

# Replacing Time-Out:

## Part One— Using Guidance to Build an Encouraging Classroom

Teachers often hear that time-outs do not help children's development or learning. Less often they are given reasons why. Less often still do teachers receive specific information about what works instead. This article explains "what the fuss is about" concerning time-outs and why it is important to replace time-outs with guidance that builds an encouraging classroom.

Confusion about time-out is understandable, as experts still disagree about its use (Ucci 1998; Schreiber 1999). Time-out probably was first used as a classroom alternative to embarrassment, scolding, and corporal punishment. Caring teachers wanted other means for dealing with classroom conflicts, and time-out became the commonly used alternative.

There has always been ambiguity about the use of this technique. When a teacher removes a child from a situation and helps the child

---

**Dan Gartrell, Ed.D.**, is director of the Child Development Training Program and professor of early childhood education at Bemidji State University in northern Minnesota. He is the author of *What the Kids Said Today* (2000, Redleaf) and *A Guidance Approach for the Encouraging Classroom* (1998, Delmar/Thomson Learning) and has done well over 100 workshops on this topic.

*Part two of this article will appear in an upcoming issue of Young Children. It will explore four guidance techniques that use social problemsolving: classic conflict management, guidance talks, class meetings, and comprehensive guidance interventions. These strategies reduce and resolve conflicts without the use of punishment.*

calm down so the two can then talk about and, hopefully, resolve the conflict, the intervention is often positive, leading to important learning. Most of us have difficulty negotiating when we are upset. But in many classrooms a child is removed to a chair or unoccupied part of the room as a consequence of something he or she has done. Virtually all early childhood educators now believe that a child should never be put in complete isolation (Ucci 1998), although some still are in favor of disciplining a child through the use of time-out. Ucci (1998) gives the rationale that, to gain control, a child needs to be removed from a conflict so he can think about his behavior and figure out what to do.

Ucci argues that the use of all discipline, including the time-out, "should be viewed not as punishment, but rather as supportive of and teaching about how to gain [behavioral] control and express feelings appropriately" (1998, 3). From this perspective, the time-out is a logical consequence of a child's losing control in a situation or otherwise acting inappropriately.

The usual length of the time-out is a minute or two for a toddler and five to ten minutes for an older child. With preschoolers, teachers sometimes use a timer to help them recognize that the time-out will have a definite end (Ucci 1998). In contrast, teachers who disagree with time-out as a discipline technique sometimes use the term "cooling down time," when referring to removal that will



© Robertson's Creative Photography

help a child calm down so a conflict can be resolved (Gartrell 1998).

### **What the fuss is about**

When used as discipline, the time-out is one of a group of techniques—including the name-on-the-board, an assigned yellow or red “light,” and the disciplinary referral slip—that still rely on blame and shame to bring a child’s behavior “back into line.” (Perhaps the most odious is putting a child on specially made green, yellow, and red steps, depending on frequency of the conflicts. This is the modern equivalent of the dunce stool.) One of the problems with these techniques, seen by some adults as “logical consequences,” is that generally they are more logical to the adult than to the child. Although the adult’s intent is to discipline rather than punish, children tend to perceive these traditional discipline techniques as “the infliction of pain and suffering,” which is, in fact, a fairly standard definition of punishment.

Going back to the nineteenth century, early childhood writers have criticized discipline techniques that punish children rather than positively teach them (Gartrell 1998). Froebel went so far as to say that through punishment, adults can make a child “bad” (in Lilley 1967). Montessori ([1912] 1964) decried traditional systems that reward and punish rather than teach children how to discipline themselves. More recently, Katz (1984) has argued that punishments such as time-outs confuse young children because they cannot easily understand the sequence of behaviors during and after a conflict nor what removal to a chair has to do with them. Clewett (1988) has pointed out that such punishments discourage the individual child and dampen the spirit of all children in



© Subjects & Predicates

the class. Marion (1999) explains that the time-out is “punishment by loss,” meaning that the adult temporarily deprives the child of membership in the group and, as a punishment, “does not teach.”

Referring especially to toddlers, Schreiber offers five reasons why the time-out is an undesirable practice:

1. The imposed external control of the time-out inhibits a child’s ability to build internal controls and may cause a child lasting feelings of “being ineffectual.”
2. The child placed on a time-out chair does not have personal needs met, including the need to develop alternative strategies.
3. The time-out diminishes the child’s developing self-worth and self-confidence; it may cause others to view the child as a troublemaker.
4. The young child has difficulty understanding the relation of actions to consequences and may feel bewildered by the time-out experience.
5. Opportunities for learning valuable lessons in social relations are lost during the period of isolation, [and humiliation from the time-out may diminish the value of adult follow-up] (1999, 22–23).

In my view, these considerations apply to older children as well.

Clewett (1988) points out that an air of discouragement pervades a classroom in which a time-out chair is prominent. Teachers in such classrooms have institutionalized *conditional acceptance*, with adult rejection an ever-lingering threat if rules are disobeyed. A child placed on the chair experiences public, if temporary, loss of group membership. Other children become apprehensive that they

may be the next to be excluded from the group. When conditional acceptance becomes the routine, in-groups and out-groups often form. Too often, institutions perpetuate this undesirable social dynamic, to the loss of all and the considerable detriment of some.

In addition to the writers cited above, the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (NAEYC 1998) and the NAEYC publication *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs* (Bredenkamp & Copple 1997) advocate use of positive discipline or guidance. The difference between guidance and traditional discipline can be summarized this way:

Traditional classroom discipline too easily slides into punishment; it punishes children for making mistakes in their behavior. Guidance rejects the pain and suffering involved in punishment. Guidance teaches children to solve their problems, rather than punishing them for having problems they cannot solve. Guidance teaches children to learn from their mistakes rather than “disciplining” children for the mistakes they make. (Gartrell 1997)

In addition to replacing time-out, we need to replace all discipline

techniques that impose pain and suffering. Instead, teachers can focus on three positive and instructive practices: being a guidance professional, teaching democratic life skills, and building an encouraging classroom.

### **Being a guidance professional**

Time-outs often provide noticeable short-term benefits, which can be more obvious than the negative side effects. It takes commitment, time, and effort to learn guidance alternatives and, until a teacher masters them, they may seem less effective (Da Ros & Kovach 1998). To learn and use effective alternatives, teachers must be **guidance professionals**.

It is never too late to become a guidance professional. (A model teacher, in her late forties, once told me it took five years before she felt her guidance responses had become automatic.) In my experience, after learning to use guidance effectively, even veteran teachers wonder how they ever managed before. This anecdote illustrates how one kindergarten teacher moved toward professionalism.

Early in the year, Jamal got upset with another child and punched her in the stomach. The teacher became furious and marched him to the time-out chair. Later in the day the principal gave Jamal a stern lecture. Two days later, Jamal got into another argument and hit again. As the teacher came toward him, Jamal walked to the time-out chair by himself and said, "I know. I'm going 'cause I'm no good." The teacher knelt beside him, put her arm around his shoulders, and explained that he did not upset her but that his behavior did. Afterward, she worked to improve their relationship. (Gartrell 1998, 62)

© Elisabeth Nichols



**Punishments such as time-outs confuse young children because they cannot easily understand the sequence of behaviors during and after a conflict nor what removal to a chair has to do with them.**

When the teacher used the time-out with Jamal, she did not try to figure out all that happened, how Jamal saw the problem, what alternatives he might learn for next time, and how he might make amends for his actions and rejoin the group. Instead, she reacted to a hard-and-fast rule—zero tolerance for aggression—with the established response: time-out and a stern lecture.

The teacher's own sense of ethics prompted her to move toward professionalism. When the second incident occurred, she realized that punishment was having a negative effect on Jamal's self-concept. In a meeting with staff who knew Jamal, she learned that after living in foster homes, he and his siblings had

every day. Her assistant helped make it possible to dedicate this time to Jamal, and both teachers became more encouraging of Jamal's everyday activities.

They also helped Jamal develop and use a strategy that allowed him to sense when he was losing control and remove himself from conflicts. One day, Jamal walked away from a conflict and, very upset, approached the teacher. She suggested he go into the bathroom, shut the door, and spit in the sink for as long as he wanted. I arrived to see a thirsty little boy come out of the bathroom and head straight for the water fountain! After the teacher quickly washed out the sink, she had a quiet talk with him about the conflict.

Teacher-child attachments are necessary if a child is to trust enough to learn to manage classroom conflicts (Betz 1994). In conflict situations the guidance professional acts as a mediator, seeking to understand the situation and lead children toward peaceable resolution. This use of conflict management teaches children important life skills. When teachers use time-out, they often think they are shaming the child into "being good." The truth

is that young children have not yet mastered the complex life skills of expressing strong emotions, resolving social problems peaceably, and getting along. The teacher may think that the child knows better and has only to be reminded. But the child is *just beginning* to build understandings and learn communication

just been returned to their mother's care. The mother had been working hard to overcome chemical dependency. The teacher began getting to know Jamal so she could better understand him and his behavior. She changed her morning routine to share 10 minutes alone with him ev-

ery day. Her assistant helped make it possible to dedicate this time to Jamal, and both teachers became more encouraging of Jamal's everyday activities.

Teacher-child attachments are necessary if a child is to trust enough to learn to manage classroom conflicts

techniques that, in fact, some adults never learn, and most of us learn only imperfectly (Gartrell 1995).

While shame may cause the child to halt (or at least be more careful about) the immediate behavior, it does nothing to teach positive alternative behaviors. Shaming also has psychological side effects. The child feels like a failure because he does not know something the teacher expects him to know (Cleworth 1988; Schreiber 1999). And shame reinforces a negative self-fulfilling prophecy. This likely was happening for Jamal, who already saw himself as “no good.” If a child internalizes

a negative label, preconsciously he is going to ask a natural follow-up question, “How do bad kids act?” In answering this question, children like Jamal often have *more* conflicts than before the traditional discipline was applied—and the negative self-label introduced (Gartrell 1995). These reasons account at least in part for the fact that for many children, time-out does not work (Cleworth 1988; Betz 1994). Think about it: a pattern of “I do something bad; therefore I am punished; therefore I am bad; therefore I do something bad” is not a life pattern we want to reinforce!

## Teaching democratic life skills

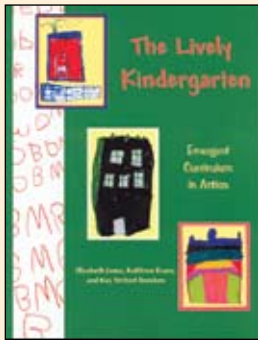
These days, most things educational are expected to have goals, standards, and outcomes. With traditional discipline, the goal is obvious: an orderly classroom with children literally and figuratively kept in line (as the saying goes, “The teacher teaches and the students learn”). The expectation is that from compliance in childhood comes character in adulthood.

The problem with this goal is that it reflects a time in our society when children were “seen and not heard.” In years past (before Drs. Spock and Brazelton, among others) most families tended to have authoritarian parenting styles, with parents in charge and the “goodness” of children evaluated by how well they obeyed. But today’s children come more often from families with different values and interaction patterns. More so than in the past, even very young children make real choices and express thoughts freely. For many families parent-driven rules and punishments are reserved for a relatively small number of situations. Practices like parent-child “chats” and family meetings are on the increase. Aware as well that they should not be overly permissive, these parents work hard to be not permissive but interactive, not authoritarian but authoritative.

At the same time it is now well known that some children also come from families under stress.

But the child is just beginning to build understandings and learn communication techniques that, in fact, some adults never learn, and most of us learn only imperfectly.

### Educating for Democracy



**Pluralistic democracy** is a desirable ideal. America’s founding fathers voiced this concept and more or less set it up, although their idea of pluralism was effectively limited to male Europeans. Although to every new manifestation of diversity, reactions, some vicious, have been expressed along the way, immigration has been and continues to be more open in North America than in many older nations.

**Diversity** creates conflict. In a democracy, respectful conflict is desirable; it enriches thought and broadens possibility. Critical thinking is one hallmark of a good citizen. It is the outcome of disequilibrium, the surprise that one’s way is not the only way and the only investment of effort in reconciling different perspectives.

**Community**—mutual caring and collaborative action—is essential to human living.

**Civilization** is not easily accomplished. It requires a long process of education of the young, shaping dispositions to care and learn as well as practicing all the skills—physical, intellectual, and social—that a complex society demands. Civilizing goes on continuously; it is never finished, but it is easily lost.

**Democratic behaviors and critical thinking** are well learned only through practice. Educational systems, then, must create democratic learning communities where thinking is encouraged and communication is active.

**The human child**, fortunately, is an enthusiastic learner.

Source: Reprinted from E. Jones, “Emergent Teaching,” *The Lively Kindergarten: Emergent Curriculum in Action* by E. Jones, K. Evans, and K.S. Rencken (Washington, DC: NAEYC, 2001), 9.

Their parents for various reasons are unable to provide the healthy attachments and encouragement that young children need. Children like Jamal often enter classrooms unsure of how to behave with others, especially adults.

In this complex new culture, effective teachers need to be leaders, not bosses. In Piaget's ([1932] 1960) words, they must work for the goal of "autonomy" (intelligent and ethical decisionmaking) rather than obedience. For many years, educators such as Dewey ([1900] 1969), Piaget ([1932] 1960), and Dreikurs (1968) argued for this shift in teaching priorities. In recent years, educators such as Katz (in Kantrowitz & Wingert 1989), Elkind (1997), and Gardner (1993) have expressed similar views. (See the article by Hermine Marshall, pp. 19–25 of this issue, for a different perspective on autonomy.)

The goals of *guidance* come from many sources. For Dewey ([1916] 1945), the purpose of education was full and productive involvement in the perpetuation of democracy. Piaget ([1932] 1960) said education should lead to *autonomy*. Gardner (1993) believes healthy development includes *interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences*, the capacity to understand one's own needs and emotions and to balance this knowledge with responsiveness to the perspectives of others (Gardner 1993). And Katz (in Kantrowitz & Wingert 1989) says that, in addition to the traditional three R's, children need to learn the lessons of a new "first" R: *relationships*.

According to these thinkers and others, and the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (NAEYC 1998), the goals of guidance can be stated in terms of **democratic life skills**—the abilities children need to function

as productive citizens and healthy individuals.

Democratic life skills include the ability to

- see one's self as a worthy individual and a capable member of the group
- express strong emotions in nonhurting ways
- solve problems ethically and intelligently
- be understanding of the feelings and viewpoints of others
- work cooperatively in groups, with acceptance of the human differences among members (Gartrell 1998)

Teaching democratic life skills is not a diversion from "real teaching," but integral to it. We teach these skills not just through conflicts resolved peaceably but also through the curriculum. In addition, guidance professionals actively model and teach democratic life skills throughout every day. They expect children to learn them, and guide them in the process. Such teachers see conflict not as the result of misbehavior, but of *mistaken behavior*, from which the child can learn (Gartrell 1995). While teachers can reduce mistaken behaviors through use of developmentally appropriate practice, they recognize that conflicts happen every day. The challenge for teachers—and children—is to recognize conflicts as opportunities for teaching and learning.

A commitment to guidance includes viewing curriculum as something that is a part of children's lives. Education is about learning to live together peaceably and solving problems cooperatively and creatively—more so than preparation for standardized tests and drills in basic skills. Each time children are helped to resolve

conflicts, they engage in high-level social studies, language arts, and sometimes even mathematical thinking. I once heard a four-year-old exclaim, "I am so frustrated, I got to get the teacher to help us share!" The teacher did help, and gently reinforced the word *frustrated*.

It is important to see children who experience repeated, serious conflicts not as problem children but as children with problems who need guidance. Such children sometimes need comprehensive guidance to resolve issues that are bigger than they are. With both children who experience typical conflicts and those who have serious problems due to unmet needs, alternatives to traditional discipline can help them, and others in the class, build democratic life skills. Professional teachers use guidance to ensure that no child is stigmatized and denied full membership in the classroom community and so that all children progress in the use and learning of democratic life skills (Gartrell 1998).

### ***Building an encouraging classroom***

In the encouraging classroom, teachers work together in teams to create an environment that includes all children; make the schedule responsive to the rhythms of the group; provide an environment that encourages individual and small group engagement; adjust the curriculum to children's attention spans, learning styles, and family backgrounds; and include democratic life skills in the curriculum. By using practices that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive, teaching teams reduce the kinds of institutionally caused conflicts that children do not cause so much as fall into. At the same time, the team recognizes that there are other conflicts that occur in even the most encouraging classroom environments. When many small bodies are in a small space for long hours with few adults, conflicts happen.

**Effective teachers need to be leaders, not bosses. In Piaget's ([1932] 1960) words, they must work for the goal of "autonomy" (intelligent and ethical decisionmaking) rather than obedience.**

Teachers in encouraging classrooms work hard to reduce the frequency of conflicts caused by an inappropriate environment or activities. They continuously review and modify the daily schedule, classroom layout, and curriculum.

**Daily schedule.** The daily schedule for a Head Start class called for returning to the classroom after active play, lining up for bathroom and hand-washing, and then sitting down for lunch. After one month, the teachers noticed the children had problems waiting in line, with conflicts occurring almost daily. They met to discuss the problem and plan a different approach. The class was already divided into four family groups, each led by a member of the teaching team. On a rotating basis, one family group came in early to help prepare the tables and get themselves ready for lunch. When the other groups returned to the classroom, the children went to the library corner to look at books individually and in pairs. The teacher would have a few children at a time go to the bathroom to wash hands and transition to the lunch tables. Everyone would eat lunch with his or her family group. From the first day teachers tried the new approach, conflicts clearly diminished.

**Room arrangement.** In a kindergarten class of 24 children, centers for reading, house, and blocks and trucks were set up around the edges of the room. The teacher observed that the centers were too crowded, and some children used the large open area in the middle of the room as a raceway for the trucks. In fact, a couple of the boys referred to this space as the “track.” After attending

a workshop on learning centers, the teacher added centers for writing, art, music, science, and technology. He spaced them around the room to eliminate runways, clustering them by estimated activity levels. For daily work time he asked the children to decide what centers they intended to use and they recorded their choices in journals (with early

priate and effective. The teacher, her assistant, and two parent volunteers divided the class into four groups for a visit to the pumpkin patch, where each group picked a pumpkin. Back in the classroom, the children worked on their pumpkins in small groups. They were actively involved and had few conflicts. One group of children and a parent whom the teacher knew did not celebrate Halloween, cut their pumpkin into small pieces and made pumpkin bars and collected the seeds for roasting. The teacher concluded that the revised activity was much more developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive, and it minimized conflicts.

**Developing curriculum.** At the beginning of the year, a preschool teaching team developed themes based on democratic life skills. As part of the theme for “work cooperatively in groups,” the teachers put on a puppet play about two bears who would not let a frog play with them. The teachers stopped the play and invited the children to discuss what had happened. Using the children’s ideas, the teachers revised the play—this time the bears let the frog play with them. The children were much happier with this ending.

In encouraging classrooms all children find a welcome place. The teaching team works continuously to make the program responsive to each child in the group. Children learn to manage their conflicts without bullying and other forms of violence (Carlsson-Paige & Levin 2000). The teachers are positive leaders who continue to learn even as they teach. They have become guidance professionals who help children learn democratic life skills.

### ***The Encouraging Classroom. . .***

...is a caring community within the physical boundaries of the class. It is a place where children feel at home when they are out of the home. . . . Adults provide ongoing guidance in order to maintain an equilibrium between the needs of each developing member and the right of the caring community for mutual appreciation among its members. It constitutes the creation and sustenance of a caring community among children and adults within the physical boundaries of the group.

Guidance, which is the approach teachers use to build the encouraging classroom, actively teaches children to express and meet needs acceptably. Unlike teachers who use traditional discipline, in a guidance approach, teachers never threaten the child’s membership in the community to “motivate” better behavior. The child’s place in the classroom community, except in rare situations that involve parents and even other professionals, is not up for discussion (Gartrell 2000, 171–72).

writing and art). Children’s playtime soon became more productive, and the teacher began to weave center use into math and language arts focus times and periodic themes.

**Modifying curriculum.** A first-year teacher planned a pumpkin activity for her class of 21 children. Everyone sat in a circle and each child in turn came up and dug out one spoonful of pulp from the pumpkin. The children soon became restless waiting for their turns, and the teacher decided to carve the pumpkin herself. A mother later saw the jack-o’-lantern and told the teacher that her family did not recognize or celebrate Halloween.

The next year the teacher again planned a pumpkin activity but changed it to make it more appro-

## What Teachers Can Do

**1. Be a guidance professional.** When children experience a conflict, try to see things the way they do. Begin by building agreement about how each child views the conflict and then guide the children toward problem-solving actions they feel okay with.

**2. Teach democratic life skills.** Concentrate on one democratic life skill you would like the children to learn. Plan a three-part strategy for teaching the skill:

- develop a theme or unit that includes a variety of open-ended learning activities through learning centers
- modify the daily schedule, room arrangement, grouping patterns, and transition activities to give the skill a high priority
- use direct modeling and instruction on the skill during conflicts

**3. Build an encouraging classroom.** Eliminate practices that single out individuals or small groups of children for either public criticism or praise. Instead, direct private encouragement and guidance to individuals and encouraging public comments to the whole group. Quietly champion children who tend to be stigmatized for their appearance or behavior. Work as a team to figure out how to include such children as full and equal participants in the group. If these children need extra help to reduce their conflicts and mistaken behaviors, work with them and their families to get the assistance they need.

## References

- Betz, C. 1994. Beyond time-out: Tips from a teacher. *Young Children* 49 (3): 10–14.
- Bredenkamp, S., & C. Copple, eds. 1997. *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs*. Rev. ed. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Carlsson-Paige, N., & D.E. Levin. 2000. *Before push comes to shove: Building conflict resolution skills with children*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf.
- Clewett, A.S. 1988. Guidance and discipline: Teaching young children appropriate behavior. *Young Children* 43 (4): 25–36.
- Da Ros, D.A., & B.A. Kovach. 1998. Assisting toddlers and caregivers during conflict resolutions: Interactions that promote socialization. *Childhood Education* 75 (1): 25–30.
- Dewey, J. [1900] 1969. *The school and society*. New York: Free Press.
- Dewey, J. [1916] 1945. *Democracy and education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dreikurs, R. 1968. *Psychology in the classroom*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Elkind, D. 1997. The death of child nature: Education in the post modern world. *Phi Delta Kappan* (November): 241–45.
- Gardner, H. 1993. *Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice*. New York: Basic.
- Gartrell, D.J. 1995. Misbehavior or mistaken behavior? *Young Children* 50 (5): 27–34.
- Gartrell, D.J. 1997. Beyond discipline to guidance. *Young Children* 52 (6): 34–42.
- Gartrell, D.J. 1998. *A guidance approach for the encouraging classroom*. Albany, NY: Delmar/Thompson.
- Gartrell, D.J. 2000. *What the kids said today*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf.
- Kantrowitz, B., & P. Wingert. 1989. How kids learn. *Newsweek*, 17 April, 50–56.
- Katz, L. 1984. The professional early childhood teacher. *Young Children* 39 (5): 3–10.

- Lilley, I.M., ed. 1967. *Friedrich Froebel: A selection from his writings*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Marion, M. 1999. *Guidance of young children*. New York: Merrill.
- Montessori, M. [1912] 1964. *The Montessori method*. New York: Shocken Books.
- NAEYC. 1998. *Code of ethical conduct and statement of commitment*. [Brochure] Washington, DC: Author.
- Piaget, J. 1932 [1960]. *The moral judgment of the child*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- Schreiber, M.E. 1999. Time-outs for toddlers: Is our goal punishment or education? *Young Children* 54 (4): 22–25.
- Ucci, M. 1998. "Time outs" and how to use them. *Child Health Alert* (1): 2–3.

## For further reading

- Beane, A.L. 2000. *The bully free classroom*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.
- Elkind, D. 1997. The death of child nature: Education in the post modern world. *Phi Delta Kappan* (November): 241–45.
- Froschl, M., & B. Sprung. 1999. On purpose: Addressing teasing and bullying in early childhood. *Young Children* 54 (2): 70–72.
- Harris, T.T., & J.D. Fuqua. 2000. What goes around comes around: Building a community of learners through circle times. *Young Children* 55 (1): 44–47.
- Kaiser, B., & J. Rasminsky. 1999. *Meeting the challenge: Effective strategies for challenging behaviours in early childhood environments*. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: Canadian Child Care Federation. (Available from NAEYC.)

- Lawhon, T. 1997. Encouraging friendships among children. *Childhood Education* 73 (4): 228–31.
- Logan, T. 1998. Creating a kindergarten community. *Young Children* 53 (2): 22–26.
- Marion, M. 1997. Guiding young children's understanding and management of anger. *Young Children* 52 (7): 62–67.
- McClurg, L.G. 1998. Building an ethical community in the classroom: Community meeting. *Young Children* 53 (2): 30–35.
- Nansel, T.R., M. Overpeck, R.S. Pilla, W.J. Ruan, B. Simons-Morton, & P. Scheidt. 2001. Bullying behaviors among U.S. youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 285 (16): 2094–100.
- Sandall, S., & M. Ostrosky, eds. 1999. *Practical ideas for addressing challenging behaviors*. Denver, CO: Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. (Available from NAEYC.)
- Stone, J.G. 2001. *Building classroom community: The early childhood teacher's role*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

## When a Targeted Approach Is Needed

Some children may not respond to the supportive guidance approaches described in this article. Their challenging behavior may result from living with high levels of stress or they might have emotional or behavioral disabilities. The *Position Statement on Interventions for Challenging Behavior*, adopted and reaffirmed by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children and endorsed by NAEYC, reminds us that most young children with challenging behaviors respond to developmentally appropriate guidance, there are many types of services and intervention strategies for addressing challenging behavior, and families should be involved in designing and carrying out effective interventions.

The Position Statement is on the DEC Website at <http://www.dec-sped.org/positions/chalbeha.html>. The "For Further Reading" section of this article includes resources from DEC, NAEYC, and others on guiding the behavior of all children and supporting children whose challenging behaviors require more targeted attention.