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# Learning Guide 1.8 Interaction- Reframing Activity

## **Objectives**

* Learners will reframe statements about children’s interactions to reflect an anti-bias viewpoint.
* Learners will reflect on implicit bias and its impact on their practice.

## **Description**

This activity can be used as a way to uncover biases practitioners may hold regarding young children’s interactions. Faculty members usually use these prompts before introducing the subject material as a way to help learners recognize a differing perspective.

## **Materials/Resources**

* Handout – “Interactions Reframing Exercise”
* Possible answers guide – “Interactions Reframing Exercise – Possible Answers”

## **Facilitator Instructions**

1. Open a discussion with the following focus statement:

* *Jillian is a four-year-old child who arrives to school in her mother’s arms. After her mother leaves she grabs toys from other children, hits, and kicks. She has also used curse words and yells loudly at the teacher when she doesn’t get her way. Jillian gets angry quickly and often throws or topples furniture.*

1. In a large group, ask learners to articulate possible explanations for the interactional behavior of the child.

Examples:

* Jillian has anger issues.
* Jillian’s mother caters to her needs and doesn’t set limits.
* Jillian lacks appropriate social skills.

1. Offer other possible explanations that focus on the positive and/or reflect an increased sensitivity to the child’s perspective.

Examples:

* Jillian is scared at school and lashes out because she feels threatened.
* Jillian has experienced a trauma and needs help regulating her emotions.
* Jillian’s interactions reflect the boisterous and exertive style of her family and culture.

1. Break learners into partners to reframe perspectives on child behavior and interactions using the handout.
2. Come together to discuss the implicit biases all practitioners bring to their interactions with children and ways to become more sensitive and rethink judgments of families and children.

## **Suggested Assessment**

See “Possible Answers Guide” at the end of this document.

## **Distance Learning Tips**

* This activity can also be done individually although would be better to be done in groups for learners to hear differing responses.
* Explore different platforms for students to collaborate with each other (i.e. Google hangouts, OTHERS?)
* Have learners post brainstorms and reflections in an easily accessed place for future reference.
* Provide feedback in a timely manner.

**Interactions Reframing Exercise**

**Directions:** Read the short vignette and the possible explanations for the child’s interactional behavior. Reframe the statements to reflect a positive, strengths-based perspective for the child and/or family.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Jamal enters his preschool classroom at a run and jumps into the cozy corner where some children are reading quietly. He loudly asks about dinosaur books and grabs a book out of one child’s hand. He says, “No, this isn’t dinosaurs,” then throws it on the ground before taking 3 more books off the shelf.* | |
| PERSPECTIVE | REFRAME |
| 1. Jamal is aggressive with other children. |  |
| 1. Jamal doesn’t know how to behave. |  |
| 1. Jamal’s parents don’t set limits for him. |  |
| *Enrique always holds his hands up to be picked up. He is three years old but doesn’t know how to put on his shoes or his jacket. At lunchtime Enrique cries until someone comes to help him open his milk and cut his food into small pieces.* | |
| PERSPECTIVE | REFRAME |
| 1. Enrique is immature. |  |
| 1. Enrique’s parents baby him too much. |  |
| 1. Enrique is not independent. |  |
| *Lisa is crying as the teacher is putting her mat down for nap. She says, “I don’t want to take a nap!” and then cries louder. She goes to the other side of the room, sits down, and hugs her knees.* | |
| PERSPECTIVE | REFRAME |
| 1. Lisa is stubborn. |  |
| 1. Lisa is a difficult child. |  |
| 1. Lisa doesn’t know how to listen. |  |

**Interactions Reframing Exercise – Possible Answers Guide**

**Directions:** Read the short vignette and the possible explanations for the child’s interactional behavior. Reframe the statements to reflect a positive, strengths-based perspective for the child and/or family.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Jamal enters his preschool classroom at a run and jumps into the cozy corner where some children are reading quietly. He loudly asks about dinosaur books and grabs a book out of one child’s hand. He says, “No, this isn’t dinosaurs,” then throws it on the ground before taking 3 more books off the shelf.* | |
| PERSPECTIVE | REFRAME |
| 1. Jamal is aggressive with other children. | Jamal is enthusiastic about coming to school and seeing his friends. |
| 1. Jamal doesn’t know how to behave. | Jamal’s behavior reflects the boisterous and exuberant interaction style of his family. |
| 1. Jamal’s parents don’t set limits for him. | Jamal’s parents encourage Jamal’s excitement for life and want him to stand up for himself and his wants/needs. |
| *Enrique always holds his hands up to be picked up. He is three years old but doesn’t know how to put on his shoes or his jacket. At lunchtime Enrique cries until someone comes to help him open his milk and cut his food into small pieces.* | |
| PERSPECTIVE | REFRAME |
| 1. Enrique is immature. | Enrique likes to be close to his caregivers and receive care. This is how he feels loved. |
| 1. Enrique’s parents baby him too much. | Enrique’s parents show him they love him by taking care of his needs. |
| 1. Enrique is not independent. | Enrique is being raised to be part of an interdependent culture where helping others is valued. |
| *Lisa is crying as the teacher is putting her mat down for nap. She says, “I don’t want to take a nap!” and then cries louder. She goes to the other side of the room, sits down, hugs her knees and won’t budge for the rest of the hour.* | |
| PERSPECTIVE | REFRAME |
| 1. Lisa is stubborn. | Lisa is being raised by parents who expect her to be confident and forward with her wants and needs. |
| 1. Lisa is a difficult child. | Lisa is not comfortable sleeping at school because of a prior negative experience. |
| 1. Lisa doesn’t know how to listen. | Lisa is using her voice and exerting her autonomy to meet her wants and needs. |