

## **Structure and Nurture**

### **Behavioral and Psycho-Social Challenges in the Classroom and at Home: Strategies and Solutions for Therapists, Educators and Program Administrative Personnel**

Presented by Miriam Manela, OTR

Developer of the Thrive Method

#### **Description of Program - Overview:**

This is a 4 hour professional development course that is specifically designed to help therapists and educators. Participants will gain key tenets where if implemented correctly will enrich their educational career experience. This course provides proven strategies and interventions that therapists and educators will be able to use in order to maintain consistent rules and regulation within the classroom to predict and manage problematic behaviors and attitudes that are faced daily.

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

#### **Inside Student's Behaviors:**

#### **Strategies and Solutions for Therapists and Educators**

In Inside Student's Behaviors, therapists and educators will attain a unique in depth understanding of how to create structure and promote nurture in the classroom and therapeutic environment to minimize and manage negative behaviors. A wide variety of practical tools and behavioral strategies will be taught and role played, as described in depth below. The purpose of these strategies is to effect immediate changes in behaviors and learning outcomes, as well as to predict, prevent and manage problematic behaviors and attitudes that are faced daily in their classrooms and in therapy. This will benefit not only the problematic child but also their peers by minimizing classroom disruption and freeing up time and energy to focus on the prepared curriculum in school and in the therapy setting.

The learning objectives will be infused with real-life case studies in an effort to further the practicality of the course.

#### **Summary of the Schedule**

Stage	Time	Learning Objective	Description	Duration
1 -	8:30-9:30	Intelligence and Academics; Incentives and Consequences	Relating specific behavioral and social-emotional challenges to types of intelligences.	1 Hours
2 -	9:30-11:30	Guidelines to Pre-empt a Strong Willed Response from a Student that is Strong Willed	Develop a repertoire of strategies to eliminate negative behaviors with students in the classroom and therapeutic settings	2 Hours
3 -	11:30-1:30	Principles to Keep Consistent	Guidelines to abide by in the classroom to reduce disruptive behaviors.	1.5 Hours
Total				4.5 Hours

**Description of Program - Detail:**

Coping with students who exhibit challenging behaviors and attitudes can be frustrating and difficult. It also may prevent an optimal teaching or therapeutic environment, and typically, negatively affects the progression of the school curriculum and therapy. Students feel misunderstood, shamed, blamed, and controlled. Therapists and teachers often feel overwhelmed and at a loss. The Thrive Method helps students feel understood and proud enough to cooperate, yet firmly guided so that they will no longer have the need to exhibit disruptive or negative behavior. In addition, this will increase the impact the therapist and school has on their academic performance and behavior by enabling each student to reach their maximum potential. The results will positively affect their personal lives and also the well-being and education of the other students to progress academically, as there is less disruption and disturbance.

This course will provide a unique and in depth understanding of the critical facets of behavioral and social-emotional challenges that will provide participants with the appropriate tools for understanding the reasons behind specific behaviors and attitudes. After participants

understand the source of the problem, they will then be taught how to tailor their approach towards the specific issue they are encountering. These unique approaches will positively affect changes in attitude, behavior, and academic performance of the students. The result will not only provide for a smooth running classroom and therapy sessions but also will mitigate and often eliminate the problem. Participants will learn the relationship between \*Anxious Attachment and \*Avoidant Attachment and strategies to overcome behavioral and social-emotional challenges.

\*Please check glossary of terms below

Specifically, this course will study the sensory challenges of the “Heat Seeking Missile”, “The Squeaky Wheel”, “Child-On-the-Edge” and “The Princess and the Pea” from the book The Parent-Child Dance. The common behavioral disruptions that will be addressed include:

- Anxiety, rigidity, and controlling behavior
- Distractibility, difficulty paying attention and focusing
- Lack of motivation or being withdrawn
- Lack of respect for others’ and own property
- Bullying, taunting, shaming, and intimidation
- Tantrums
- Class-clown and attention-seeking
- Risk-taking behaviors
- Physical aggression (shoving, kicking, hitting, and spitting)
- And other behaviors that prevent educators from effectively educating the children in their care.

Therapists and teachers need effective methods to transform challenging behaviors into positive attitudes and abilities so they can spend more time helping their students’ progress and less time dealing with disruptive behaviors.

### **Methods to accomplish the services proposed:**

The methods used to accomplish the objectives proposed, will be through following the detailed steps below. These steps also identify what the educators will learn from the training:

1. **Overview:** An insightful understanding of the reasons for student’s social-emotional and behavioral challenges from a pediatric behavior and regulation expert, occupational therapist Miriam Manela OTR.

2. **Evidence based prevention:** How to predict, prevent, and manage challenging behavior using proven strategies from the Thrive Method.
3. **Underlying Causes of Challenging Behavior and Performance:** Gain a richer understanding of behavior; cognitive and connecting strategies; unique techniques for regulating the student; self-regulation; effective psychological strategies; touch and/or non-invasive touch responses; how to deal with the behavior; and more.
4. **Empowerment Strategies:** Dozens of effective interventions they can use to shape behavior and improve academic learning. Driving the behavior of the student appropriately will generate motivation and promote personal positive performance.
5. **Mind posture:** Interventions to help therapists and educators regulate themselves, and achieve calmness and mindfulness during disruptions, so that they are able to quickly regulate the student, without personal enmeshment and emotional reactivity.
6. **Family support:** An introduction to creating effective whole-family outreach strategies, which support student's positive behavior at school and at home.
7. **Interactive demonstrations:**
  - a. **Coaching to resolve real-time and current issues:** Join in on a Dynamic Case Study Analysis where participants will present current examples from their programs and together we will generate an effective approach to addressing the student's therapy and classroom issues. This will enable partakers to receive performance coaching in a group setting that will allow themselves and their peers to develop solutions to challenging case scenarios based on the methods learned throughout the course.
  - b. **Role play** - Demonstrate and synthesize course materials in a Mock Classroom setting.
8. **Practical Takeaways - "The Thrive Guide":** Participants will have the opportunity to create their own personalized Before-and-After Guide, which they will be able to use as a reference and guide in their own personal sessions and classrooms. This guide will be based on the methods and approaches being taught throughout the day that has been created by Thrive and tailored to the participants of this training.

### **Length of Workshop:**

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This is a 4.5 hour workshop in which the time will be bifurcated into teaching, role playing, mock classroom sessions and documenting results and takeaways of the training.

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**Glossary of Terms:**

**Attachment theory:** Created by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, this theory is based on the important bond created between a caregiver and infant and the idea that it sets a precedent for future relationships with adults, including the type of attachment that the child will have with other adults throughout their lives. There are 4 attachment types: secure, avoidant, anxious (resistant/ambivalent), and disorganized/ disoriented.<sup>1</sup> The teacher will be able to learn how to pick up on the type of attachment a child has and be able to apply the strategies taught to reshape the attachment between the teacher-child relationships in the classroom. Reshaping the attachment pattern from a negative one to a positive one will be used to improve the child's occupational performance in the school setting and allow them to engage in school activities as their peers are.

**Anxious attachment:** A child with this type of attachment may demand a lot of attention from their teacher, need constant reassurance, and may also present as distrusting and with a constant fear of being rejected.<sup>2</sup> These are many needs that a teacher would need to attend to when trying to run a classroom. The teacher will be able to utilize the strategies from the workshop to reshape this negative attachment to a positive one in order to allow both the student and the teacher to expend their energy on the roles they have at school.

**Avoidant Attachment:** A child with this type of attachment are very independent from the adult figures in their lives. They have come to cope with their needs on their own without seeking the guidance or comfort from an adult when distressed. In the classroom, this may present as the child who does not communicate their troubles or negative emotions to the teacher and may avoid socializing altogether.<sup>3</sup> They are the child who will suppress their feelings until they reach a breaking point; presenting itself as an outburst of anger or as a tantrum.

### **Regulation**

The ability to control one's activity level and state of alertness, as well as one's emotional, mental or physical responses to senses; self-organization.<sup>4</sup>

### **Theraplay**

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<sup>1</sup> Case-Smith & O'Brien, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Catlett, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Bergin & Bergin, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Manela, 2016.



Theraplay is a treatment method based on the Attachment Theory that focuses on relationships with engaging, playful activities to promote interactions. This approach is short-term, intensive and incorporates parents and families actively into the treatment sessions.

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