

CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

Parent Notes & Homework - Session 9

👉 RULES OF THUMB TO REMEMBER:

1. **"Where there are no limits, there is no security."** Consistent Limits = Security in the Relationship. When you don't follow through, you lose credibility and harm your relationship with your child.
2. **"Don't try to change everything at once!"** Focus on 'big' issues that ultimately will mean the most to your child's development of positive self-esteem and feelings of competence and usefulness.

Notes (use back for additional notes):

Homework Assignments:

1. Review *Generalizing Limit Setting to Outside the Play Session*—if applicable, report on a time you used A-C-T outside of the play session.
 What happened _____
 What you said _____
 How child responded (verbally or nonbally) _____
2. Notice the number of times you touch your child in interactions outside the play session (hugging, patting on the head, a touch on the arm, etc.) and keep count this week. # of physical contacts: _____
3. A related assignment is to play-wrestle with your children. (Example: In a two-parent family with small children, Mom and kids can sneak up on Dad and try to get him down on the floor, accompanied by lots of fun and laughter.)
4. Choose one issue you are struggling with outside of the play session to focus on and report back next week on how you can use your play session skills to respond to the issue. _____

5. Conduct play session (same time & place)—review *Play Session Do's & Don'ts & Play Session Procedure Checklist*
 - a. Complete *Parent Play Session Notes*.
 - b. Use *Play Session Skills Checklist* to note what you thought you did well, and select one skill you want to work on in your next play session.
 _____ ***I will bring my videotape for next week (if videotaping at clinic: my appt. day/time _____).***
6. Additional assignment:

Reminder: Write third note to your child of focus, as well as other children in the family, pointing out another positive character quality you appreciate about the child. (Vary how the note is delivered.)

CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

Advanced Limit Setting: Giving Choices as Consequences for Non-Compliance - Session 9

Play Session Example: After parent has stated that the playdough is for playing with on the tray, 5-year-old Billy dumps it on the floor. Next, parent follows the A-C-T method of limit setting: "Billy, I know that you want to play with the playdough over there, but the floor (carpet, etc.) is not for putting playdough on; (pointing to tray) the tray is for putting the playdough on." Billy continues to ignore parent and begins to smash the playdough on the floor. Parent may patiently restate limit up to three times before beginning the next step of stating "If-Then" choices (consequences) for following or not following limit.

Note: This example assumes that parent has chosen a location for the play session where the floor surface can be easily cleaned by parent after the session. (of child *begins* to put playdoh on carpet, parent can reach out and guide the playdoh can to the tray as the A-C-T limit is set)

Next step: Begin "If-Then" choice-giving method to provide consequence for unacceptable behavior. Note the number of times the words "choose" or "choice" are used! Remember that the intent is for the child to bring himself under control; therefore, patience is the order of the day. Children need time and practice to learn self-control.

Example: "Billy, If you choose to play with the playdough on the tray (pointing to tray), then you choose to play with the playdough today. If you choose to continue to play with the playdough on the floor, then you choose not to play with the playdough for the rest of today." (Pause.) Patiently restate if child does not make the choice to comply with the limit. (If no answer and Billy continues to play with playdough on floor, then he has made his choice.) "Billy, looks like you've chosen to put the playdough up for today. You can choose to give me the playdough, or you can choose for me to put the playdough up for you; which do you choose?" If child begins to cry and beg for the playdough, parent must be tough and follow through, acknowledging child's feelings and giving child hope that he will have a chance to make a different choice in the next play session. "Billy, I understand that you're unhappy that you chose to have the playdough put up for today, but you can choose to play with it in our next play session."

In the above example, if at any point the child took the playdough and put it on the tray to play with, the parent must be careful to respond matter-of-factly, "Looks like you decided you wanted to play with it some more today."

Practice:

1. Your child aims a loaded dart gun at you.

A _____

C _____

T _____

Your child continues to aim the gun at you after you have set the limit using A-C-T three times.

If you choose to aim the gun at me
then you choose to not to get to play with the gun.

If you choose to aim the gun somewhere else
then you choose to get to play with the gun.

If your child aims and shoots the gun at you, you say:

I see you've chosen not to get to play with the gun.

If your child puts the gun down, you say:

I see you've chosen to play with the gun some more today _____

2. Describe a situation in which you think you might need to set a limit during the play session and you anticipate the child might not comply.

Situation: _____

A _____

C _____

I _____

If/Then: _____

CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

Generalizing Limit Setting to Outside the Play Session - Session 9

Acknowledge the feeling Communicate the limit Target alternatives

Three-Step A-C-T Method of Limit Setting Followed by Choices (Consequences) for Non-compliance:

Scenario: *Child found your hidden stash of candy, has a piece in his hand, and is starting to unwrap it. (It is 30 minutes before dinner.)*

1. **A**cknowledge your child's feeling or desire (*your voice must convey empathy and understanding*).
(Empathically) **"Billy, I know you'd really like to have the candy..."**
Child learns that his feelings, desires, and wishes are valid and accepted by parent (but not all behavior). Just empathically reflecting your child's feeling often defuses the intensity of the feeling or need.
2. **C**ommunicate the limit. (Be specific and clear—and brief.)
"...but candy is not for eating before dinner."
3. **T**arget acceptable alternatives. (Provide one or more choices, depending on age of child.)
"You can choose to have a piece of fruit now (pointing to bowl of fruit) and choose to have the piece of candy after dinner." (If you do not want your children to ever have candy, don't keep it around.)
The goal is to provide your child with acceptable alternatives—ones that are acceptable to you, the parent, and ones that you believe will allow your child to get his need met (in this case, to have a piece of candy, but not until after dinner—and if he is hungry, to meet that need with an acceptable before-dinner snack).
Note: Pointing helps redirect child's attention. If child chooses fruit, stop here.
Patiently restate the limit up to three times, depending on the age of the child, to allow child to struggle with self-control before proceeding to the next step.
4. **C**hoice-Giving (consequences) as next step after noncompliance (examples of possible responses):
Billy continues to say that he doesn't want fruit; he wants the candy.
— **"Billy, having candy now is not one of the choices. You can choose to give me the candy now and choose to eat it after dinner, or you can choose for me to put the candy up and choose not to have the candy after dinner. Which do you choose?"** (Pause—Billy says nothing.) **"If you choose not to choose, you choose for me to choose for you."** (Pause.)
a) *(Billy gives you the candy.) "I can tell that was a hard decision—I'll put it up here for you for after dinner."*
b) *(Billy continues to hold on to candy.) "I see you've chosen for me to choose for you" (as you reach for the candy to put it up). After dinner, if Billy comes to you and says "Now can I have the candy?" your response is, "Remember when you chose not to give me the candy before dinner—at that very moment, you chose not to have candy after dinner." Child may continue to plead and cry (because it has worked in the past). BE FIRM—don't give in!*

Practice: It is a school night and 5-year-old Billy wants to watch just 30 more minutes of television before he goes to bed, because his favorite Charlie Brown special is coming on next.

A _____

C _____

I _____

Patently restate the limit up to three times; Billy doesn't comply. (It's important to remain empathic & calm, but firm.)

You can choose to _____

3. Props and place

Remember: This is a creative business. So you need to decide on a comfortable time and place to do structured doll play and prepare your props (dolls) ahead of time. A good time might be in your child's bedroom in the evening before bedtime (to avoid disruptions and create a routine). You don't need to buy any special dolls—use your child's dolls and stuffed animals or puppets. (Save your money to give yourself a treat after telling a good story—it's a lot of work to tell a really good story!) You can also involve your child in picking out the dolls/stuffed animals by saying "I've got a special story to tell you tonight. It's about a little girl name Lucy who goes to Jane's (the babysitter). To tell the story, we need a Lucy doll, a Mommy doll, a Daddy doll, and a Jane doll. Can you help me pick out a doll (stuffed animal) for each character?" (Make sure you have a selection of your child's dolls/stuffed animals lined up to choose from.) *Note: You need to remember who is who, and the doll figures stay the same person thereafter (you can add new dolls as you use this method to tell different stories, like going to the dentist for the first time, etc.).*

4. How do I start?

You can start this new play experience by using nonthreatening, general daily life activities as the content of the story (e.g., going to the grocery store). This will help you practice and gain skills before plunging into more challenging themes. Focus your story on one theme and don't go beyond five minutes. You can think the story out in your head, or you can jot down brief notes to use as the script.

Helpful hints:

1. It may seem awkward to tell stories and act them out. Be patient with yourself—YOUR CHILD WILL THINK IT'S FUN AND WON'T NOTICE IF YOU MESS UP!
2. Include only those elements in the story that you have control over. Don't say how much fun Lucy is going to have (she may not be having much fun, if she's anxious). If you say something is going to happen at the babysitter's (going to the park, etc.), make sure you ask that the babysitter follow through on that activity the next day. The entire point of the story is to help the child feel more secure by being able to predict what will happen.
3. Don't build on your own feelings when you are telling the story. For example, "Mom is working in the office while Lucy is playing in day care. Mom is thinking of Lucy and she misses Lucy." (Take away the underlined phrase; including your own feelings in the story may make the child feel guilty for you missing her). Remember: The goal is to help Lucy go to day care without feeling anxious, so she can relax and have fun.
4. Make the story realistic and positive. You are the author of the story, so you can make it the way you want it to turn out in real life. Instead of focusing the story on how Lucy doesn't want to leave Mom, make the story go like this: "Lucy and Mom ring the doorbell together (ding-dong!). The door opens and Lucy smiles when she sees Jane. Lucy gives Mom a big hug, and she and Jane wave goodbye to Mom together...." (Remember to let Jane know about your story.)
5. Always end the story on a positive note THAT YOU CAN CONTROL. If the story involves the child not seeing you for several hours (especially if that is part of the concern), always include an "I'm so glad to see you!" reunion with kisses and hugs. The graphic representation of using dolls is more powerful than a verbal promise.
6. Your child may get distracted and interrupt the story. Briefly attend to the child, but be sure to finish the story. Telling the story after the child is already in bed helps with distractions. Parent can respond to requests to play with something else by saying, "You can play with your other dolls tomorrow; it's bedtime now." Or, if your child asks for a drink, "As soon as we've finished the story, I'll get you a drink."

CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

Structured Doll Play for Parents - Session 9

What is structured doll play?

Structured doll play is a lively way of storytelling for parents to help children who are feeling anxious or insecure. It provides a brief and specific experience for the children to prepare them for anxiety-provoking experiences, such as parents' divorce, going over to the babysitter, and so forth, or to help them regain a sense of normalcy and routine after a significant change in their life. It has a specific purpose and a clear message (e.g., Mom is going to come back at the end of the day to pick Lucy up).

Can my child benefit from structured doll play?

If your child is showing anxiety or fear, or has been through a traumatic experience, he/she can probably benefit from you using structured doll play with him/her. Structured doll play works best with children from ages 2–6. However, older or younger children can also benefit from it.

How do I do structured doll play?

1. Creating the story

Structured doll play is basically creative storytelling about specific real life happenings. It is similar to reading a story from a storybook to your child; the major differences are:

- A. You create the story instead of reading out of a storybook.
- B. The story involves real life characters, such as Mom, Dad, Lucy (your child), babysitter Jane, Grandma, schoolteacher, dentist, and so forth.
- C. The story is about real life happenings, usually about future events that are coming up in the next day or two. It can also be a story of routine daily happenings.
- D. You have a specific purpose and a clear message. For example: Lucy is reluctant to go to the new day care. She would not let you leave when you dropped her off at day care. Your purpose is helping Lucy to feel more comfortable about going to day care. Your message may be, "Mom is going to return at the end of the day." (It's important that the message fit what the parent believes is of most concern to the child.)
- E. You use dolls to enhance the dramatic effect and help your child remember. You can also use sound effects to enrich the story and make it more powerful and fun. Remember, young children understand concrete things like dolls and scenes better than promises and reasons.

2. The making of a story (Think about a beginning, middle, and an end)

- Beginning Don't start off by saying Lucy is going to the babysitter. Start off by giving some background for the story (e.g., a predictable routine, like waking up in the morning).
- Middle Give content to the story by putting in details (e.g., putting on shoes or buckling seat belt). Remember to exaggerate and use sound effects (you'll probably feel silly at first, but children love it!).
- End Remember to end the story. Don't leave your child hanging. End the story with a big kiss. *"Mom drives to the babysitter's (Jane) house and rings the bell (ding-dong). Jane opens the door and Lucy sees Mom. Lucy jumps into Mom's lap. Mom gives Lucy a big hug and a kiss (make kissing noise). Mom and Lucy drive home together. They talk about the day on the way home."*

Steps to making a story:

- A) Start with a title sentence (e.g., "This is a story about Lucy going to the babysitter").
- B) Introduce the characters by using real names of people.
- C) Tell the story (don't use "you" to refer to the doll representing your child. Use your child's name to stay objective, e.g., "Lucy is saying goodbye to Mom" rather than "You are saying goodbye to Mom").

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CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

In-Class Play Session Skills Checklist:

For Review of Videotaped (or Live) Play Session - Session 9

Directions: Indicate ✓ in blank when you observe a play session skill demonstrated in videotaped or live play session

1. ___ Set the Stage/Structured Play Session

2. ___ Conveyed "Be With" Attitudes
Full attention/interested
Toes followed nose

3. ___ Allowed Child to Lead
Avoided giving suggestions
Avoided asking questions
Returned responsibility to child

4. ___ Followed Child's Lead
Physically on child's level
Moved closer when child was involved in play
Joined in play when invited—took imaginary/pretend role when appropriate

5. ___ Reflective Responding Skills:
 - ___ Reflected child's nonverbal play behavior (Tracking)
 - ___ Reflected child's verbalizations (Content)
 - ___ Reflected child's feelings/wants/wishes
 - ___ Voice tone matched child's intensity/affect
 - ___ Responses were brief and interactive
 - ___ Facial expressions matched child's affect

6. ___ Used Encouragement/Self-Esteem-Building Responses

7. ___ Set Limits, As Needed, Using A-C-T

CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

Parent Play Session Notes - Session 9

Play Session # _____ Date: _____

Significant Happenings:

What I Learned About My Child:

Feelings Expressed:

Play Themes:

What I Learned About Myself:

My feelings during the play session:

What I think I was best at:

What was hardest or most challenging for me:

Questions or Concerns:

Skill I Want to Focus on in the Next Play Session: _____

CHILD-PARENT-RELATIONSHIP (C-P-R) TRAINING

Play Session Skills Checklist - Session 9

Play Session # _____ Date: _____

(Note: Indicate \checkmark in column if skill was used; $-$ if skill was not used; and $+$ if skill was a strength)

✓ - +	Skill	Notes/Comments
	Set the Stage/Structured Play Session	
	Conveyed "Be With" Attitudes <i>Full attention/interested</i> <i>Toes followed nose</i>	
	Allowed Child to Lead <i>Avoided giving suggestions</i> <i>Avoided asking questions</i> <i>Returned responsibility to child</i>	
	Followed Child's Lead <i>Physically on child's level</i> <i>Moved closer when child was involved in play</i> <i>Joined in play when invited</i>	
	Reflective Responding Skills:	
	Reflected child's nonverbal play (Tracking)	
	Reflected child's verbalizations (Content)	
	Reflected child's feelings/wants/wishes	
	Voice tone matched child's intensity/affect	
	Responses were brief and interactive	
	Facial expressions matched child's affect	
	Use of Encouragement/Self-Esteem-Building Responses	
	Set Limits, As Needed, Using A-C-T	