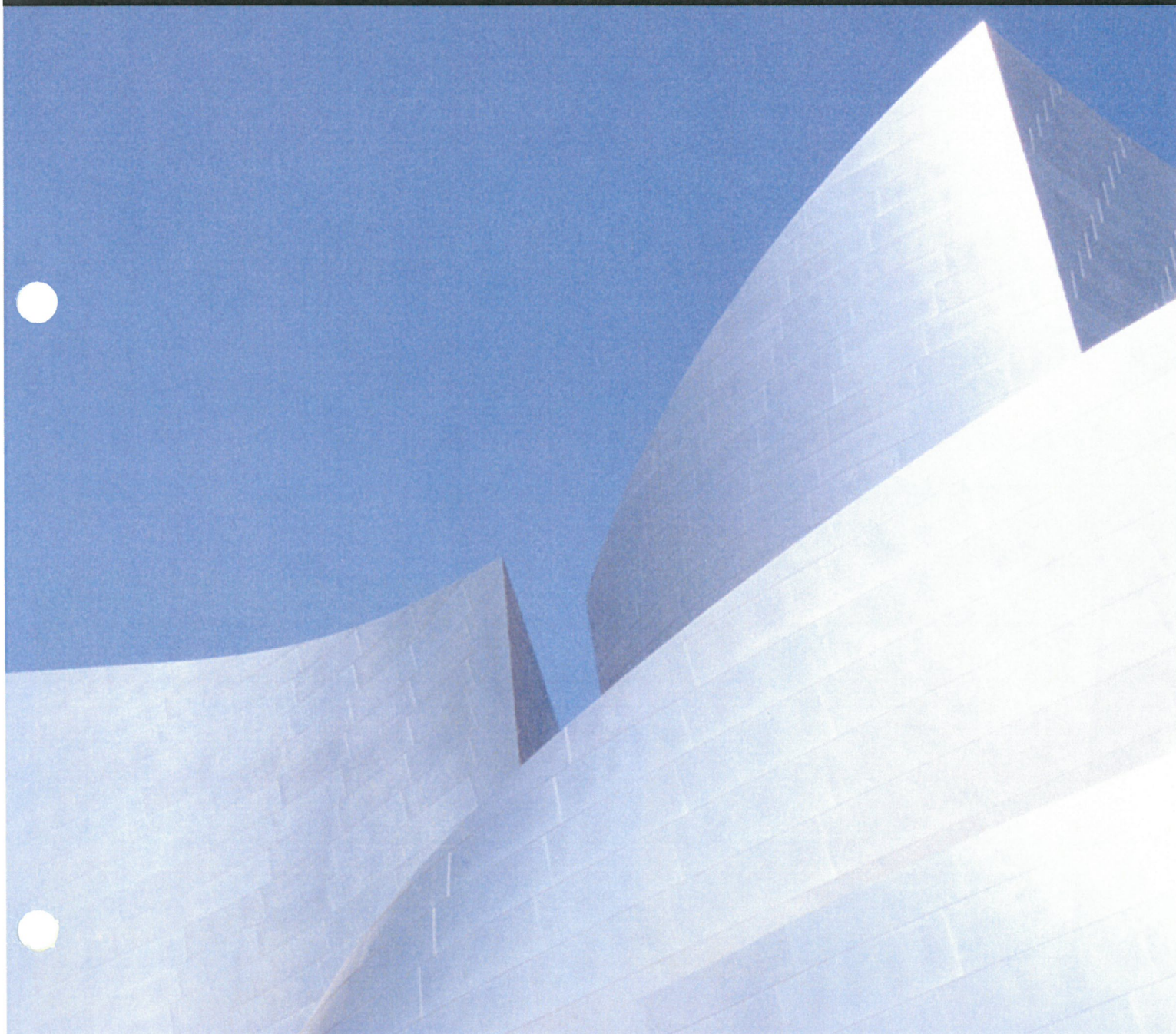Set up your classroom
environment and rules to
promote predictability
and opportunities for
success

Checklist
Classroom Structure

Classroom Structure Checklist
Positive Education Program

☐ Self-Assessment   ☐ Observation by _____

Date: ___/___/____   Staff: _____

Atmosphere & Appearance

Is the classroom:

____ Neat   *labels   ____ Clean

____ Organized   ____ Pleasant, inviting place to be

Are there prominent, accurate visual displays of:

____ Individual personal goals   ____ Premack schedule

____ Classroom Rules   ____ Level System

____ Student / Group Achievements ____ Values & Responsibilities

Division of Space

Are there defined areas for:

____ Individual students   ____ Small group work, meetings, etc.

____ Multiple groups to operate ____ Staff / teaching materials

____ Choice / Break time activities ____ Quiet Corner / Area

Room Arrangement

____ Considers that students are influenced by those around them & distractors

____ Considers presenting problems / individual needs of students

____ Allows staff to monitor room from any vantage point

Time Management

Classroom Schedule

___ Based upon Premack Principle   ___ Length of intervals appropriate

___ Readable / posted near clock   ___ Followed consistently

___ Used as contingency management tool effectively

___ Appropriate allocation of time (academics, meetings, breaks, other activities)

Breaks, Choice Time

___ Forced choice to structure   ___ Contingency-based

___ Sufficient (i.e., restroom)   ___ Timely (restroom, lunch)

Transitions

___ Warning announcement made

___ Initiated on schedule

___ Point of Order routine to bring momentum to a halt

___ Rules, schedule, etc. reviewed as necessary

___ Clear instructions given (to close current activity)

___ Task instructions given, modeled if necessary (to start new activity)

___ Students complying are praised, others cued

___ Accomplished quickly (~ 2 minutes)

Rules

____ Stated positively   ____ Limited in number

____ Understood by group   ____ Behavior-specific

____ Referred to consistently   ____ Enforced consistently & fairly

Routines & Rituals

____ Routines are in place and/or rituals being used to structure

____ Morning arrival   ____ Lunch

____ Leaving / entering the classroom   ____ Dismissal

____ Transitions   ____ Establishing order when necessary

____ Group Meetings   ____ _____

____ Approximate normal expectations / Age-appropriate

____ Phased in and out to eliminated artificial structure when not needed (rituals)

Ceremony & Rituals

____ Group referred to by name (not number)

____ Group shares "an identity" – a positive group concept

____ Group's theme is evident in displays, name, etc.

____ Group celebrates successes and achievements meaningfully

____ Group values & traditions encouraged

Behavior Management Skills & Techniques

___ Starts all activities from a point of order

___ Re-establishes order as needed

___ Delivers reinforcement effectively
(How soon? How consistently? On what schedule? How much?)

___ Uses varied means of genuine, age-appropriate reinforcement
(verbal, touch, proximity, choice, novelty, primary, secondary, generalized, etc.)

___ Reinforces specific behaviors

___ Maintains **at least** a 8:1 ratio of praise to criticism

___ Shapes behavior by reinforcing successive approximations of desired behavior

___ States contingencies precisely – emphasizes positive contingencies

___ Attends to students demonstrating expected behaviors

___ Sets limits early

___ Uses ignoring appropriately and effectively

___ Cues and prompts (w/o nagging)

___ Cruises regularly

___ Models new behaviors, guides practice, and gives specific feedback
(teaches)

___ Responds with empathy

___ Uses humor appropriately and effectively

___ Uses natural and logical consequences effectively, safely

___ Avoids the use of punishment (aversives)

___ Uses group contingencies effectively

___ Avoids accidental learning of undesirable behavior

Contingency Contracts

____ Used with individuals and groups who need additional incentives

____ Negotiated & signed   ____ Positive & success-oriented

____ Written & understood   ____ Terms fair & realistic

____ Compatible with other systems   ____ Reinforcers delivered

Rating and Level System

____ Ratings completed daily

____ Feedback shared regularly

____ Ratings made in accordance with behavioral anchors

____ References made to levels regularly to lend significance & motivation

____ Other classroom systems (e.g. bonus points, trip clubs) compatible

____ Additional privileges appropriate, sufficient

____ Intervention meetings held in a timely fashion

____ Home-School contacts, passports used

____ Ecology Contracts implemented & monitored in a timely fashion

____ Individual Contracts implemented & monitored in a timely fashion

____ Service Projects required / facilitated / monitored

____ Disciplinary action used according to philosophy and procedure

____ Consultations with support staff as needed

Instruction

___ Uses varied assessment techniques (pre & post) to make decisions

___ Whole group, small group, and individual instruction used effectively

___ Sponge / Warm up activities eliminate "dead time"

___ Lessons are pre-planned

___ Varied instructional techniques / materials utilized

___ Active participation and engagement encouraged

___ Evidence of motivation strategies being utilized

___ Effective questioning strategies (e.g. question first, name called second, wait time provided, group responses, etc.)

___ Uses models / modeling and examples effectively

___ Checks for understanding

___ Sufficient use of guided practice

___ Effective use of seatwork / independent practice activities

Group Meetings

___ Occur at regularly scheduled times (except problem-solving meetings)

___ Have a reinforcing activity scheduled to follow (when needed)

___ Uses group leader when able, encourages member to member interaction

___ Start from a point of order, review rules

___ Follow an appropriate agenda or routine (given type of meeting)

___ Include all classroom staff as participating members of the group

___ Conclude with an evaluation of behavior / participation during meeting

POSITIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
Designing a Premack Schedule

> *Make a list of five high interest activities that could be incorporated into the design of a Premack schedule. Then, develop a schedule to reinforce the probability that your student(s) will complete the low interest activities in the schedule.*

What activities could you incorporate into the schedule that would be of high interest to your student (or group)?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Premack Schedule

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If necessary, continue on the back.

pep
positive education program

Resources

<u>Books on Collaborative Problem Solving</u>:

Greene, R.W. (2010). *The explosive child: A new approach for understanding and helping easily frustrated, "chronically inflexible" children (4th ed.).* New York: HarperCollins.

Greene, R.W. (2009*). Lost at school: Why our kids with behavioral challenges are still falling through the cracks and how we can help them (2nd ed.).* New York: Scribner.

<u>Selected Papers/Articles</u>:

Greene, R.W. (2011). The aggressive, explosive child. In M. Augustyn, B. Zuckerman, & E. B. Caronna (Eds.), *The Zuckerman Parker Handbook of Behavioral and Developmental Pediatrics for Primary Care (3rdd Ed.).* Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins, 282-284.

Greene, R. W. (2010). Collaborative Problem Solving. In R. Murrihy, A. Kidman, & T. Ollendick (Eds.), *A clinician's handbook for the assessment and treatment of conduct problems in youth.* New York: Springer Publishing, 193-220.

Greene, R.W. (2009). Conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder. In J. Thomas & M. Hersen (Eds.), *Handbook of Clinical Psychology Competencies.* New York: Springer Publishing, pp. 1329-1350.

Greene, R.W., Ablon, S.A., & Martin, A. (2006). Innovations: Child Psychiatry: Use of Collaborative Problem Solving to reduce seclusion and restraint in child and adolescent inpatient units. *Psychiatric Services, 57*(5), 610-616.

Greene, R.W., Ablon, J.S., Monuteaux, M., Goring, J., Henin, A., Raezer, L., Edwards, G., & Markey, J., & Rabbitt, S. (2004). Effectiveness of Collaborative Problem Solving in affectively dysregulated youth with oppositional defiant disorder: Initial findings. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 72,* 1157-1164.

Greene, R.W., Biederman, J., Zerwas, S., Monuteaux, M., Goring, J., Faraone, S.V. (2002). Psychiatric comorbidity, family dysfunction, and social impairment in referred youth with oppositional defiant disorder. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 159,* 1214-1224.

<u>Support</u>:

For additional resources, support, to learn more about consultation services and continuing education opportunities, and to advocate for kids with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges, visit the website of Dr. Greene's non-profit organization, **Lives in the Balance** (www.livesinthebalance.org). And be sure to join in on Dr. Greene's web-based radio programs for educators and parents (or listen to the archives)…details on the Lives in the Balance website.

<u>About the Speaker:</u>

Dr. Greene is Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the Cambridge Health Alliance, adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech, and Senior Lecturer in the school psychology program of the Department of Education at Tufts University. He is no longer associated in any way with the General Hospital Corporation/Massachusetts General Hospital or any of its programs. He can be reached through the Contact page on the Lives in the Balance website.

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR BEHAVIORALLY CHALLENGING KIDS

If we don't start doing right by kids with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges, we're going to keep losing them at an astounding rate. Doing the right thing isn't an option…it's an imperative. There are lives in the balance, and we all need to do everything we can to make sure those lives aren't lost.

Behaviorally challenging kids have the right:

- To have their behavioral challenges understood as a form of developmental delay in the domains of flexibility/adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem-solving.

- To have people -- parents, teachers, mental health clinicians, doctors, coaches...everyone -- understand that challenging behavior is no less a form of developmental delay than delays in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and is deserving of the same compassion and approach as are applied to these other cognitive delays.

- Not to be counterproductively labeled as bratty, spoiled, manipulative, attention-seeking, coercive, limit-testing, controlling, or unmotivated.

- To have adults understand that challenging behavior occurs in response to specific unsolved problems -- homework, screen time, teeth brushing, clothing choices, sibling interactions, and so forth -- and that these unsolved problems are usually highly predictable and can therefore be solved proactively.

- To have adults understand that the primary goal of intervention is to collaboratively solve these problems in a way that is realistic and mutually satisfactory so that they don't precipitate challenging behavior any more.

- To have adults (and classmates) understand that time-outs, detentions, suspensions, expulsion, and isolation do not solve problems or "build character" but rather often make things worse.

- To have adults take a genuine interest in their concerns or perspectives, and to have those concerns and perspectives viewed as legitimate, important, and worth listening to and clarifying.

- To have adults in their lives who do not resort to physical intervention and are knowledgeable about and proficient in other means of solving problems.

- To have adults who understand that solving problems collaboratively -- rather than insisting on blind adherence to authority -- is what prepares kids for the demands they will face in the real world.

- To have adults understand that blind obedience to authority is dangerous, and that life in the real world requires expressing one's concerns, listening to the concerns of others, and working toward mutually satisfactory solutions.

ASSESSMENT OF LAGGING SKILLS & UNSOLVED PROBLEMS (Rev. 8/29/11)

Child's Name: _____   Date: _____

Instructions: The ALSUP is intended for use as a *discussion guide* rather than a freestanding check-list or rating scale. It should be used to identify specific lagging skills and unsolved problems that pertain to a particular child or adolescent. If a lagging skill applies, check it off and then (before moving on to the next lagging skill) identify examples (unsolved problems) in which that lagging skill is causing difficulty. Unsolved problems should specify the explicit conditions in which the child or adolescent is having difficulty meeting expectations (a non-exhaustive list of potential unsolved problems is shown at the bottom of the page). To assist in prioritizing, also rate the degree to which each recorded unsolved problem is setting in motion challenging episodes.

LAGGING SKILLS	EXAMPLES (UNSOLVED PROBLEMS)	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Difficulty handling transitions, shifting from one mindset or task to another	1.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty doing things in a logical sequence or prescribed order	2.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty persisting on challenging or tedious tasks	3.	0	1	2	3
Poor sense of time					
Difficulty maintaining focus					
Difficulty considering the likely outcomes or consequences of actions (impulsive)	4.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty considering a range of solutions to a problem					
Difficulty expressing concerns, needs, or thoughts in words	5.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty understanding what is being said					
Difficulty managing emotional response to frustration so as to think rationally	6.	0	1	2	3
Chronic irritability and/or anxiety significantly impede capacity for problem-solving or heighten frustration					
Difficulty seeing the "grays"/concrete, literal, black-and-white, thinking	7.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty deviating from rules, routine					
Difficulty handling unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, novelty	8.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty shifting from original idea, plan, or solution					
Difficulty taking into account situational factors that would suggest the need to adjust a plan of action					
Inflexible, inaccurate interpretations/cognitive distortions or biases (e.g., "Everyone's out to get me," "Nobody likes me," "You always blame me, "It's not fair," "I'm stupid")	9.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty attending to or accurately interpreting social cues/poor perception of social nuances	10.	0	1	2	3
Difficulty starting conversations, entering groups, connecting with people/lacking other basic social skills					
Difficulty seeking attention in appropriate ways					
Difficulty appreciating how his/her behavior is affecting other people					
Difficulty empathizing with others, appreciating another person's perspective or point of view					
Difficulty appreciating how s/he is coming across or being perceived by others					

EXAMPLES OF UNSOLVED PROBLEMS

HOME: Waking up/getting out of bed in the morning; Completing morning routine/getting ready for school; Sensory hypersensitivities (specify); Starting or completing homework (specify); Time spent in front of a screen (TV, video games, computer); Going to/getting ready for bed at night; Sibling interactions (specify); Cleaning room/completing household chores (specify)

SCHOOL: Shifting from one specific task to another (specify); Getting started on/completing class assignment (specify); Interactions with a particular classmate/teacher (specify); Behavior in hallway/at recess/in cafeteria/on school bus/waiting in line (specify); Handling disappointment/losing at a game/not coming in first/not being first in line (specify)

PLAN B FLOWCHART (7-12-10)

Child's Name _____ Date _____

UNSOLVED PROBLEM #1	UNSOLVED PROBLEM #2	UNSOLVED PROBLEM #3
▼	▼	▼
Adult Taking the Lead on Plan B	Adult Taking the Lead on Plan B	Adult Taking the Lead on Plan B
▼	▼	▼
Kid's Concerns Identified (Empathy Step) Date _____	Kid's Concerns Identified (Empathy Step) Date _____	Kid's Concerns Identified (Empathy Step) Date _____
▼	▼	▼
Adult Concerns Identified (Define the Problem Step) Date _____	Adult Concerns Identified (Define the Problem Step) Date _____	Adult Concerns Identified (Define the Problem Step) Date _____
▼	▼	▼
Solution Agreed Upon (Invitation Step) Date _____	Solution Agreed Upon (Invitation Step) Date _____	Solution Agreed Upon (Invitation Step) Date _____
▼	▼	▼
Problem Solved? Yes _____ Date _____ No _____ Comment:	Problem Solved? Yes _____ Date _____ No _____ Comment:	Problem Solved? Yes _____ Date _____ No _____ Comment:

Plan B Cheat Sheet

EMPATHY STEP

Ingredient/Goal:
Gather information about and achieve a clear understanding of the kid's concern or perspective on the unsolved problem you're discussing.

Words:

Initial Inquiry (neutral observation): "I've noticed that (insert highly specific unsolved problem)… what's up?"

Drilling for Information: usually focuses on the who, what, where, and when of the unsolved problem, and why the problem occurs under some conditions and not others.

More Help:

– If you're not sure what to say next, want more info, or are confused by something the kid has said, say:
– "How so?"
– "I'm confused."
– "I don't quite understand."
– "Can you tell me more about that?"
– "Let me think about that for a second."

– If the kid doesn't talk or says "I don't know", try to figure out why:
– Maybe your observation wasn't very neutral
– Maybe your unsolved problem was too vague
– Maybe you're using Emergency Plan B instead of Proactive Plan B
– Maybe you're using Plan A
– Maybe he really doesn't know
– he might need time to think
– he might need problem broken down into its component parts

What You're Thinking:
"What don't I yet understand about the kid's concern or perspective? What doesn't make sense to me yet? What do I need to ask to understand it better?"

Don't…
– skip the Empathy step
– assume you already know what the kid's concern is and treat the Empathy step as if it is a formality
– rush through the Empathy step
– leave the Empathy step before you completely understand the kid's concern or perspective
– talk about solutions yet

DEFINE THE PROBLEM STEP

Ingredient/Goal:
Enter the concern of the second party (often the adult) into consideration

Words:
"The thing is (insert adult concern)…" or "My concern is (insert adult concern)…"

More Help:
Most adult concerns fall into one of two categories:
– How the problem is affecting the kid
– How the problem is affecting others

What You're Thinking:
"Have I been clear about my concern? Does the child understand what I have said?"

Don't…
– start talking about solutions yet
– sermonize, judge, lecture, use sarcasm

INVITATION STEP

Ingredient/Goal:
Brainstorm solutions that are realistic (meaning both parties can do what they are agreeing to) and mutually satisfactory (meaning the solution truly addresses the concerns of both parties)

Words:
Restate the concerns that were identified in the first two steps, usually beginning with "I wonder if there is a way…"

More Help:
–Stick as closely to the concerns that were identified in the first two steps
–While it's a good idea to give the kid the first opportunity to propose a solution, generating solutions is a team effort
–It's a good idea to consider the odds of a given solution actually working …if you think the odds are below 60-70 percent, consider what it is that's making you skeptical and talk about it.
–This step always ends with agreement to return to Plan B if the first solution doesn't stand the test of time

What You're Thinking:
"Have I summarized both concerns accurately? Have we truly considered whether both parties can do what they've agreed to? Does the solution truly address the concerns of both parties? What's my estimate of the odds of this solution working?"

Don't…
–Rush through this step either
–Enter this step with preordained, "ingenious" solutions
–Sign off on solutions that both parties can't actually perform
–Sign off on solutions that don't truly address the concerns of both parties.

A more accurate, compassionate, productive understanding of (and approach to helping) behaviorally challenging kids

Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) is a model for understanding and helping kids with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. The model was first described in the book, *The Explosive Child*, by Dr. Ross Greene, which was originally published in 1998 and is now in its fourth edition (2010).

The CPS approach sets forth two major tenets. First, challenging behavior in kids is best understood as the result of lagging cognitive skills (in the general domains of flexibility/adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem solving) rather than as the result of passive, permissive, inconsistent, noncontingent parenting. And second, the best way to reduce challenging episodes is by collaboratively solving the problems setting them in motion in the first place (rather than by imposing adult will and intensive use of reward and punishment procedures). Here are some of the important questions answered by the model:

Question: *Why are challenging kids challenging?*
Answer: Because they're lacking the skills not to be challenging. If they had the skills, they wouldn't be challenging. That's because – and this is perhaps the key theme of the model – *Kids do well if they can*. And because (here's another key theme) *Doing well is always preferable to not doing well (if a kid has the skills to do well in the first place)*. This, of course, is a dramatic departure from the view of challenging kids as attention-seeking, manipulative, coercive, limit-testing, and poorly motivated. It's a completely different set of lenses, supported by research in the neurosciences over the past 30-40 years, and it has dramatic implications for how caregivers go about helping such kids.

Question: *When are challenging kids challenging?*
Answer: When the demands or expectations being placed upon them exceed the skills that they have to respond adaptively. Of course, that's when everyone looks bad: when they're lacking the skills to look good. Thus, an important goal for helpers is to identify the skills a challenging kid is lacking. An even more important goal is to identify the specific conditions or situations in which a challenging behavior is occurring in a particular challenging kid. In the CPS model, these conditions are referred to as *unsolved problems* and they tend to be highly predictable. Identifying lagging skills and unsolved problems is accomplished through use of an instrument called the *Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP)*. You can find the ALSUP in The Paperwork section of the website of *Lives in the Balance,* the non-profit Dr. Greene founded to help disseminate the CPS model (*www.livesinthebalance.org*).

Question: *What behaviors do challenging kids exhibit when they don't have the skills to respond adaptively to certain demands?*
Answer: Challenging kids let us know they're struggling to meet demands and expectations in some fairly common ways: whining, pouting, sulking, withdrawing, crying, screaming, swearing, hitting, spitting, kicking, throwing, breaking, lying, stealing, and so forth. But what a kid *does* when he's having trouble meeting demands and expectations isn't the most important part (though it may feel that way)...*why* and *when* he's doing these things are much more important.

Question: *What should we be doing differently to help these kids better than we're helping them now?*
Answer: If challenging behavior is set in motion by lagging skills and not lagging motivation, then it's easy to understand why rewarding and punishing a kid may not make things better. Since challenging behavior occurs in response to highly predictable unsolved problems, then challenging kids – and the rest of us – are a whole lot better off when adults help them solve those problems. But if we solve them unilaterally, through imposition of adult will (referred to in the CPS model as "Plan A"), then we'll only increase the likelihood of challenging episodes and we won't solve any problems durably. Better to solve those problems collaboratively ("Plan B") so the kid is a fully invested participant, solutions are more durable, and (over time) the kid -- and often the adults as well -- learn the skills they were lacking all along. *Plan B* is comprised of three basic ingredients. The first ingredient – called the *Empathy* step – involves gathering information from the child so as to achieve the clearest understanding of his or her concern or perspective on a given unsolved problem. The second ingredient (called the *Define the Problem* step) involves entering into consideration the adult concern or perspective on the same unsolved problem. The third ingredient (called the *Invitation step*) involves having the adult and kid brainstorm solutions so as to arrive at a plan of action that is both realistic and mutually satisfactory...in other words, a solution that addresses the concerns of both parties and that both parties can actually perform.

Question: *Where has the CPS model been applied?*
Answer: In countless families, schools, inpatient psychiatry units, group homes, residential facilities, and juvenile detention facilities, the CPS model has been shown to be an effective way to reduce conflict and teach kids the skills they need to function adaptively in the real world.

Question: *Where can I learn more about Plan B and the CPS model?*
Answer: The website of the non-profit *Lives in the Balance* website is a very good place to start. It has a ton of resources to help you learn about and apply the CPS model, including streaming video, audio programming, commentary, support, and lots more.
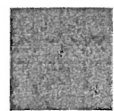
Lives in the Balance

Founded in 2010 by Dr. Ross Greene, *Lives in the Balance* provides on-line resources and programming to help people better understand behaviorally challenging kids and implement the *Collaborative Problem Solving* **(CPS)** approach. Our mission is to advocate on behalf of kids with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges, and to support the parents, teachers, and others who are trying to help them.

Lives in the Balance needs your help! **Here's what you can do right now!**

LEARN — Explore video programming explaining and demonstrating the CPS model

SHARE — Tell us about your efforts to help a challenging child or student and (perhaps) how the CPS model has had an impact
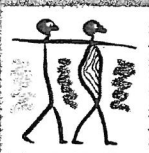
CONNECT — Be part of the discussion: ask questions, tune-in to radio broadcasts, find support

COLLABORATE — Take action on behalf of challenging kids and their parents, teachers, and other caregivers

SIGN UP for **Action Plan *B***
the *Lives in the Balance* Call to Action

NOW WHAT?
Start Taking Action!

VISIT WWW.LIVESINTHEBALANCE.ORG

EXPLOSIVE, NONCOMPLIANT, DISRUPTIVE, AGGRESSIVE KIDS: WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T AND HOW TO TURN IT AROUND

Program Objectives

Please use the objectives below to answer the online objective questions.

At the completion of this seminar, I have been able to achieve these seminar objectives:

1. Explain and interpret challenging behaviors in an entirely new way, setting the stage for more effective intervention.
2. Discuss why conventional reward and punishment procedures may not be effective for many challenging kids.
3. Assess the various cognitive skills found lacking in challenging kids.
4. Identify and prioritize unsolved problems precipitating challenging behavior.
5. Summarize the three basic mechanisms by which adults handle problems and unmet expectations in kids (Plans A, B, and C).
6. Explain how the 3 ingredients of "Plan B" reduce the intensity and frequency of challenging behaviors.
7. Implement "Plan B" in schools, homes and restrictive therapeutic facilities.

**If there are no additional objectives above, please select "not applicable"

NOTES

NOTES