versus spending an hour in his great aunt's living room, trying to keep her hands off all the precious and fragile treasures sitting around on display. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) All children socialize differently. Some are outgoing, some are shy, some are angry, some are sad, some are developmentally behind, and some are developmentally ahead. All of these social differences usually do not make a difference in the social skills a child needs. All children learn to

socialize in the way that is right for them. I feel that children learn to socialize through play with other children their age, siblings, or even adults. They start to learn what is appropriate for them to socialize about and find things that they have in common with others they are socializing with. When children are beginning to socialize they may feel aggression and defensiveness with others they are socializing with. This is when problem-solving skills need to be learned. Adults must be on the spot when difficulties arise between children. It's important to intervene before the action gets physical. Four qualities are important when helping children talk to each other in a conflict situation; Firmness should come through, Empathy also should come through, a problem-solving attitude rather than a power play must be part of the exchange, and Persistence is critical. The objective is not to solve the problem in a particular way for the child but to help him discover his own alternatives to violence. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Children will need to learn to solve their problems on their own as children so they can have good problem solving skills as an adult as well. Parents and teachers should let the child try to figure it out on their own and only step in and guide the child when it is necessary. It is important for children to have a good sense of self-esteem. Self-esteem is a valuing process and results from an ongoing self-appraisal in which traits and abilities are acknowledged and evaluated. Self-esteem is made up of self-image—the pictures we carry of ourselves—and self-concept—the ideas we have about ourselves. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Ways a teacher can help provide high self-esteem to a child is to praise them and acknowledge their attributes and skills. It is important to be honest to the child when praising them, and to not over praise. Children can notice when

this is being done. Maybe, instead of saying " You are the best painter in the entire world" try saying " You did a great job on that painting of a flower, I really like to colors you chose to use! " This is a more honest and personal response of praise. When a family promotes self-assurance, self-help, competence, and being " special, " self-esteem rises if the individual is proud to perceive herself as being in possession of those traits. (Gonzalez-Mena 2009) Children really love when they are receiving acknowledgement and praise from their family. I know that sometimes parents may be busy when their child is trying to show them something, but instead of not looking at something and saying awesome job, tell your child to come back and show you in a couple minutes so you all will have time to sit down and talk about it. This is an honest answer that a child can appreciate and they will also have the opportunity to receive the praise they need. Just these little things can really boost a child's self-esteem. In conclusion, A family centered approach seems to be the best approach for the family, teacher and child. Teachers and parents need to be a team so they can focus on the child together. When dealing with Early childhood education, there are some behaviors that teachers and parents need to focus on with the child. These include; Attachment, self-help skills, empowerment, pro-social skills, and self-esteem. There are strategies for parents and teachers to focus on when these behaviors need to be dealt with. When the family and teacher are working together it only provides a more well-rounded education for the child. References Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2009). Child, family, and community: Family-centered early care and education. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Family-Centered Care for Children Needing Specialized Health and

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