Teacher's Guide/Exploring Childhood

Fear, Anger, Dependence

Seeing Development

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EDC School and Society Programs
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02160

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Overview

As part of the Seeing Development module, this booklet helps students consider how feelings and behaviors are affected by development as a person grows. Fear, anger, and dependence were chosen for this booklet because they often cause problems in working with children; students may wish to discuss other feelings as well that are prominent in their relationships with children at fieldsites.

Goals

The goals of the student booklet are:

- to present some causes and consequences of fear, anger, and dependence in children;
- to consider how feelings and ways of coping with feelings change with development;
- to help students develop appropriate responses to children experiencing fear, anger, or dependence.

While the student booklet first analyzes behavior and then considers ways to respond, students should be cautioned that such a sequence is rarely possible in actual practice. The reasons for a child's behavior are not always immediately evident, but students may need to respond to a child before they have had a chance to analyze the child's behavior. On the other hand, time spent analyzing specific incidents (from booklet or student experience) at a distance (e.g., reflecting in journals, observing, reading, discussing in class, practicing responses) can give students the confidence and skill they need to respond quickly when similar situations arise in the future.

Materials

The student booklet is divided into three major sections on (1) fear, (2) anger, and (3) dependence. Within each section, material is directed toward:

- understanding a child's fearful, angry, or dependent feelings and behavior;
- considering how you can help;
- considering development as related to fear, anger, or dependence;
- observing evidence and effects of these feelings.

This teacher's guide will first describe the use of the student resource booklet, *Fear, Anger, Dependence*, by individuals, by small and large groups, and in conferences. The guide will then consider each of the four student material divisions listed above. Finally, a selection of brief readings is provided in "Perspectives on Fear, Anger, and Dependence."

When and How to Use the Booklet

Fear, Anger, Dependence is meant to be used as a resource or reference book for students in your class throughout the year. You may therefore need to have only four or five copies on hand.

Introducing the Booklet

Class Discussion and Activities

One way to introduce the booklet to your class is to ask students what fear, anger, or dependence mean to them and what differences and similarities they see in these feelings. To start such a discussion, you might send students on a hunt for three items: a symbol of fear, one of anger, and one of dependence. As a class, compare and discuss the various items and discuss reasons for choosing them. Or you might have each student draw a picture that expresses one of these feelings, and then talk about their pictures.

Photographic Essays

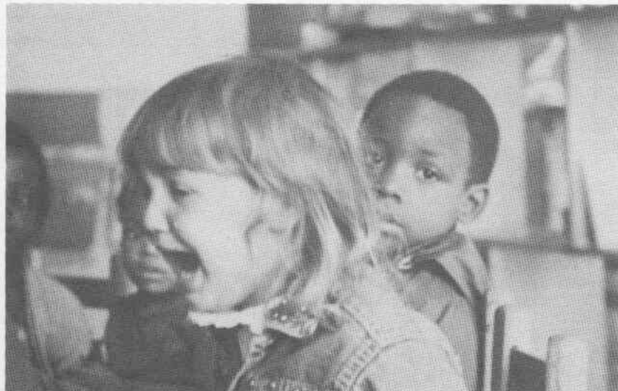
The three photographic spreads and the illustrations throughout the student material can provide introductory activities and can be returned to during work with the booklet. Students can examine a picture carefully and, putting themselves in the position of the child or the caregiver, consider questions such as the following:

> What events might have preceded this picture?
>
> What might each person in the picture be feeling, both physically and emotionally? How can you tell? What might have caused the feeling? What does the setting and the child's age suggest to you about what the child is feeling?
>
> What might the child and the caregiver do next? Why? In situations where a caregiver is not present, what would you do if you entered the scene?

The point is not to argue about whether a specific event occurred or not, but to consider a wide range of situations and possible emotional reactions. You can remind students that they cannot be sure of what the people in the photographs are experiencing, just as it is not always easy to know the feelings of people observed around us.

Donald Mitchell, E.D.C.

Anger



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Pictures can be discussed, role played, or written about in journals. Students can write as though they were speaking from inside the head of the child or caregiver. They might also look for photographs that remind them of incidents in their own lives, and describe what happened and how they felt. Finally, students could collect photographs from magazines and photo albums, or use their own photographs, to make individual photo spreads or a photo display for the classroom.

Activities With Children

Jerome Kagan, a professor of human development, has described some interesting exercises relating to fear and anger:

> There is much research to show that a four-year-old child has no trouble discriminating fear from anger. You describe situations and say, "Johnny had his ball taken away. Is he afraid or is he mad?" No child says, "afraid." Also if you show children pieces of colored paper--for fear and anger they'll pick different colors. They'll pick dark colors for anger and reds and oranges for fear.

Students might try such questions and activities with children and discuss the results. They might also consider which colors they themselves associate with different emotions, or which colors describe their own moods on different days.

Journal Entries

You might also introduce the booklet by asking students to make daily journal entries for two weeks that address one or more of these questions:

> Was there any time today when I felt afraid?
>
> Was there any time today when I felt angry or aggressive?
>
> Was there any time today when I felt dependent?

These entries need not be shared or analyzed, but can help students to empathize with children's feelings and to understand how feelings develop from childhood to adolescence.

Use by Individuals

Individual students may refer to sections of the booklet when events at their fieldsite raise questions. Some students might also browse through the booklet, responding to issues that interest them. A teacher might establish a "contract" with individual students in which students agree to do a certain amount of work (at home, at fieldsites, or in class) for extra credit or as part of regular class work.

You and the student might agree on credit commensurate with the amount and quality of work done. For example, a student might agree to read the material on fear and respond in a journal to questions raised in this section of the booklet; or, after reading the student booklet and teacher's guide material on fear, to observe and record fieldsite behavior that might be caused by fear; or to read and write on all of the material in *Fear, Anger, and Dependence*, and observe the interplay of these emotions in one child for a month.

Students focusing on one child should keep in mind that these feelings occur frequently in all children. They should also beware of the tendency to draw hasty or far-reaching conclusions (for example, about a child's home life) from these observations. Above all, they should respect the child's privacy in sharing their observations with others.

A note about contracts: Contracts should be worked out with the student and should respond to the student's own interests and abilities. You can help students to delineate their interests and to establish reasonable criteria for their work according to their individual ability.

Establishing standards of quality together is important, since no contract should be based only on the amount of work done. For example, concrete detail in an observation might be more important than the length of the observation. To evaluate a student's work at the end of a contract, you might refer to the booklet *Approaches to Evaluating Student Learning*.

If many students are doing individual projects on a range of topics at the same time, they might share their results in small groups or with the whole class. An alternative to the standard oral report might be for students either individually or in pairs to lead a class discussion or exercise, perhaps using the questions and activities suggested in *Fear, Anger, and Dependence*.

Use by Small Groups

The entire class might be divided into several small groups, each using different booklets, depending on student interest and choice. Booklets that might be used in this way include other resource books such as *Doing Things* or *What About Discipline?* You might also consider small-group work with other booklets, such as *Children's Art*, *Child's Play*, *No Two Alike*, or *Making Connections*.

Such a procedure puts more responsibility into students' hands and allows students to choose what interests them most. It may also be a way of individualizing work according to ability as well as interest. For example, some students could work on the more difficult material in *Making Connections*: "Curious About Human Change" (pp. 9-18), on theorists; and "Being and Becoming" (p. 7), on theory building.

A small group might use *Fear, Anger, and Dependence* to carry out a project. Possible project topics might be: "How to Recognize Fearful Feelings in Children"; or "Causes of Dependent Feelings in Children and How to Respond to Them."

Used in conjunction with *The Inquirer*, the booklet might encourage students to interview or poll people in their community about how they respond to fearful, angry, or dependent behavior in children or about how feelings and ways of coping with them differ according to age or sex. These results might then be presented to the class.

Use in Conference

One way to use a resource book such as *Fear, Anger, and Dependence* would be to refer to it in conferences with individuals, students, or groups who work at the same fieldsite. For example, several students in the classroom excerpt quoted on page 7 in this guide worked at the same site with a child named Elaine. A teacher conferring with these students about their field work might read sections on anger and dependence with them, discuss some of the questions, and suggest that they use the booklet for help in observing and responding to Elaine's behavior. Again, to prevent misinterpretation or invasion of privacy, students should be cautioned against analyzing or guessing about information they have not observed firsthand.

Use by Whole Class

You might choose to consider issues raised by the booklet with the whole class by reading aloud sections, by discussing questions, or by doing exercises. For example, a teacher might tell the story of Toni's first day of school (p. 21) and ask students to explain why they think Toni felt afraid. The teacher could then read the explanations quoted in the booklet and continue the discussion. Or the teacher could do the "Tracing" activities (pp. 9, 17, 27) with the whole class.

Understanding Feelings and Behavior

The initial reading in each of the three major sections of the student booklet includes questions (in large type) that ask students to recall emotional experiences of their own or of children they know, or to consider how to respond to children's feelings.

<u>Responding to our own fear, anger, or dependence</u>: Some questions lend themselves to journal writing by asking students to recall an incident from their own childhood or from their fieldsites. Students using the booklets individually or in small groups might consider these ques-

It is healthy for children to feel angry when they have been hurt or taken advantage of, when someone they love or feel responsible for has been attacked, or when they have been prevented from doing something they want to do. What children must learn about anger is how to be in control of it — to use it positively and not to allow it to control them.

> Sharon is almost three years old. She has a new baby doll — a present from her mother who has just had her second child, a boy named Timothy. While her mother and Timothy are still in the hospital, Sharon asks her grandmother and father about her new baby brother. "When is Timothy coming home? How long will he stay here?" She helps get his crib ready, but on the day Timothy is due to be brought home, Sharon throws her new baby doll into a trash basket and stamps her foot on it. She says, "I don't want any babies around here."

Welcoming the new member of the family turns into resentment against the newcomer. But it's just as common to be angry at yourself — and then blame it on the nearest object.

> Joe sits down at the work table at his Head Start center and slips his short fingers through the scissors. "I'm going to cut with the scissors. . . . I can cut good!" He grabs a piece of colored paper and struggles to cut into it. The paper twists and slips away. Joe: "I want to cut!" He finds the paper and tries again. Once more the paper slides away. The scissors jam as Joe snatches up the paper and stabs at it, saying angrily, "Cut, you stupid!"

Tempers rise when children get into a battle of wills.

> Clayton: "I'm coming to play. I'll be the father."
> Melissa: "No. We're fixing our playhouse. You can't come in."
> Clayton: "I can too, if I want."
> Melissa: "No. We can't let you in yet."
> Clayton: "Yes . . . Teacher, make Melissa let me in. . . ."
> Clayton throws a block from the "house" down on Melissa's foot. Melissa grabs Clayton and pushes him.

THESE ARE ALL EXAMPLES OF AGGRESSION. WHAT DOES THE WORD "AGGRESSION" MAKE YOU THINK OF?

WHEN HAVE YOU SEEN A FRUSTRATED OR ANGRY CHILD STRIKE OUT AT AN OBJECT OR A PERSON?

According to the dictionary, aggression is an attack. One thing aggression does is allow a person to express anger, sometimes a very important thing to do. Aggression is also defined as vigorous and forceful behavior. Most Americans admire vigor and force; athletes and farmers, pilots, salespeople and lawyers all do well if they are vigorous people. Very young children, as well as older ones, tend to admire the strongest and most energetic children in their schools. The heroes in our society are often aggressive — in the sense that they behave forcefully and are adventurous.

The problem lies in the fact that in children, aggression so often takes the form of hurting other children or destroying property. Teachers, parents, and helpers don't mind when children hammer nails into wood during carpentry, or punch a punching bag. What they mind is children's pounding and punching each other or breaking something valuable. But growing

from impulsive behavior to mature, controlled behavior takes years.

Toddlers are rough and uncoordinated with toys and impulsive with each other. Then gradually, starting at about two, children learn skills and find ways of expressing in words what they feel. But during these learning years there is still much shoving, snatching, or screaming when they get mad. Less noisy but still irritating to many adults is the six-year-old child who seems to go on emotional binges and who cries out aggressively, "I hate you!" and possibly uses swear words in screaming at mother, babysitter, or teacher.

To people who work with young children, it sometimes seems that the children will never learn to get along without fighting. Most children in nursery schools and in day care centers will have to be disciplined from time to time for hitting someone. Some will need more control and discipline than others.

HOW YOU REACT TO AGGRESSION IN CHILDREN MAY VARY ACCORDING TO THE SITUATION AND TO YOUR STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS. HOW DO YOU REACT WHEN:

- A BIG CHILD HITS A LITTLE, MORE HELPLESS CHILD?
- TWO CHILDREN THE SAME AGE AND SIZE HAVE A FIGHT?
- A BOY HITS A GIRL? A GIRL HITS A BOY?
- A CHILD HITS AN ADULT? SWEARS AT AN ADULT?
- A CHILD SMASHES HIS OR HER OWN BLOCK TOWER OR WORK OF ART?
- A CHILD RIPS UP ANOTHER CHILD'S WORK?
- A CHILD CALLS A NEW CHILD INSULTING NAMES?

It is hard to figure out whether a particular child is aggressive by nature or whether something about how that child lives causes aggressive acts. A teacher describes Edie, a four-year-old girl in her fieldsite, as *always* throwing blocks, *always* arguing with other children, and *constantly* hitting.

tions and record their ideas. Later they might refer to their journal entry in a relevant class discussion. When several students have read a section, they might compare their ideas in small groups.

Other questions raise problems to be solved, such as how to respond to a child who is afraid. These problems could be both journal topics and subjects of class brainstorming, role playing, or discussion activities. Students who are working with the booklet might be responsible for presenting these problems to the class.

Questions such as those on dependence, page 20 (When does a person no longer feel dependent on his or her family? Is it safe for children to be outdoors alone?), have no narrowly defined answer and are more provocative if students consider them in light of different ages, individual children they know, and their own memories of childhood. For a variety of opinions, students might discuss such questions with their parents and friends as well as with the whole class.

Young children have lived only about a third or a quarter of your lifetime. They do many things so well that they sometimes fool us into overestimating them. We have to remind ourselves that they may not really be as independent as they like to act.

> Julio likes to be called a big boy. He strides when he walks and likes to climb the tree in his front yard. But he runs to his parents' bed when he wakes up after a bad dream.
>
> Brenda gets into her snowsuit all by herself and dashes out of her apartment before she realizes that she has to go to the toilet.

Children act their age. They may seem to be full of strength one minute, and clinging and dependent the next.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

It may not be easy for you as a student at your fieldsite (or with small sisters and brothers at home) to be patient with young children acting their age.

> One day at his fieldsite, Carl, a high school student, pushed a lonely little girl, Helen, on the swings. Every day after that, Helen found Carl and clung to him, begging him to push her on the swings again.

Dave Robinson, E.D.C.

HOW CAN A STUDENT WORKING AT A FIELDSITE BE FRIENDLY TOWARD CHILDREN WITHOUT LETTING THEM BE TOO DEPENDENT?

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS CARL COULD HELP HELEN PLAY ON HER OWN OR WITH OTHER CHILDREN? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION? WHAT HAPPENED?

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Considering How You Can Help

Following the initial reading and discussion material (which is designed to help students understand a child's fearful, angry, or dependent behavior) each section turns to how students can help children who are caught up in such experiences. In both sections, the booklet offers many anecdotes to help students both understand and respond to a child's emotions. In considering the materials on how you can help, students should also reconsider the anecdotes (in reduced, indented type in student booklet) presented earlier in each section.

Students might brainstorm possible responses to situations described in the anecdotes and role play a few solutions to discuss their appropriateness (see role-play procedure, *Working with Children Teacher's Guide*, pp. 48-50). For example, in the section on dependence, students are asked to consider how a student, Carl, could help a girl to stop demanding his help at the swing and to play more on her own or with other children (p. 22). Students brainstorming alternative actions might suggest that Carl:

- continue to play with her but try to draw in other children;
- give her a doll or stuffed animal on the swing to help her start something on her own, independent of him;
- have her take turns on the swing with others;
- have her push him or others on the swing;
- find games that require two children, such as using the see-saw;
- start hand-holding games, such as the bunny hop or ring-around-the-rosy;
- let her tag along while he plays with other children.

Students might also write about a response they would make to a situation, then debate the appropriateness of the various responses. For example, students could choose one of the actions suggested for responding to Darren and his hammering difficulty (p. 24) or make up an action or response of their own. Students could also role play the alternatives suggested, then discuss which seemed to work best from the standpoint of the student and child, and why.

In the case of anecdotes that suggest solutions, students might apply them to similar situations at fieldsites or from their own childhood, and consider whether the solutions are still appropriate. For example, students could consider how they would help a child cope with fear of the dark, as Gina (p. 7) copes with a bruised knee. In this case, students might also discuss or write about whether it is always appropriate to help children cope by themselves.

In all cases, students should consider children they know who are brought to mind by the anecdotes in the booklet, and ask themselves whether or not the suggested responses are appropriate for these children. If an anecdote reminds students of a particular incident, they should be encouraged to problem-solve for that incident as well as for the one described in the booklet.

Dealing with Students' Feelings

Encourage students to explore and share their own feelings of fear, anger, and dependence, both as children, and now. Ask them to recall specific incidents from their childhood. Provide materials for students to make collages and drawings representative of these feelings or incidents. Pictures and collages could be discussed in small groups and displayed in the room.

A student's drawing of a fearful experience.

Students might also apply the suggested responses to themselves: What responses helped them as children when they were afraid, angry, or dependent? What helps now? How did they cope with feelings such as fear of the dark when they were children? Did the responses of their parents or caregivers satisfy them? What do they do now for children when they babysit? In considering appropriate responses for children who need help, students can also refer to the "Helping Skills" section of the booklet *Getting Involved* and to the booklet *What About Discipline?*

Student reactions to children's feelings: Very often, students are not ready to put their minds to the problems a child may be having. They may experience such strong feelings in reaction to a child's behavior that they need to deal with their own reactions first. Such a reaction is illustrated by the following discussion that took place in a junior high school class:

Beth: *When I first went to the class, Elaine always wanted me to be with her and on the art project*

she made me do most of it for her. But now she lets me help other people. She makes a fuss, but at least she will do things on her own without making me help too much.

Dottie: *She still makes me do it for her.*

Teacher: *Well, let's think about why that might be. Do you think there's anything that you could do differently, Dottie?*

Dottie: *When she's crying, the teacher says, "You just have to learn." She's taking everything her way; everything she wants, she gets.*

Teacher: *Beth, do you think you did anything that helped her to learn not to behave that way with you?*

Beth: *Well, all I did was, like, I told her I'd help her later and she didn't like me to help her later. If I don't help her then, then she gets mad at me. So then I help someone else, and when I ask if she wants me to help her she usually doesn't answer me.*

Teacher: *How do you feel when she's mad at you?*

Beth: *Well, I don't know because I don't really pay attention to her anymore.*

Dottie: *She tried to make me give her a piggyback before we went to the library. She says, "You're gonna stay here with me, right?" So I was cleaning up because they were making clowns, right? And so she jumped on me and she followed me around. I said, "Elaine, get down." She took a bite off my smock and wouldn't let go.*

Teacher: *How do you feel when she behaves in these ways, Dottie?*

Dottie: *She drives me crazy. She drives Miss Page crazy, too, and she says, "Elaine, let go or it will hurt your teeth, right?" And so she's just hanging on. So the teacher had to pull her off. And then Elaine was hiding when it was time to go; the teacher had to drag her.*

Teacher: *I wonder if we could think about any ways to, let's say to help Dottie to help Elaine learn not to always take things as hers, and not to try to dominate all of Dottie's attention. Does anybody have any ways or activity that Dottie could do with some of the children that would help teach Elaine that she has to share with other children--she has to share Beth and Dottie's attention?... It's a tough one.... Nobody got any ideas?... Oh, I just had an idea. Would it be possible to invent some kind of a game that the rules of the game--it would have to be something that Elaine liked to do, like hide and seek or something like that--but the rules of the game made it necessary for Elaine not to have your attention all the time?*

Dottie: *She likes to have your straight attention. If you go talk to someone else, she says, "I hate you, you all make me sick." She starts swearing.*

A teacher who finds that students are too preoccupied with their own reactions to think about how to help a child needs to respect the students' feelings, to listen, and not to force solutions. In many cases, a child may not need help as much as an annoyed or frustrated student does.

By allowing students to discuss their own feelings, the teacher acknowledges that such feelings are legitimate and often shared. The teacher may thus help students both to deal with their own reactions and to move toward a readiness to consider ways to help the child.

Feelings and Development

Children's understanding of their emotions and their abilities to cope with them change with age. If students understand these changes, they are better prepared to help children who are experiencing them. Here, students might refer to information about development patterns in other materials from the "Seeing Development" module and to readings in this guide.

In the sections on fear and anger, students are asked to trace on charts the way these emotions are affected by the changes in perceptions, abilities, and interests that come with development. To do this, students can draw conclusions from what they already know about development and from their experiences with people of different ages. They can also make new and more careful observations, as suggested in the closing exercises in each section.

To help students do the tracing exercises, the teacher might first do a sample chart on the blackboard. For example, on page 9, students are asked to consider how people of different ages feel about being left alone or excluded, and how they cope with this fear. A teacher might do this first with the class using another example, such as fear of fire. Students might write in journals about fearful feelings about fire they may have had at different ages; then, as a group, brainstorm how their feelings about fire have changed. You might use the responses on the sample chart (p. 10 in this guide) with students and/or help students to fill in their own responses.

After you and the students have filled in the left side of the chart, have students fill in the right side by considering how they or people they know coped with fear of fire. Remember that fear of fire is normal and helps prevent accidents. "Coping" does not mean eliminating the fear.

Students might write individual responses to the "Ways of Coping" side of the chart in their journals, then collect them on a group chart. In addition to referring to you for ways adults cope with a fear, students might interview their parents and adult neighbors or other teachers in the school or fieldsite. Grouping such a variety of coping mechanisms may help students look at both individual differences and at general developmental patterns in ways of coping.

Some individual differences in fears may be the result of differences in individual experiences. To consider how feelings and ways of coping with them are affected by experience as well as by development, ask students to list a number of fears they have now or remember having, and what may have contributed to these fears. For example, fear of cats or dogs may have been caused by a pet who chased, clawed, or snapped at a child. Experience may also have helped students learn to cope with

FEARS AND DEVELOPMENT

Fears are a natural and important part of self-defense. Fears cause a state of alertness — a way of responding to what we feel unable to understand or control. People learn to overcome some fears and to cope with the others as they grow up. As one grows older, fears change and ways of coping with them change also.

CONSIDER FEAR OF BEING LEFT ALONE OR EXCLUDED. WHAT DOES BEING LEFT ALONE OR EXCLUDED MEAN TO PEOPLE AT DIFFERENT AGES? HOW DOES A PERSON COPE WITH THIS FEAR AT DIFFERENT AGES?

Being left alone
feelings
ways of coping
young child
teenager
adult
elderly person

Tracing Common Fears

Make a table of what you think are common fears for people of the following ages: 4, 14, (or your own age) and 40.

Common fears
4
14
40

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS PEOPLE OF EACH AGE HANDLE THEIR FEARS? WHAT SIMILARITIES IN FEARS CAN YOU FIND? WHAT DIFFERENCES?

WHAT FEARS SEEM TO BE USUALLY "OUTGROWN" BETWEEN 4 AND 14? BETWEEN 14 AND 40? NEVER?

Observation

How do children's fears affect their behavior at your fieldsite? Using the basic observation form at the end of this booklet, what can you learn about children's fears and how adults can help?

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	FEAR OF FIRE	WAYS OF COPING
Young Child	· At first, not fearful--fascinated with movement and color · Later, with growing sense of consequences, fear for self, beloved persons and possessions, feeling of helplessness · Around age 6, worrying, "What if..."	
Teenager	· Fear for self, growing sense of responsibility for others · Great emotional sense of magnitude of tragedy · Fantasies of rescuing · Greater awareness of consequences	
Adult	· Fear for others and self · Strong feelings of responsibility for children and elders · Fear of consequences to family, possessions	
Elderly Person	· Relative helplessness and dependence · Fearful of inability to rescue self or others · Dread of consequences	

their fears. For example, new experiences with friendly cats or dogs may help to overcome previous fearful experiences.

In the case of dependence ("Dependence in Your Own Life," p. 26), students are asked to consider especially their own feelings of dependency rather than analyzing dependency in others. Who depends on them and for what? Whom do they depend on and for what? Do they need to feel that others depend on them as well? These questions can be dealt with privately in journals and discussed in class. Students might also make drawings, paintings, or collages that express their own feelings of dependence or that relate a specific incident in which they felt dependent.

Observation

The closing observation suggestions should be used in conjunction with the observation form at the end of the student booklet and with readings about observing in *Getting Involved* (pp. 12-14) and *Looking at Development* (pp. 6-13). Students can copy this form in their journals, leaving ample space, and fill it in at their fieldsites, at home, at babysitting jobs, etc.

This procedure can be repeated many times. Students can revise the form and add to it as appropriate for their needs. They

can add information collected in their observations to the poster, "Directions in Development," or start a file section on the development of emotions as they may have done in creating a "Play File" (*Child's Play*, p. 24).

Since exercises that grow out of real concerns are most valuable to students, students might develop their own focusing questions and substitute these for some of the observation questions suggested in the booklet and on the form. For example, students experiencing difficulty with clinging children could observe them to determine which situations they are most dependent in, or what activity or behavior by others seems to precede their most dependent behavior. Or students might observe themselves to see what behavior in a child makes them most uncomfortable. Information gathered might then help students make judgments about appropriate ways to deal with their own feelings and to respond to children.

Use of Readings

You might select excerpts from one or more of the readings in this guide for individuals or small groups to apply to their observations. For example, students might read aloud the teacher's conversations with Dottie and Beth about the child, Elaine. This might encourage them to express their own feelings about a child whose behavior bothers them.

When studying *Making Connections*, you might ask students to consider how each of Erikson's eight stages of development interacts with sources of fear, anger, or dependence, and with ways of expressing and handling these feelings.

Dependence in Your Own Life

Make a table that lists who depends on you and in what ways, and whom you depend upon and in what ways.

Dependence

Who Depends on Me	in these ways

I depend on	in these ways

DO YOU EVER FEEL YOU WANT TO LEAN ON SOMEONE ELSE? WHEN? HOW DOES IT SHOW UP IN WHAT YOU SAY OR DO?

HOW DEPENDENT DO YOU WANT TO BE?

HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT OTHERS TO DEPEND ON YOU?

Observation

How do children's feelings of dependence affect their behavior at your fieldsite? Using the basic observation form at the end of this booklet, what can you learn about how children's dependence and independence change as they grow?

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Observation Form

Copy this form and use it for looking at fear, anger, and dependence in young children.

time ________ place ________ date ________

The child:

What was the child doing?

What seemed to be the child's mood at the time?

What was the immediate event that seemed to arouse the child's feelings?

How did the child handle the situation?

Who or what was the "target" that the child directed feelings toward?

Did the child use play as a way of handling his or her feelings? How?

Others:

What did other children do?

What did the teacher do?

What did you do?

If you wanted to do something else, what was it? Why didn't you?

Analysis:

If you need more information about this child or the situation, what do you need to know?

Could any undesirable part of this experience have been prevented?

Is this behavior typical of other children you know who are about the same age?

What kind of growth would you like to see happen as this child gets older, so that this kind of situation can be faced with more of a feeling of self-control?

What will you do next time?

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Perspectives on Fear, Anger, and Dependence

What lies beneath children's fear, anger, or dependence has long fascinated scholars, psychologists, and caregivers. The complex interweave of feelings and behaviors has yet to yield a clearly patterned answer and is unlikely ever to do so. Theories abound, however, and we have decided to present to you here several perspectives that caregivers have found helpful.

These perspectives fall under the following headings:

- Anxiety--Relationships Among Anger, Fear, and Problem Behaviors
- Fear and Cognitive Development
- Student Reactions
- Anger's Link to Aggression
- Aggression's Link to Guilt and Fear
- Hostile Behavior of Long Standing
- Learning Dependent Behavior
- Early Deprivation and Dependence
- Individual Temperament
- What Use Are Theories?

Some theorists emphasize the role of children's experiences in shaping their feelings and fears; others point to stages of emotional concerns or intellectual response to their

world; still others cite individual differences of temperament as a significant factor in understanding children's feelings and behavior. Awareness of these multiple factors can help caregivers respond to children caught in their own strong feelings.

On Anxiety

In The Magic Years[1] *Selma Fraiberg, a professor of child psychoanalysis, considers the origins of fear and anger and the ways in which children deal with these feelings. Her readable and entertaining book illustrates the interconnections among fear, anger, and dependence in children's behavior.*

Her views, which draw heavily on the work of Sigmund Freud and his followers, focus on fostering the mental health of children as they grow, each in his or her own individual way. Her subject is the way children deal with the natural anxieties that accompany growing up. She defines anxiety as a distinctly human characteristic that is valuable to most people. It is the human way of preparing for that which is feared.

Relationships Among Anger, Fear, and Problem Behaviors

Anxiety is necessary for the survival of the individual under certain circumstances. Failure to apprehend danger and to prepare for it may have disastrous results. We will find, further, that anxiety can serve the highest aims of man. The anxiety of performing artists before going on the stage may actually bring forth the highest abilities of the artist when the performance begins.

Anxiety serves social purposes. It is one of the motives in the acquisition of conscience. It is fear of disapproval from loved persons as well as the desire to be loved which brings about conscience in the child. It is fear of criticism from one's own conscience that brings about moral conduct. It was anxiety before danger of extinction which first bound human groups together for mutual security....

First: Parent Protectors

Long before the child develops his inner resources for overcoming dangers he is dependent upon his parents to satisfy his needs, to relieve him of tension, to anticipate danger and to remove the source of a disturbance. This is the

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[1] Excerpts from pages 11-18, 100-101, 167, 202-205. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons from THE MAGIC YEARS by Selma Fraiberg. Copyright © 1959 Selma Fraiberg.

situation of the infant. To the infant and very young child the parents are very powerful beings, magical creatures who divine secret wishes, satisfy the deepest longings, and perform miraculous feats....

During the period of infancy, of biological helplessness, we make very few demands upon the child and do everything possible to reduce tension and satisfy all needs. Gradually, as the child develops, he acquires means of his own to deal with increasingly complex situations. The parent gradually relinquishes his function as insulator and protector. But we know that even the most independent children will need to call upon the protection of parents at times of unusual stress....

The Imaginary Monsters

But even the most loving and dedicated parents soon discover that in a child's world a good fairy is easily transformed into a witch, the friendly lion turns into a ferocious beast, the benevolent king becomes a monster and the paradise of early childhood is periodically invaded by dark and sinister creatures....

How is it then that a beloved parent will be transformed, in the child's eyes, into a monster? If we look closely into the life of the small child we find that such transformations take place chiefly in those instances when we are compelled to interfere with the child's pleasure, when we interrupt a pleasurable activity or deny a wish, when we frustrate the child's wishes or appetites in some way....

So there are no ways in which a child can avoid anxiety. If we banished all the witches and ogres from his bed-time stories and policed his daily life for every conceivable source of danger, he would still succeed in constructing his own imaginary monsters out of the conflicts of his young life. We do not need to be alarmed about the presence of fears in the small child's life if the child has the means to overcome them....

Let me introduce you to Laughing Tiger. I first met him myself when my niece Jannie was about two years eight months old. One afternoon as I entered the door of her grandparents' house, I found my niece just about to leave with her granduncle. Jan did not greet me; if anything, she looked a little annoyed at my entrance, like the actress who is interrupted during rehearsal by a clumsy stage-hand who blunders on stage. Still ignoring me, Jan pulled on white cotton gloves and clasped her patent purse in her hand in a fine imitation of a lady leaving for an afternoon engagement. Suddenly she turned and frowned at something behind her. "No!" she said firmly. "No, Laughing Tiger. You *cannot* come with us for an ice-cream cone. You stay right there. But Jannie can come with us. Come along Jannie!"

And she stepped out the door with her uncle, swinging her purse grandly....

At dinner that evening my niece did not take notice of me until I was about to sit down. "Watch out!" she cried. I rose quickly, suspecting a tack. "You were sitting on Laughing Tiger!" she said sternly. "I'm sorry. Now will you please ask him to get out of my chair." "You can go now, Laughing Tiger," said Jan. And this docile and obedient beast got up from the table and left the company without a murmur.

Laughing Tiger remained with us for several months. As far as I was ever able to tell he led a solemn and uneventful life, with hardly anything to laugh about. He never demonstrated the ferocity of his species and gave no cause for alarm during his residence....

How Children Cope With Anxiety

A few months after Jannie's third birthday he disappeared, and nobody missed him.

Now the time has come to ask, "Who *was* Laughing Tiger?" If we go way back to the beginning we find that Laughing Tiger was the direct descendant of the savage and ferocious beasts who disturb the sleep of small children. It is not a coincidence that Laughing Tiger sprang into existence at a time when Jannie was very much afraid of animals who could bite and might even eat up a little girl. Even the more harmless dogs of the neighborhood occasionally scared her. At such times she must have felt very small and helpless before the imagined danger. Now if you are very little and helpless before dangers, imaginary or real, there are not too many solutions handy, good solutions anyway. You could, for example, stay close to mother or daddy at all times and let them protect you. Some children do go through such clinging periods and are afraid to leave a parent's side. But that's not a good solution. Or you could avoid going outside because of the danger of an encounter with a wild beast, or you could avoid going to sleep in order not to encounter dream animals. Any of these solutions are poor solutions because they are based on avoidance, and the child is not using his own resources to deal with his imaginary dangers. (Instead he is increasing his dependency upon his parents.)

Now there is one place where you can meet a ferocious beast on your own terms and leave victorious. That place is the imagination. It is a matter of individual taste and preference whether the beast should be slain, maimed, banished or reformed, but no one needs to feel helpless in the presence of imaginary beasts when the imagination offers such solutions....

Some Sources of Anxiety

We will observe in the most normal children that as soon as we begin to make demands upon the child for controlling a body urge some tensions will arise, some anxieties may appear. It is often very puzzling to parents to see a child develop some type of problem behavior around the time toilet training is begun, or is under way, and to find no very clear connection between the behavior and the attitude toward toilet training....

We will see a child who is cooperative in his training showing little resistance to the process, but who is now very uncooperative, negative and defiant about all manner of other things in his daily routine. Here again, we may find that the child has become obedient with regard to his training out of a wish to obtain mother's approval, or out of a fear of mother's disapproval, and the negative and defiant feelings are removed to another area and expressed in ways that are far removed from the toilet experience. Among the eating disturbances in the second year we have found a number of instances in which a refusal to eat or fussiness in eating coincided with the onset of toilet training. Here, again, the negativism which was the suppressed attitude toward the training process was removed to another area and expressed in regard to food....

If we look at some other common fears of Stevie's age, we can see a similar mechanism at work. Peter, who loves the zoo and has never reacted to the roaring lions with much anxiety, now clings to his Daddy when the lions roar. He thinks the lion is angry when he roars. Peter, these days, is doing his two-and-a-half-year-old best to bring his own aggression under control and we can see why the lion is disturbing to him. Sally has a fear of rain for a few weeks in the second year and this baffles the family. Why doesn't she like the rain. "It's vet!" she explains sensibly. "Of course, the rain is wet," says her mama. But that isn't what Sally means. She has been trying, trying too hard perhaps, to have dry nights and when she wakes up wet, she is irritable and disappointed. "Vet!" she complains. So her fear of rain ("It's vet!") is her fear that she will wet herself. We could go on to catalogue a large number of fears of children this age which are the results of the child's early efforts to bring his own impulses under control. In these instances the child's fear is essentially a fear of his own impulses which are transferred to objects or phenomena outside himself. In each case, normally the fear will subside when the child has learned to control successfully the particular impulse which is disturbing him....

About the Oedipus Complex

"When I grow up," says Jimmy at the dinner table, "I'm gonna marry Mama."

"Jimmy's nuts!" says the sensible voice of eight-year-old Jane. "You can't marry Mama and anyway what would happen to Daddy?"...

If this is a childhood day-dream why do we attach more significance to it than any other day-dream? Well, first of all, because the child himself attaches great importance to it. The love expressed in this childhood fantasy is deeply felt. The wish to replace the father in the small boy's fantasy has a parallel in the little girl's fantasy of replacing the mother. In the case of both sexes the wish is strong enough to create a period of conflict in the child, for the very nature of the wish implies rivalry with the parent of his own sex and aggressive wishes toward that parent. But this love of early childhood creates the impossible situation in which the rival parent is also the object of love. When Jimmy imagines his father's death and his replacement of his father, he comes face to face with a powerful contradictory feeling. He also loves his father very much and the thought of his father's death fills him with horror. We do not normally encounter such difficulties in the love experience of later life.

This love attachment in early childhood to the parent of the opposite sex and its many ramifications in the conflict with the rival parent--the aggression, the guilt feelings and the form of its resolution--was given the name "Oedipus complex" by Freud....

There are millions of parents today who have never heard of the Oedipus complex and wouldn't recognize it if they saw it in their children, and most of these parents are successfully rearing their children without this information. For the truth of the matter is whether we know about an Oedipus complex or don't know about it the outcome for the child remains the same. It's a day-dream without any possibility of fulfillment, now or ever. It is a dream of love that must end in disappointment and renunciation for all children. It ends in renunciation of the impossible wishes and, normally, in the resolution of the conflicts engendered by them. The rivalries subside and the personality reintegrates in the most promising fashion. For we find that the rivalry with the parent of own sex is finally overcome by the strength of the positive ties. The child around the age of six reveals a strengthened identification with the parent who had so recently been his rival....

But in a study of child development we need to give an important place to the role of the Oedipus complex in emotional development of the three to five year old. Parental understanding can be a great aid in helping the child to successful resolution of the conflicts of this age.

On Fear and Cognitive Development

Another way of thinking about the relationship between fear and development was outlined by Jerome Kagan, a professor of human development, in a conversation he had with developers of Exploring Childhood. His view is influenced by the work of Jean Piaget.

My own view is that there are at least four different conditions that can bring about fear and they have a developmental sequence. The earliest condition that can elicit fear is encountering a strange event which is related to some knowledge you have, but not being able to understand it. In other words, an event which cannot be understood is a source of fear, and that is the reason why children, eight, nine, ten months of age, will show fear of strangers.

So that is the earliest source of fear and, of course, although it is the first one, holds with us all our lives. If we're on a jet airplane and we've been flying jets for ten years, we know exactly what the sound should be when the wheels are lowered for landing. However, if the sound is different and if we can't understand why it's different, we become afraid. That is, a discrepant event has occurred and we cannot assimilate that discrepant event.

The second source of fear is unpredictability. Around the end of the first year, the child starts to generate thoughts of what might happen--the next moment, the next day, the next hour. Once you start doing that you do it for the rest of your life. If you cannot generate a prediction of what is going to happen, you become frightened. That's a source of fear.

This source of fear is less common for young children because young children don't go around thinking through what's going to happen next week or next year. They don't have that degree of cognitive maturity. As they approach school age they do. The approach of adolescence is a time of intense anxiety because they are generating ideas of the future and if they cannot predict what is going to happen, they become anxious.

The third source of fear is anticipation of an undesirable event. That is, you think an undesirable event is going to hurt you: you are going to be rejected; you are going to be hurt; you are going to be punished. But it has not yet occurred. If you can do nothing about it, or you're not sure what you can do, then you become frightened.

This is one of the major socialization forces for children. That is, anticipation of loss of love. It is one of the

main reasons why children learn desired behavior. They fear that they will be rejected or punished for an act, therefore they don't do the act. It's not fear from not understanding. It's not fear of unpredictability. It's anticipation of an undesirable event. It is also probably the main socializing force for adolescents and adults.

Finally, the fourth source of fear is the last one to develop. It's when the person detects an inconsistency in his or her beliefs or inconsistency between his or her actions and behavior. Ordinarily that is called shame or guilt, but there is fear attached to it. So if I regard myself as honest and have told a lie, that's logically inconsistent and I will experience anxiety. Or inconsistency between two thoughts or feelings: I may think I love my mother, and that I hate my mother. It makes me anxious. Obviously only when children are cognitively mature enough to detect inconsistencies in the propositions that they hold, do they become fearful. And this is probably the last source of fear to appear developmentally.

On Student Reactions

Feelings of fear or anger, whatever their causes, lead some children to behaviors that can disturb caregivers. As Fraiberg shows, the complex interactions of these feelings and the ways children respond to them can be puzzling and upsetting. During a conference with Dottie, her teacher learned more about how her field experience in a kindergarten was affected by the aggressive and *dependent behavior of one little girl.*

Teacher: What I'd like to do is talk about how you felt at the beginning. How was it when you first went?

Dottie: Oh, everything was going crazy. The first day there was a substitute teacher, you know, and Elaine...she was trying to hit, I don't know who.

Teacher: The first day you came?

Dottie: She tried to hit somebody and she was screaming and yelling and said she wanted to go home, and the substitute teacher said, "I think I'll go get her number and call her mother," and he said, "You take care of Elaine while I do that...."

Teacher: (laughing) And that was your very first day?

Dottie: Yeah, and so I tried to do the alphabet with Elaine....

Teacher: You and Elaine were doing the alphabet together?

Dottie: And she was doing the alphabet and, let's see, when he came back from getting the number, he saw that she wasn't screaming and yelling and so he thought it was OK.

Teacher: Oh, so he hadn't called the mother yet.

Dottie: Yeah.

Teacher: And then what?

Dottie: Oh, well, then we were doing the alphabet, right? And so the next two times Beth and I came, we always played with her, because we had nothing to do and the other kids were busy and so we always played with Elaine, and the teacher said it was good for us to play with Elaine.

Teacher: So the next two or three times that you came, you and Beth always played with Elaine partly to keep her out of everybody else's hair, and partly because she wanted to play with you?

Dottie: She *expected* us to play with her.

Teacher: When you played with her, was she still aggressive and hitting people?

Dottie: Yep.

Teacher: Still, even when you were with her?

Dottie: Right. Then we were going to the theater, the music theater, and she would come over and she would always hold our hand.

Teacher: When you were walking over there?

Dottie: Yeah. Polly would too, but she would always let go, because Elaine would always tug and pull and jump around and things like that, and I'd say, "OK, you'd better behave, Elaine," and Elaine'd say, "I don't want you to hold *her* hand."

Teacher: Are there other things she always wants?

Dottie: She says, "You gotta help me do some work." I say, "I gotta do this with the other kids," and she says, "No, you gotta help *me* do some work."

Teacher: And then what do *you* do when she says that?

Dottie: I say, "Come on, Elaine," and she says, "Well, I don't like you people. You make me sick."

Teacher: What does she mean when she says, "I don't like you people, you make me sick"?

Dottie: I don't know. She goes, "I hate you all," and everything.

Teacher: Do you think she has gotten a little better? Has she learned from school that she can't get her own way and she can't demand?

Dottie: Miss Page had to drag her to the library.

Teacher: So what happened when you were there?

Dottie: She was crying and she was screaming 'cause she wants to go home and she says, "Let go of me, I won't, I won't run away," and Miss Page said, "You have to have somebody else's way sometime." She let go of Elaine, and Elaine started running and when it was time to go we can't find Elaine. I think she didn't want to go. But after that she, you know, when we got to the library, she was still crying. So Samuel's mother took care of her.

Teacher: Does Samuel's mother know her?

Dottie: Yeah, she goes to the library all the time and she's really nice.

Teacher: And did it work?

Dottie: Yeah, she goes, "Miss Page, I got candy!" and everything, and she wasn't even mad, you know what I mean?

It is important to remember that the responses each student has to a situation will differ according to his or her own needs, previous experiences, and feelings. Here is an excerpt from a conference the teacher later had with Beth, who worked with the same child.

Teacher: Some kids have said that Elaine was pretty rough and aggressive--grabby and hitting, and stuff like that. Did she do that when you were there?

Beth: She didn't--wait--she didn't hit anyone that I saw.

Teacher: She didn't bother you?

Beth: She just spoke back at people, that's what she did, but....

Teacher: She was aggressive maybe with words, but not physically.

Beth: Yeah.

Teacher: Did she bother you? Did you like working with her?

Beth: Oh yes. I liked working with her, it was just that sometimes I wished she wouldn't like me so much so I could work with somebody else....

Teacher: What do you mean by that?

Beth: Well, like, she always wanted me to do things with her and no one else. She didn't like it if I assisted someone else.

Teacher: Was she jealous, or why do you think she wanted you to herself?

Beth: Well, I think she liked it better when...she was with just me, and Dottie and the other people weren't doing anything with us.

Teacher: How could you tell?

Beth: We gave her more attention then; I think we gave her too much to start with.

Teacher: Why, why do you say that?

Beth: Because we always were with just her, and we didn't try to go to the other ones; we waited until they came to us. And then she got used to the idea that we'd be with her all the time, but it couldn't turn out that way.

Teacher: When did you decide that it was too much with her and that you wanted to do things with the other kids too?

Beth: We actually didn't. I didn't really care if we did things with her or with other kids, but it's just that they came over to us and they started it. And they started doing art things and we helped them.

Teacher: Do you think that you helped Elaine especially in any particular way? Do you see yourself as somebody who can help her?

Beth: I dunno. She is still the same as usual, I think.

Each of these students responded to a child's aggression and dependence out of her own perception of the situation and according to her own nature. Can theories, such as those of Freud or Piaget, B. F. Skinner or Haim Ginott, provide them with any further help? Faced with a child's behavior that they find troubling, caregivers can reflect on the particular situation in the light of several perspectives, choosing those views that they feel are most helpful for each particular case.

On Anger's Link to Aggression

Professor Kagan also talked with us about connections between anger and aggression, and how behaviorist theory explains aggression. The thinking of B. F. Skinner led behaviorists to say that people's behavior is largely the result of some behaviors being rewarded in the past (positively reinforced) and some behaviors being punished or ignored (negatively reinforced).

Now what leads to anger? I would say that there are two major sources of anger. One is interruption of a response routine, which is fancy language for frustration. The classic occasions for anger in children are taking away a toy, interfering with the child's activity, making a child go to sleep when he or she doesn't want to--interference with self-directed activity or activity toward a goal. What is normally called frustration is the earliest source of anger; and, of course, lasts all your life.

A second source of anger, which probably doesn't occur until school age--six, seven, eight years of age--is a threat to your standards. To have someone imply that a standard you hold dearly is incorrect makes you angry. So name calling causes anger. If you hold the standard that you are not dumb and someone calls you stupid, you get angry. In short, an assault on self-esteem can also cause anger.

What are the results of anger? What will happen is a function of those responses that have been punished or not punished, modeled or not modeled, and whether they have been successful in the past. Anger leads to a desire to hurt the person whom you believe made you mad.

What happens when you're very young? You don't have control of your anger and hostility, so you lash out. And children do hit and they swear and they yell. The intention is to hurt the person. The behavioral theorists would say that the more the parent or the adult or the child who's the target behaves as if he or she is hurt or upset, the more the aggressive action is reinforced or strengthened. Therefore, it would become more frequent.

The implication would be that teachers and parents should ignore aggression. That is, they should not behave as if they are hurt because, according to reinforcement theorists, if the child did intend harm, the worst thing you can do is reward that behavior by showing you're upset.

Children's aggressive behavior gets reinforced or strengthened also when they're successful in hurting other children and, of course, children cannot inhibit their distress when they're hurt or slugged or have toys taken away from them. So, in general, children who are successful in their aggression become more aggressive.

On Aggression's Link to Guilt and Fear

But others concerned with children's emotional development warn against allowing or ignoring aggressive behavior. Their view is that the child who "gets away with" behavior that he or she knows is hurtful or inappropriate builds up guilt and anxiety, which cause further troubles. Here is Dr. Haim Ginott, writing in his popular guide to parents, Between Parent and Child[1]*:*

A child should never be allowed to hit his parents. Such physical attacks are harmful for both child and parent. It makes the child feel anxious and afraid of retaliation. It makes the parent feel angry and hateful. The prohibition against hitting is necessary to spare the child guilt and anxiety and to enable the parent to remain emotionally hospitable to the child....

[Stop a child's attack immediately:]
"No hitting. I can never let you do that."
"If you are angry, tell it to me in words."

The limit against hitting a parent should not be modified under any circumstances. Effective upbringing is based on mutual respect between parent and child *without* the parent's abdicating the adult role.

A Limit on Violence

In How to Parent[2]*, Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson cautions that ignoring or allowing aggression can foster continuing violent behavior.*

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[1] Haim Ginott, M.D., *Between Parent and Child* (New York: Avon Books, 1961), pp. 123-124.

[2] Excerpts from pages 242-246. Copyright © 1970 by Fitzhugh Dodson. Reprinted by permission of Nash Publishing Corporation.

Another way a parent teaches his child to become violent is to condone his child's violence by not setting firm enough limits against hostile actions....

I have even known of cases where parents have allowed their child to strike them. If they forbade the child something, he would get angry and strike or kick them. When he hit her, his mother might say, "Now that's not nice to do that, Billy," but she would not physically prevent the child from hitting her....

If a parent does not set firm limits on physical expressions of hostility and violence, the child cannot internalize these limits and develop a control system for his violent impulses. Make no mistake about it. A child *wants* to be able to internalize firm limits against physical violence. It scares him that his own violent impulses may get out of hand and run away with him....

Suppose your preschool child is hitting or being physically destructive. If you are in control of your own actions and can "keep your cool," then grab your child's arms, hold him firmly, and immobilize him. While you are doing this, look him firmly in the eye, and say sternly to him something like this: "You must not do that! I cannot let you hit your brother (or friend). You can tell him you are mad at him, but you *must not hit!*"...

[Here are] some of the things you *should* do in order to prevent your youngster from growing up to be a violent person.

> Don't be a violent person yourself, or your child will imitate you.
>
> Make a distinction between violent *actions* and violent *feelings*.
>
> Set firm limits on your child's hostile and violent *actions*.
>
> Give him outlets for expressing hostile and violent *feelings*.

In What Every Child Needs[1] *Lillian and Richard Peairs offer this advice:*

You can't do much about it anyway. Restrain later attack if it comes. You might say to him, "Sorry. I know how

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[1] Abridged from page 176 in WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS by Lillian Peairs and Richard H. Peairs. Copyright © 1974 by Lillian Peairs and Richard Peairs, Co-trustees. By permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc. (hereafter cited as WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS).

you feel, but I can't let you hit me. Tell me what you are angry about. Maybe we can do something about it."

Children are most easily taught self-discipline by parents who practice it. Restrained by a calm parent, the child can more easily see that he is the one creating most of the fuss. When parents do not overreact, he's also not so likely to feel guilty or frightened by the force of his anger. Strong feelings come to be viewed more realistically.

On Hostile Behavior of Long Standing

Perhaps a child seems angry a great deal of the time. In discussing hostile behavior of long standing, the Peairses[1] consider the interrelation of a child's temperament with experiences. How might a particularly active, intense child become "an angry child"?

Hyperactivity may lead to hostility. Aggression may arise out of frequent difficulties flowing from his active inquisitiveness. If a child receives more parental reprimands than less active brothers and sisters, he may conclude that he is less favored.

Behind arrogant behavior is an uncertain, deeply insecure child--one who often, perhaps too often, has been corrected, threatened, and scolded. His behavior, both good and bad, may have been so frequently explained that he has come to feel smothered. He sees other children enjoyed, himself disciplined. The "good" example set by brothers and sisters, whom he believes he cannot emulate, and the seemingly endless admonitions of his parents lead him to give up trying to please. He concludes that, since he cannot be like his approved, more passive siblings, he has little to gain from trying to change his life-style. His behavior persists, and he may become more hostile.

The child who has been labeled "hostile" acts out his label. Parents may have become so sensitive to the problems he creates that they remind him of his behavior even when expressing affection.

> *You're a devil when it comes to teasing your sister,* but we love you.
>
> I'm glad you are my boy, *even if you do give me a hard time occasionally....*

---

[1] WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS, pp. 184-185.

What Can We Do About It?

There is no quick, easy way to help the hostile child.... A great deal of love, concern, emotional maturity, and understanding is required of any [person] wishing to resist the child's provocation and break the self-reinforcing pattern of his hostility. It takes longer to reassure him of his value and importance as a member of the family than it did to help him establish his antagonistic beliefs.

On Learning Dependent Behavior

In discussing how dependent behavior develops, Professor Kagan again felt that behaviorist theory provided a helpful explanation--but with one important reservation.

There are certain situations in which the child is in a state of distress. You've been hurt or confused and you're in a state of distress. You're not afraid because the event is all over. You had the toy taken from you and though not angry, you are in a state of distress. In a state of distress, the child will tend to behave in ways that have been successful in the past. For family-reared children, adults have usually been able to resolve their distress. Therefore, children go to adults for comfort, for aid, for help. We call these acts dependent acts.

So the behaviorists' approach to dependent behavior is very much like their approach to aggressive behavior. The more dependent behavior is rewarded, the more dependent the child will be. But it is more complicated. Children who have a close relationship to adults want to please them and be like them. Around age five, children begin to sense that the people they care about want them to be independent.

On Early Deprivation and Dependence

Another point of view, which reflects research on animals who were deprived of love and companionship as infants, contends that dependent behavior often results from past unmet needs. Lillian and Richard Peairs[1] provide this perspective on behavior like Elaine's:

Clinging, fear of leaving mother, and other evidences of lack of self-sufficiency are examples of stimuli that arouse parental anger....

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[1] WHAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS, pp. 113-115, 75.

Independence does not come easily. For the child, it's difficult to give up the comfort of having others care for you. His requests for assistance may sound like demands: "Help me get dressed." "Make me cocoa." "Help me take a bath." His obvious immaturity affords him considerable control over parents. Conditioned from earliest infancy to expect parental care and attention, he thrives from getting as much as he wants. Reversing such a comfortable state of affairs must be a gradual process.

Parents may think that his demands are deliberate attempts simply to assert and enjoy his control over them. It may be hard to see the needs that motivate his demands. He himself may be unaware of those needs. Have you noticed how often a child misinterprets his own feelings?

> He will request food when in fact he seeks the comfort that mother seems too busy to give.
>
> He looks for assistance in getting dressed for an outing away from home when he wishes relief from the fear of the unexpected.
>
> A need for companionship or love becomes a request to "Help me take a bath."...

Continuing dependency sometimes arises from a lack of adequate and reliable care during the critical years when it was needed most. If his cries were frequently left unanswered by a parent afraid of "spoiling" him, he may have come to feel helpless and to fear abandonment greatly. In his insecurity, he clings to mother, demanding frequent support to alleviate his fears. He pleads with mother: "I don't want to go. I'm afraid. Don't leave me. I want to stay with you."

Similar dependency needs have been observed in other creatures. Some species of birds and animals may become *imprinted* by some close moving object, living or mechanical, which they see shortly after birth--the thing becomes firmly fixed in their memory and they are deeply attached to it. Once this attachment is established, acceptance of a substitute, even if it happens to be the real mother, is resisted.

Punishment appears to increase the strength of such attachments. The research of Hess (1959) shows how the baby duck whose toes are stepped on during the imprinting period doesn't run away in fear but cuddles even closer to the punishing object. Similarly, the baby duck who is pecked as it follows its mother or who has difficulty following her over rough ground may become more strongly attached to the mother than do its less threatened siblings. Monkeys mistreated by their mothers during infancy show stronger mother-attachments than do other monkeys (Seay, Alexander, and Harlow, 1964).

In a similar way, research indicates that the human child whose needs were criticized and punished during certain early critical periods displays more dependency traits than the child who felt secure and well-cared-for during early childhood....

Self-reliance can be encouraged with praise when a child shows independence, but it cannot be forced when he does not. When your preschooler insists that he cannot pour his juice, cannot reach the glass he wants, cannot spread the peanut butter, cannot turn on the bath water, cannot dry himself, cannot find his coat, his scissors, his blanket, or his shoes, you or an older sibling may have no alternative but to give the necessary assistance. As mentioned earlier, you only need to get him started. Let him do most of the work. Within reasonable limits, let him be as childish or immature as he wishes, when you know that he also does many things for himself. But remember to reinforce him with approval when he does do it alone.

On Individual Temperament

These perspectives have all emphasized the effect of the environment (the experiences children have and how others respond) on how children behave. Others point out, however, that behaviors, like aggression and dependence, may have inborn or biological causes. These people point to differences in children's temperament that are observable from birth. Dr. Berry Brazelton's Infants and Mothers *explores such differences and their effect upon caregivers. His introduction makes his position clear.*[1]

Normal babies are not all alike. However obvious, this fact is invariably overlooked by the literature for new parents. It is therefore, together with its extensive implications for child rearing, the principal reason for this book. I have described the normal developmental paths of three very different infants, as well as the very different ways in which they affected their environments. These are not actual biographies of any one baby. Instead they are composites of many of each type--the active, the average, and the quiet babies--seen over fifteen years of pediatric practice.

The active and quiet babies (Daniel and Laura) demonstrate how amazingly broad the spectrum of normal development can

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[1]Berry Brazelton, M.D., *Infants and Mothers: Individual Differences in Development* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1969), p. xvii.

be. From the very moment of birth these differences become apparent and begin to determine the tone of the parents' reactions. Preconceived notions of childrearing crumble in the face of a Laura or a Daniel; but both a Laura or a Daniel can be infinitely rewarding to the mother and father who recognize the strengths of the individual with whom they have been presented....

[This] book is intended to document my firm belief that the newborn affects his environment as much as it influences him.

An extensive study of 85 families over a twelve-year period is the subject of Temperament and Behavior Disorders in Children. *In chapters 7 and 8, these researchers provide insights into the temperamental make-up of so-called "difficult" and "easy" children, which have implications for understanding children's fear, anger, and dependence.*[1]

When the children in the longitudinal study population were still under two years of age, and far in advance of the appearance of any behavioral disturbances among them, one subgroup came to particular attention. These children were variously characterized by their mothers, the interviewers, and all other members of the research team in terms of a series of pejorative labels, ranging from the expression "difficult children" by the more sedate and formal of our colleagues to "mother killers" by the more graphic and less inhibited....

"Difficult Children"

The difficult child typically follows this pattern of very slow adaptability in most new situations and reveals a need for many familiarizing exposures to new experiences before he can make a positive adaptation. If given an opportunity to experience the new without pressure for an immediate positive response, such children will in time adapt. The stranger becomes a familiar person, liked or not as the case may be; the new bed is taken for granted; riding in an automobile and going to public places all become an accepted part of the daily routine. However, if the child is not given regular and repeated exposures, and the given novel experience is repeated only intermittently, often after a long gap of time, the child will tend to display his original withdrawal response on each new exposure.

These difficult children are not truly nonadaptive, they are slowly adaptive. Once they have made their adjustment,

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[1] Reprinted by permission of New York University Press from *Temperament and Behavior Disorders in Children* by Alexander Thomas et al., © 1968 by New York University.

their responsiveness to a situation may often be indistinguishable from that of children who had adapted quickly. Thus, during periods in life when few new exposures occur, the child's routine behavior and temperament may seem to have changed. This may happen first during the second or third years of life. However, the change is more apparent than real. Once a new set of demands occurs, such as attendance at nursery school or birthday parties or exposure to a wider range of travel experiences than before, the child's typically slow adaptability again becomes manifest. After the child has learned to adapt to the school experience in general, he may display his typical negative response only for a short time at the beginning of the new school year or when there is a change in schools or in teaching personnel. However, when he is confronted by the next new set of social demands, the child once again may well demonstrate his initial avoidance tendency. He hesitates to engage in organized recreational activities or has difficulty each time a new demand for learning is made. This latter reaction can be so marked that a very bright child may be initially misjudged by the teacher as slow to learn and academically misplaced, although he will in most cases eventually come to demonstrate his high learning capacity after repeated exposures to the new learning demand have permitted it to become familiar.

The predominance of negative mood means that the difficult infants cry more than they laugh and that as toddlers they fuss more easily than they express pleasure. Naturally, the frequency of negative mood is more evident at times when the child is experiencing new situations and new demands. At such times, the negative mood is often the most striking aspect of the difficult child's withdrawal response to the new.

The final characteristic included in the cluster of temperamental traits that typifies the difficult child is the predominance of intense reactions. These are the children who shriek more frequently than they whine, who give belly laughs more often than they gently smile. Such a three-year-old will express his disappointment not with a whimper, but a bang. Frustration characteristically produces a violent tantrum. If, for example, such an infant has adapted positively to the bath, he may cry, scream, and kick if he is removed from the tub before he has had an opportunity to play in the water. Or, when he is two years old and is pressed to go outdoors at a time when he is engaged in a favorite indoor activity, he may react with a tantrum. Moreover, when he is started back to the house from his outdoor excursion, an equally violent tantrum may ensue. Pleasure is also expressed loudly, often with jumping, clapping, and running about....

"Easy Children"

Before considering the factors involved in the development of behavioral disturbance in the easy children, it is pertinent to outline their characteristic patterns of behavior.

During infancy, the child's biological rhythmicity shows up in the regular timing of his naps and his periods of wakefulness, hunger, eating, and elimination. It is possible for caretakers to plan the day's schedule with full confidence that the baby, unless ill, will do the same things at about the same time every day....

Positive approaching responses to new stimuli are the rule with the easy child. Most new foods are accepted from the beginning, and changes in foods, the place of the feeding, or the person feeding the child make little or no difference. His first tub bath is usually a source of evident pleasure. The child can be left with new people, dressed in different clothing, taken to new places, and these events will go smoothly and pleasantly for all concerned....

The rapid adaptability of such youngsters means that family plans can proceed without concern lest the child behave badly. He will adapt easily to a new home, a change in feeding and sleep routines, a new way of life. It requires only a few exposures before this youngster is behaving as if there had been no changes and his current activities had been going on since birth.

The predominance of positive mood means that the child smiles and laughs considerably more than he cries. Indeed, it frequently is said of such a child that he never cries unless he is hungry or sleepy. Nevertheless, the intensity of these children's moods may vary. Pleasure may be shown by a smile or a belly laugh. One can be sure, however, that if this type of child cries, there is indeed something amiss. Understandably, these children generally evoke pleasant responses in others and, as a result of the gentle handling and genuine affection they often inspire, they experience the world as a very warm, accepting, and happy place. As they grow older, these youngsters tend always to find something good, even in disappointing situations....

Why then should behavior problems ever appear in any of the children in this group? In the first place, traumatic events of a fortuitous nature may occur which cause fears, anxieties, and subsequent problem development....

Secondly, and interestingly, a cause of behavioral difficulties in easy children can derive from their very virtues, particularly their high degree of adaptability. The children easily develop the behavioral patterns that are taught them at home. They mirror the rules, regulations, mores, and manners of their parents, sometimes exaggerated to the point of caricature. At times, however, the expectations of the peer, educational, or recreational group in which the child spends his time outside of the home may conflict with

the parental mores, standards, and behavior patterns that the child has assimilated. If the conflict is not too severe, the easy child can usually develop flexible adaptive responses so that his functioning in different environments and with different people is appropriate to each. However, if the contradiction between parental and extrafamilial standards of acceptable behavior is extreme and acute, and if the parents insist upon their style, it may be impossible for the child, no matter how adaptable he is, to develop separate behavior patterns that will obviate the negative effects of the conflicting expectations of his family and the outside world. Once unresolvable dissonance between the standards of behavior within and without the home arises, the subsequent features of the child-environment interaction may intensify the child's difficulties.

What Use are Theories?

Any of these perspectives can be useful to the extent that it provides help to students trying to support children's growth in self-control and happy adjustment to the world in which they live. No single perspective can provide all the answers to why a child is fearful, angry, or dependent.

From each perspective, caregivers can select what they find helpful. Experiences and temperament together underlie children's behavior. A mother who was troubled by her daughter's excessive dependence told us how relieved she felt when her hospital's pediatrician gave her this advice:

When Beverly wants to hang around you, cling to you or get your attention or help, just give her as much as you can. She seems to need to be dependent right now. Perhaps the changes and uncertainties which the family is experiencing right now are hard for her to handle. Either her age or her temperament, probably both, are telling us that this is how she must behave. She'll emerge stronger if you can just bear with her need to lean on you for a while.

CREDITS

The Teacher's Guide for *Fear, Anger, and Dependence* was developed by Emma Wood Rous and Susan Christie Thomas. Editors: Marjorie Waters and Nancy Witting. Production: Maria Rainho and Alison Wampler.

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Director:
Marilyn Clayton Felt

Curriculum Coordinator:
Ruth N. MacDonald

Module Head:
Susan Christie Thomas

Project Manager:
Kathleen Maurer Horani

Senior Scholars:
Jerome Kagan, Professor of Human Development, Harvard University

James Jones, Assistant Professor of Social Psychology, Harvard University

Freda Rebelsky, Professor of Psychology, Boston University

Consultants:
Elaine A. Blechman, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Yale School of Medicine, Yale University

T. Berry Brazelton, Pediatrician and Clinical Assistant Professor, Harvard University

Urie Bronfenbrenner, Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, Cornell University

Jerome S. Bruner, Watts Professor of Psychology, Department of Experimental Psychology, Oxford University

Betty H. Bryant, Nursery School Director, Center for Child Care Research, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey

Courtney Cazden, Professor of Education, Harvard University

Joan Goldsmith, Co-Director, The Institute of Open Education/Antioch Graduate Center

Patricia Marks Greenfield, Associate Professor of Psychology, University of California at Los Angeles

John Herzog, Associate Professor of Education, Northeastern University

David Kantor, Director of Research and Development, Boston Family Institute

Eli H. Newberger, Director, Family Development Study, The Children's Hospital Medical Center

Ed Tronick, Associate in Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School, Harvard University

Robert Selman, Clinical Psychologist, Judge Baker Child Guidance Center, Boston, Massachusetts

Beatrice Blyth Whiting, Professor of Education and Anthropology, Harvard University

Developers:
Norma Arnow
Wendy Johnson Barnes
Ellen Grant
Rogier Gregoire
Toby Grover
Patricia Hourihan
Margaret Janey
Peggy Lippitt
Ronald Lippitt
Karlen Lyons
Lucy Lyons
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Dennie Wolf

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Editors:
Anne Cleaves
Anne Glickman
Marcia Mitchell
Marjorie Waters
Nancy Witting

Design:
Myra Lee Conway
Roz Gerstein
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Michael Sand
Karen Shipley
Judy Spock
Alison Wampler

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Scott Paris

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