

# Prevention and Intervention With Young Children's Challenging Behavior: Perspectives Regarding Current Knowledge

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*ABSTRACT: Challenging behavior exhibited by young children is becoming recognized as a serious impediment to social-emotional development and a harbinger of severe maladjustment in school and adult life. Consequently, professionals and advocates from many disciplines have been seeking to define, elaborate, and improve on existing knowledge related to the prevention and resolution of young children's challenging behaviors. Of particular concern for the field of behavioral disorders is the lack of correspondence between what is known about effective practices and what practices young children with challenging behavior typically receive. To increase the likelihood that children receive the best of evidence-based practices, the current analysis was conducted to provide a concise synthesis and summary of the principal evidence pertaining to the presence and impact, prevention, and intervention of challenging behaviors in young children. A consensus building process involving review and synthesis was used to produce brief summary statements encapsulating core conclusions from the existing evidence. This article presents these statements along with descriptions of the strength of the supporting evidence. The discussion addresses directions and priorities for practice and future research.*

■ In the past ten years, professionals from various disciplines have expressed alarm regarding the implications of serious challenging behaviors exhibited by young children (e.g., Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Increasingly, it is understood that serious and persistent challenging behaviors in early

childhood are associated with subsequent problems in socialization, school adjustment, school success, and educational and vocational adaptation in adolescence and adulthood (e.g., Campbell 1995; Dodge, 1993; Kazdin, 1985; Reid, 1993). As a result, numerous authors, as well as official reports (e.g., New Freedom

