

ACTIVITY HANDOUT | Effective Practices for Reducing Suspensions and Expulsions in Early Childhood Settings

Activity 2 – Example from Tier 2 – Classroom Environment

Instructions (also see the PPT slide):

1. Think (individually 5 min.): Read the vignette below about a Samantha, a teacher in a preschool program, and brainstorm ideas for how to support Samantha to make her transitions more active.
2. Pair (5 min.): Turn to a partner, brainstorm & share your ideas:
 - a. What are some concrete steps that Jonelle could do to help support Samantha to meet her transition goal? Do you do any of these currently with staff in your program?
 - b. What are your ideas for ideas for how to make transitions more active?
 - c. How could you document and acknowledge Samantha's progress?
3. Share: Large group share out
 - a. What were some of the ideas for concrete steps, ways to make transitions more active or documenting and acknowledge progress that you and our partner came up with?
 - b. Do you do any of these currently with staff in your program?

Vignette: *Jonelle is the center director of a state-funded preschool center called Harris Early Learning Center. She leads a staff meeting where they discuss the importance of having a high-quality classroom environment and how that might reduce challenging behavior and the need to remove children from the classroom or have them leave early. The staff list practices that support a high-quality environment. Jonelle challenges each teacher to reflect on her or his own teaching practices and think about what might be a good starting point for improving the classroom environment.*

Samantha thinks transitions should be a priority for change in her classroom, because a lot of challenging behavior happens during transitions. Jonelle helps Samantha develop the following goal: I will create opportunities for children to be ready for and engaged in transitions.

Jonelle and Samantha then discuss what Samantha needs to help make that happen. They decide that Samantha needs help brainstorming ideas for making her transitions active. She also could use another pair of eyes in the classroom during her hardest transition, which is moving from centers to lunch.

Activity 3 – Example from Tier 3 - Functional behavior assessment

Instructions (also see the PPT slide):

1. Think (individually 5 min.): Read the vignette below and brainstorm why each child might be exhibiting the behavior.
 - a. Shaun:
 - b. Sophie:
2. Pair (5 min.): Turn to a partner, brainstorm & share your ideas
 - a. Based on the information provided, what's your hypothesis or "best guess" for why Shaun's behavior is occurring?
 - b. For why Sophie's behavior is occurring?
 - c. Compare and contrast your hypotheses with your partner.
3. Share: Large group share out
 - a. What were some of the hypotheses you came up with for why Shaun and Sophie's behavior was occurring?
 - b. Did your partner come up with anything you hadn't considered?
 - c. Do you currently do functional behavioral assessment with staff in your program?

Vignette 1: Shaun

Nature of the behavior: Shaun's disruptive behaviors include hitting, pinching, and kicking other children and adults.

What happens just before: Just before his disruptive behavior, Shaun is playing with the blocks and a dump truck, and another child reaches for a block.

Under what conditions: Shaun tends to exhibit challenging behavior in the block area or sandbox when another child tries to take a toy he's playing with or a toy that is near him.

What adults and peers do: After Shaun hits, kicks, or pinches other children, they drop the toy and pick a new one.

Vignette 2: Sophie

Nature of the behavior: Sophie's disruptive behaviors include crying, lying on the floor, refusing to participate (e.g., saying, "no,"), and leaving the assigned area.

What happens just before: Just before her disruptive behavior, Sophie's teacher announces that it's time to transition to circle time activities.

Under what conditions: Sophie tends to exhibit challenging behaviors during nonpreferred activities like circle time.

What adults and peers do: Sophie's teacher, Mr. Brown, tries to convince Sophie to join the group on the carpet but eventually asks the teaching assistant to talk and work with Sophie quietly at a table.