

# ***Ask the Expert***

## ***Educator Edition***

### **Classroom Management Supports for ADHD Behaviors in Early Childhood Education Settings**



#### **Desiree W. Murray, Ph.D.**

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The National Resource Center on ADHD: A Program of CHADD is the nation's clearinghouse for evidence-based information on ADHD. This *Ask the Expert* webcast is supported by Cooperative Agreement Number NU38DD005376 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and does not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC. The National Resource Center on ADHD, CHADD and the CDC do not endorse, support, represent or guarantee the accuracy of any content presented or endorse any opinions expressed in this webcast.



## Recording available

✓ Use registration link

<https://goto.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1106235>

✓ CHADD website

[www.chadd.org/asktheexpert](http://www.chadd.org/asktheexpert)

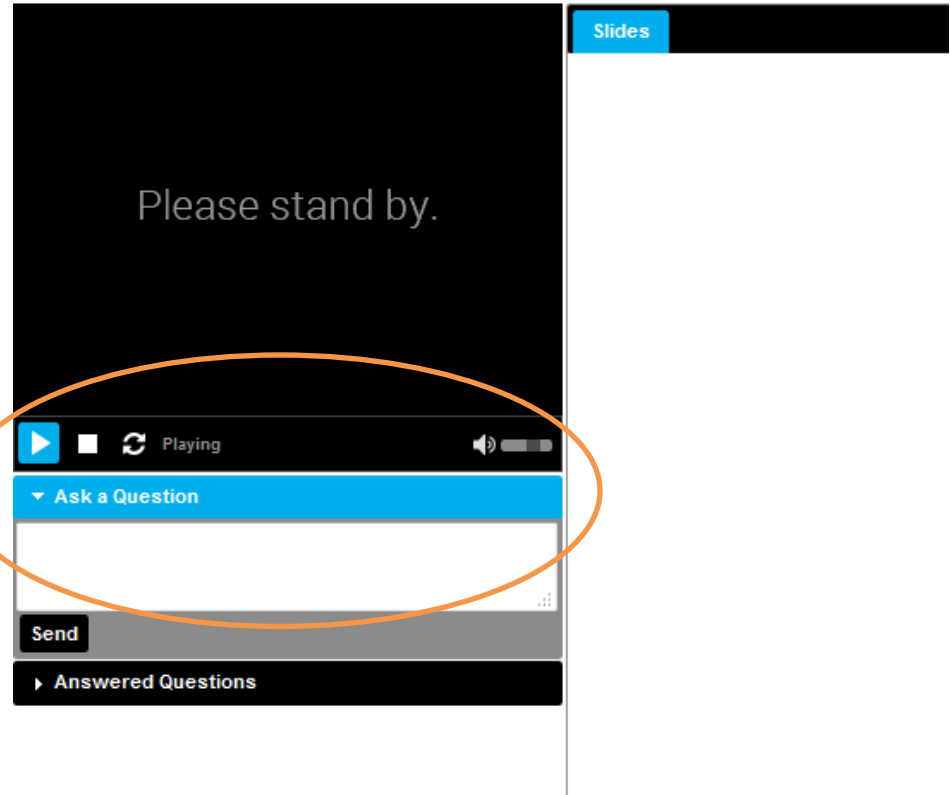


Slides available under resources



Twitter feed: #AskADHD

To Ask A Question:



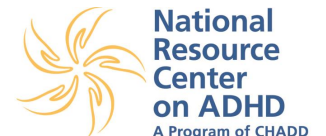


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Resource Specialist



1-800-233-4050  
Mon-Fri, 1-5pm ET



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- ✓ Evaluate our webinars
- ✓ Identify future topics
- ✓ Add features and create updates

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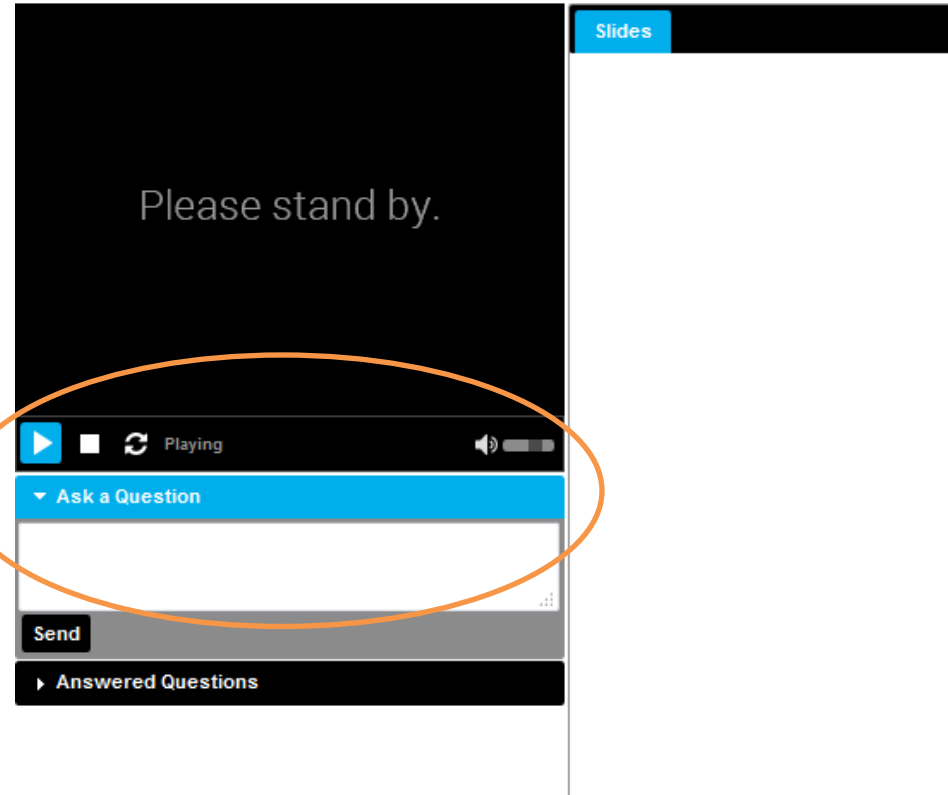
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# Disclosure

Dr. Murray is a trained mentor in the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Program, and receives compensation from community organizations for providing trainings and consultation.

# Agenda

- Understanding ADHD behaviors in early childhood settings
- Classroom structures and teacher practices that support positive behaviors
- Effective approaches to incentives and discipline
- Teaching self-regulation



# **Understanding ADHD Behaviors**

**IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM  
MANAGEMENT SUPPORTS**

# Common Preschool ADHD Behaviors

- Difficulty sitting still, always on the go
- Noise-making, blurting out in circle time
- Unable to wait, easily frustrated
- Not following directions or “forgetting” rules
- Unable to stick with tasks or activities
- Unable to keep hands to self – hits, kicks, bites



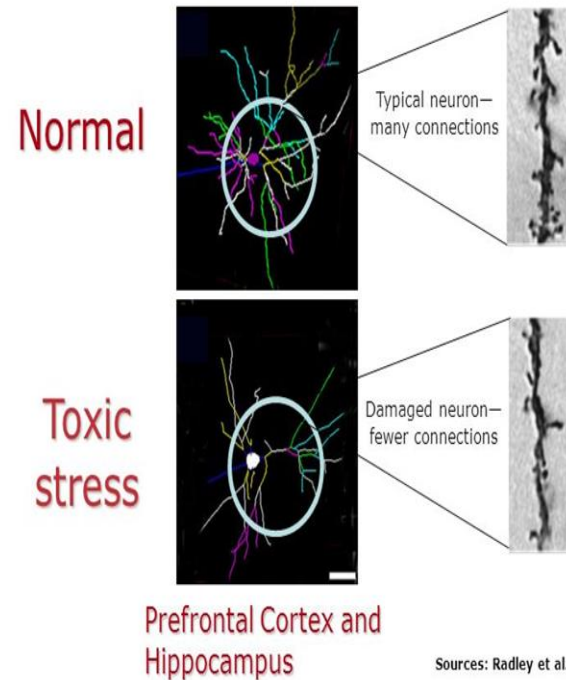
# Causes of “ADHD” Behaviors


- **Biology/genetics** – attention problems, “high motor” (hyperactivity), impulsivity, inflexible or sensation-seeking temperament
- **Developmental or language delays** – can’t understand rules/directions or express needs with words
- **Stressed caregivers** – “attention-starved” children, distrust adults, lack confidence, low motivation
- **Adversity in the environment** – can’t focus, over-react to frustration and stress

# Impact of Stress on Attention and Behavior

- Half of US children have experienced at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACES)
  - 22% have 2 or more
- ADHD behaviors associated with:
  - ACES
  - Poverty, food insecurity
  - Violence in neighborhoods
- Adversity can cause brain-behavior changes that look like ADHD

## Toxic Stress Changes Brain Architecture



Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY


# Understanding Challenging ADHD Behaviors

- Reflects delayed “self-regulation”
  - Sustain attention, delay gratification, inhibit impulses, regulate emotions
- Misbehavior is not typically willful or intentional
- Behavior is an attempt to communicate or solve a problem without the necessary skills
- Behavior serves a purpose



# Implication of Delayed Self-Regulation

- Behavior may be inconsistent
- Typical strategies may not “work”
  - Need more external structure and support
  - Need more learning trials
  - Less responsive to consequences
- Children may be difficult to like!
- BUT, self-regulation skills can be taught



# **Classroom Structures and Teacher Practices that Support Positive Behaviors**

# ADHD-Friendly Classroom Structure

|  | Is this in place in my classroom? |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Clearly defined centers and seating space in circle              | <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Challenging students seated near teacher or positive peer models | <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Calm-down area   | <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Routines established for daily activities                        | <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| “Down-time” limited; transition warnings given                   | <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Rules are taught, reviewed, and actively implemented             | <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Clear expectations and instructions                              | <input type="checkbox"/>          |

# Keep Children Engaged during Circle Time

- Keep instructional time short/provide “wiggle breaks”
- Give child a way to be actively involved
  - Use his/her name in examples
  - Have him/her hold a book or be a “helper”
- Teach listening strategies, e.g., “1-2-3, eyes on me”, “show me listening ears”
- Use nonverbal signals to get kids back on task
- Praise or use incentives for “eyes on teacher” (good listening behavior ) frequently

# Use Attention Strategically


- Praise and “Catch” the child being good
  - Be specific
  - Praise immediately
  - Praise effort and improvement
  - Praise 4 x as often as redirection or correction
- Ignore minor inappropriate behaviors
  - Actively ignore the behavior then praise
  - Be consistent
- Redirect
  - Tell the child what you want instead
  - Be brief and matter of fact



# Effective Use of Incentives

- Always combine with praise!
- Select 1-2 SPECIFIC positive behaviors to target at a time
- Pick small, achievable goals
  - If no success for 3-4 days, re-evaluate
- Pick meaningful incentives for that child
  - Try new things over time!
- Fade incentive after behavior is established
- Keep separate from punishment system





# **Effective Approaches to Discipline for Young Children with ADHD Behaviors**

# Foundation for Effective Discipline Plans

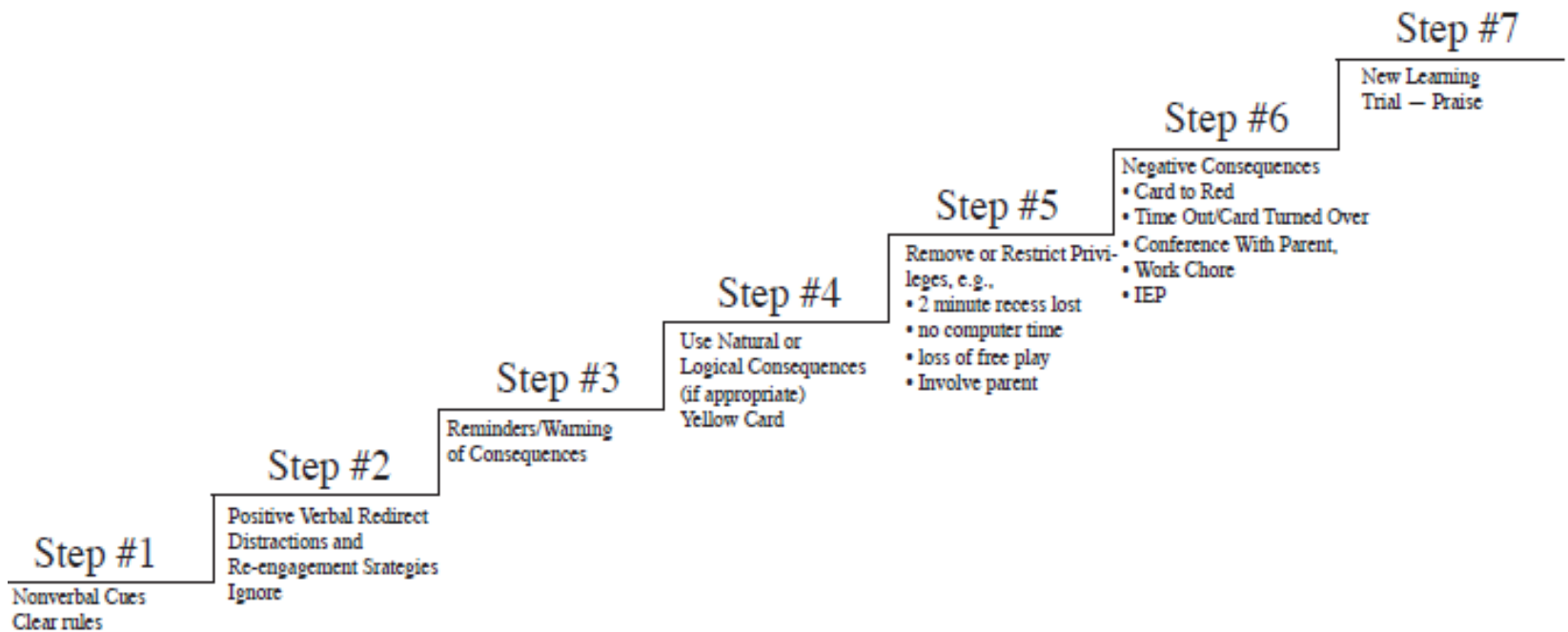
- Based on positive, proactive classroom management
  - Expectations and instructions are clear and specific
  - High rate of praise in context of positive relationships with teachers
  - Powerful and variable incentives are used
- Targets a few specific behaviors at a time

# Principles of Effective Consequences

- Develop a discipline hierarchy
  - Use the least intrusive strategy first
- Brief, immediate, followed by another learning opportunity
  - Smaller more frequent better than larger infrequent
- Be firm and follow through but keep your cool!
- Avoid negative attention and power struggles

# Discipline Hierarchies/Steps

## For Nondisruptive & Disruptive Behavior



Foundation: “Massive” Attention/Praise/Encouragement for Prosocial Behavior

“Always choose the lowest, least intrusive first.”



# Teaching Self-Regulation

# Provide “Co-Regulation”

- Predictable, structured, supportive *environments*
- Warm, nurturing, and responsive *relationships*
- Teaching and coaching *self-regulation skills*



Murray et al., 2015. Foundations for understanding self-regulation from an applied developmental perspective. OPRE Report # 2015-21; Administration for Children and Families.

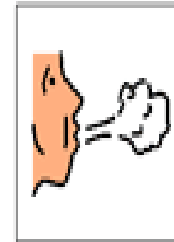
# Self-Regulation Skills to Teach

- Waiting (**delay gratification**)/ using patience muscles
- Staying focused and thinking hard (**attention**)
- Trying different ways to solve a problem (**cognitive flexibility**)
- Trying your friend's idea (**social flexibility**)
- Sticking with something when it is hard (**persistence**)
- Using words to say how you feel (**emotional literacy**)
- Staying calm when you are frustrated or upset (**emotion regulation**)

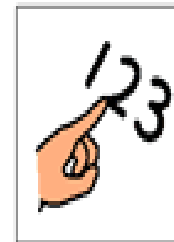
# How to “teach” self-regulation

- **Model** self-regulation behaviors and label what you are doing
- **Describe** when child is showing self-regulation
- **Praise and provide incentives** for self-regulation behaviors
- Create lots of **practice opportunities**
- Provide enough “**scaffolding**” to set children up for success

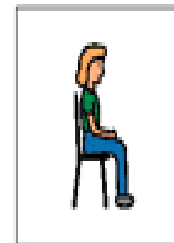
Calm Down



take a deep breath



count to 5



rest in my chair

# How to “Coach” Self-Regulation

- Describe examples of self-regulation that you see, using descriptive commenting:
  - “You are....”
  - “I see....”
  - “It looks like....”
- Praise self-regulation behaviors
- If a child is having trouble regulating:
  - Give coping statement
  - Make a positive prediction



# Teacher Programs for Supporting Preschoolers with ADHD

- Daily Behavior Report Cards
  - Several small intervention studies showing benefit for preschoolers with ADHD
- Incredible Years (IY) Teacher Classroom Management Program
  - Evidence of improvements in ADHD behaviors at school for at-risk preschoolers
- Teacher-Child Interaction Therapy (TCIT)
  - Evidence of improvements in disruptive behaviors

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# Upcoming Webcasts

## Ask the Expert *Educator Edition*

Tailoring learning settings to engage young children with ADHD

Tuesday August 16, 2016 at 2pm ET

Guest expert: Mary Wonderlick

Building partnerships with parents and caregivers

Tuesday August 30, 2016 at 2pm ET

Guest expert: Lee Kern, Ph.D.

Register Now at

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