

# Transforming Challenging Behavior Through Leadership of Your Program



## Mindset, Play & Theater Techniques

with Barb O'Neill, Ed.D.

[www.transformchallengingbehavior.com](http://www.transformchallengingbehavior.com)

What you'll learn:

- a **mindset** activity for staff meetings
- my top 2 tips for **family collaboration**
- behavior prevention through **play**
- 3 **transition/circle time strategies**
- how to **learn more!**

## MINDSET

What are your...

beliefs about challenging behavior? about children who use them?

beliefs about your ability to work effectively with these children?

thoughts you have or things you hear yourself saying?



Record some examples here:



Which of the beliefs and thoughts on the previous page represent a Fixed or Growth Mindset?

Fixed vs. Growth Mindset	
Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Avoid challenges</li> <li>✓ Gives up easily when faced with obstacles</li> <li>✓ Sees effort as fruitless</li> <li>✓ Ignores useful feedback</li> <li>✓ Threatened by others' success</li> </ul> <p>→ intelligence and ability are static</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Embraces challenges</li> <li>✓ Persist despite obstacles</li> <li>✓ See effort as a path to mastery</li> <li>✓ Learns from feedback</li> <li>✓ Inspired by others' success</li> </ul> <p>→ intelligence and ability can be developed</p>
Carol Dweck	

## SETTING A POSITIVE INTENTION for a GROWTH MINDSET regarding behavior

Examples:

I have tools to prevent challenging behavior and my confidence and skill is increasing daily

**The “difficult” children are my favorites and I feel gratified helping children and families who are in crisis**

I am skilled at working with children who use challenging behavior



Write your *positive intention* here:

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# FAMILY COLLABORATION

**TIP #1:** Take steps to *proactively* set expectations about behavior in general and biting in particular.

Your ideas about that:

**TIP #2:** When families do not take your recommendations about challenging behavior re-focus on \_\_\_\_\_.

Your ideas about that:

## PLAY

HELPING CHILDREN PLAY CAN HELP PREVENT CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

1. **Get in there and *PLAY!***
2. **Imitate children's actions**
3. **Imitate *and expand* aka "yes, and"**
4. **Prompt interaction**
5. **Ask one child to buddy up with another**



**Improv-based Play Support** is a strengths-based method for building on children's interests and play initiations that promotes social and play skill development, thereby preventing challenging behavior. It relies on the principles of theater improvisation or "improv". At its most basic level teachers imitate children's actions and then do something to expand the play in a way that is closely related to what the child is already doing.

*Example 1:* A child is banging blocks. The teacher bangs blocks. Eventually the teacher bangs the blocks in a simple pattern or stacks them to see if the child will copy her.

*Example 2:* A teacher imitates a child rocking a baby doll. The teacher says, "my baby is hungry" or pretends to feed her a toy bottle, perhaps silently. The child may or may not copy her.

**More on Improv-based Play Support:** [https://www.naeyc.org/tyc/files/tyc/07YC\\_pg62-69\\_rv.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/tyc/files/tyc/07YC_pg62-69_rv.pdf)

# TRANSITION/CIRCLE TIME STRATEGIES



## 1. songs with *embedded directions*



## 2. start circle time with a movement song

Don't wait till everyone arrives or settles to begin.  
Build on the *interests* of kids who have trouble at circle time!



## 3. use a puppet...maybe a *class* puppet

Don't forget to download your *No More Challenging Behavior Cheatsheet* at  
[www.transformchallengingbehavior.com](http://www.transformchallengingbehavior.com)

I offer consulting, training, coaching, and keynote talks on everything covered above and more. Interested? Let's talk.

You can reach me at [barb@transformchallengingbehavior.com](mailto:barb@transformchallengingbehavior.com).

