IS IT BULLYING
OR
SOMETHING ELSE?

WILMA GOLD
&
GABY LITSKY
NONVIOLENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN PROJECT INC.

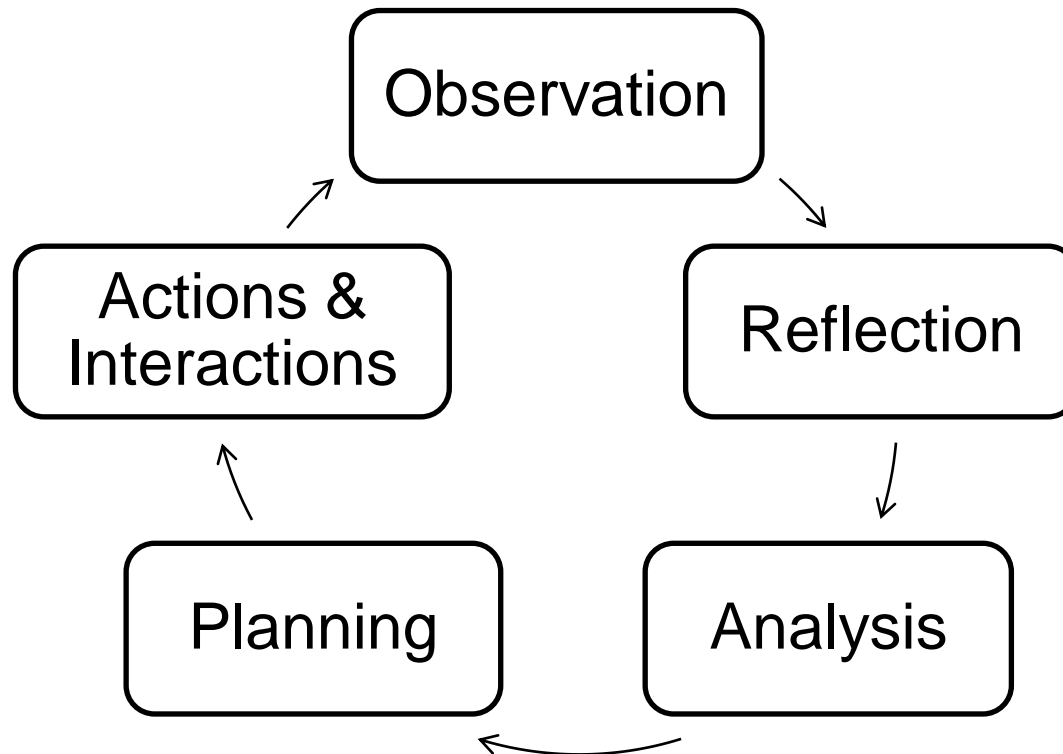NonViolence in the Lives of Children Project

Today we will cover:

• Strategies for working with challenging behaviors

• The development empathy

• Creating community in your child care program

• The importance of supporting the "bully" the "bullied" and the "witness"

• Assisting children's peaceful problem solving and conflict resolution skills.

Observation Cycle

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        ┌──────────────┐
        │ Observation  │
        └──────────────┘
       ↗                ↘
┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
│  Actions &   │   │  Reflection  │
│ Interactions │   └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘         │
       ↑                 ↓
┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
│   Planning   │   │   Analysis   │
└──────────────┘   └──────────────┘
              ↖   ↙
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What needs Are Not Being Met For the Individual Child?

- Every behavior is a message.
- What needs might acting out behavior be intended to meet?
- How might you offer alternatives?

Building Community:
Empathy, Respect & Cooperation

- Helping Children recognize their own feelings
- Helping children observe the feelings of others

Providing opportunities for children to work together and assist each other.

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The Teacher's Role

🕊 How and When to Step in

🕊 Ensure Safety

🕊 Be consistent

🕊 Children's Perspective on Power

🕊 The Adult's Power On, For and With

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🕊 Model Language and Behavior

🕊 Empowering Children to Talk to Each Other

🕊 Open Ended Questions – Fostering Critical Thinking

🕊 Allow Children Time to Think

- **Primary caregiver/aide or mentor** is someone who is "matched" to the child, to encourage attachment and is committed to the child's success and building a trusting relationship.

- **Predictable daily routine** - the child comes to "own" his school day.

- **Creating a Supportive Environment**

- **Mentoring Children One-on-One** – connection and conversations to build trust, share observations and offer alternatives

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- **Impartiality** – when there is an imbalance of power, everyone in the situation suffers.

- **Role modeling** by the adults in their own interactions with children and other adults is critical

- **Communicating with Families** – remembering to be impartial and using the communication as an opportunity to educate and built trust

Empowerment Activities

🕊 Teach communication skills - "stop" - "I feel. ...When you..."

"I   want..."

🕊 Opportunities for decision making

🕊 Opportunities to be heard

🕊 Opportunities for leadership

🕊 Working together to solve a problem/create a solution

Helping Children develop Empathy
Creating a Community Built on Trust

- The bullied, the bully and the witness are all part of the community.

- Everyone need to know that they will be listened to

- Everyone needs opportunities for caregiving and helping

- Witnesses, children and adults alike, can be empowered to become allies.

Classroom Environment

- Physical
  - Furnishing
  - Open Space
  - Private Space

- Psychological
  - Classroom Culture
  - Rules
  - Limits
  - Tools

What if it is Bullying?

- Bullying Involves an imbalance of power between the participants resulting in what we often perceive as an aggressor and a victim.

- Acts of bullying almost always occur in front of peer-group witnesses, so bullying really includes people in one of three roles; the bully, the bullied, and the witness.

- A potential serious consequence of bullying is internalizing negative self image

What Are The Behaviors,
When We Think About Bullying?

- 🕊 Bullying Behavior

- 🕊 Bullied Behavior

- 🕊 Witness Behavior

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🕊 **Bullying Behavior is:**

- Physical

- Verbal (teasing, taunting)

- Relational (exclusion)

🕊 **Characteristics are:**

- The intention is to hurt another physically or emotionally

- The behavior is repeated, ongoing

- There is an imbalance of power

NOTE: The behavior in preschoolers is part of the developmental stage where he/she is trying to find a way to get needs met. Bullying before concrete thinking, when children see the world in black and white and egocentric is different than in older children.

The Bully

This child needs to trust and have a sense of responsibility

🕊 I need to know that there is someone who will not allow me to do harm. "I can't let you hurt anyone, and I will not allow anyone to hurt you."

🕊 When you see me lash out and hit someone for no apparent reason, ask what is it that I need? I may be lashing out because I need to feel safe.

🕊 When you see me boss others around and insist on getting my own way, what is it that I need?

🕊 I may have been raised in such stressful conditions that I am always on alert for danger. I may have been conditioned to believe that when someone approaches me, I NEED TO PROTECT MYSELF, I am liable to be hurt - so I lash out quickly before any harm comes to me.

🕊 **To help me, you must take the time and have the patience to calm my unthinking, automatic response to perceived danger.** All the things we do as adults to help build resiliency are critical in relaxing a child's conditioned responses to perceived danger. We do this by starting at the very beginning - we take the responsibility of developing TRUST .

Witness Behavior

🕊 Witnesses to peer bullying have concerns that often keep them from intervening.

- Personal safety

- Their standing in the peer group

- Not understanding or knowing what to do

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🕊 Children may not believe that the adults will support them.

🕊 Children may not believe they will be supported by other children.

🕊 At the developmental stage of children 0 – 5 children may get hooked into the excitement of the aggressive behavior

🕊 A witness is a passive participant in the aggression and an ally stands up and speaks up.

From Witness to Ally

🕊 What is the distinction between a witness and an ally? How do adults or children become an ally?

🕊 Self-esteem, empathy and feelings of connection with and responsibility to the members of the peer community move someone from witness to ally.

🕊 Children need skills in observing, accessing danger, knowing when to intervene, problem solving, and knowing how to share and balance power.

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🕊 Adults can intervene to support all the children. Remember all of the children have needs and suffer from the event. Children can discuss how to support each other and then implement strategies when the situation calls for it.

🕊 Both adults and children can learn advocacy skills. Children need to be encouraged to practice until these skills to become internalized.

🕊 When adults and children stand up and speak up the community is strengthened.

The Bullied

- Empowerment
  - Care must be taken to insure that empowering the bullied does not lead to retaliation
  - Practice appropriate language and behavior
- Trusted Adults
  - Dependable consistent behavior
  - Availability
  - Empathy
  - Facilitator of problem solving and communication
- Sense of community
  - The teacher , the family and the other children can provide a supportive community for the child

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Conflict Resolution/Problem Solving
The goal is:

To give children skills to manage conflict and creatively solve problems

NOT TO ELIMINATE CONFLICT

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Problem Solving
&
Conflict Resolution Steps

1.   Calm children and acknowledge their feelings.
2.   When the children are calm ask, "What is the problem?"
3.   Continue by asking each child to express
     what they want or need.
4. State the problem clearly and non-judgmentally.
5. The children brainstorm ideas about how to resolve the
   conflict.
6. Try the idea (take action.)
7. Evaluate.

Tools

🕊 Peace Path

🕊 Talking Stick

🕊 Peace Table