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The Developing Independence of Toddlers

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The Developing Independence of Toddlers

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Capstone Project: An Action Research Project

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Abstract

This action research project was driven by the researcher's interest in whether three-year-old children exhibited more negative behaviors then two-year-old children. The researcher used two different types of surveys for mothers and teachers to answer. This survey took 5-10 minutes to complete, and participants had two weeks to complete it. The research was conducted to see which age of children displayed more frequent behaviors. The researcher is an assistant director in her 10th year of teaching early childhood students. The findings showed that both teachers and parents reported more behavior problems among two-year-olds compared with three-year-olds.

Keywords: behaviors, early childhood, terrible twos, terrible threes

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The Developing Independence of Toddlers

Children's frustration manifests in different negative emotions as observed by facial expression, vocalization, and body tension as well as negative behaviors ranging from protest to aggression (Deichmann & Ahnert, 2021). As implied by the phrase "terrible twos," externalizing behaviors (e.g., temper tantrums, physical aggression, and frequent noncompliance) are common in toddlerhood but become less common in the preschool years (Hughes et al., 2020). More teachers and even parents state that they believe it is more "terrible threes" then twos. Research shows the varying kinds of aggression in preschool classrooms: 1) fighting 54%; 2) kicking 48%; 3) hitting friend 34%; 4) grabbing forcefully a friend's toy 27%; 5) throwing toys 15% (Purwati & Japar, 2015). Moreover, the study by Purwati and Japar (2015) shows that more than 14% of preschool childhood or early childhood students show a symptom of disordered behavior (Purwati & Japar, 2015). Teachers need to know if and why two-year-olds start to have more behavior issues as they near their third birthday.

The purpose of this action research plan is to find out how children's behaviors change as they near the age of three. Future research can be conducted on ways to help the children overcome these behaviors. This will also help teachers learn how to help students succeed.

Resources for this action research study were compiled from the DeWitt Library at Northwestern College. The only research studies used were peer reviewed and completed within the past 10 years. The sources that were chosen included these subjects: terrible twos, physical aggression, behaviors, teachers dealing with behaviors, behavior supports, and early childhood. A total of 20 research articles were reviewed and considered for the research topic.

Review of the Literature

The Terrible Twos

Deichmann and Ahnert (2021) wanted to find out how children cope with frustration and tantrums and the effect of maternal and paternal behaviors. Participants in the study were 158 children ranging from 15-39 months old from two-parent families. The study took place over two visits to the child's home with 15 days between the visits. The intervention sessions involved having mothers soothe their child and fathers encourage their child. The results showed only the mothers showed attachment security to the children. During the first session, the research assistant interviewed one of the parents on SES and social structure, then observed the family for two hours. During the second visit, the other parent was interviewed, and another two-hour observation performed. At the conclusion of the study, researchers found that frustrations and tantrums are provoked by experimental procedures but vary from day to day. The findings of Deichmann and Ahnert (2021) seem to suggest that children's behaviors are culturally shaped.

In an effort to understand the terrible twos, Hughes (2020) investigated the longitudinal impact of early executive function and parent-child interactions. In his research he included 484 expectant couples from antenatal clinics, ultrasound scans and parenting fairs. The research was done over a two-and-a-half-year span. To be included in the study, participants had to: (a) be first-time parents, (b) be expecting delivery of a healthy singleton baby, (c) be planning to speak English (or Dutch) as a primary language with their child, and (d) have no history of severe mental illness (e.g., psychosis) or substance misuse (Hughes, 2020). When children were 14 months and 24 months old, they had to complete three tasks: *Prohibition Task, Multilocation Search Task, Ball Run Task.* As did Ahnert (2021), Hughes (2020) found that maternal support is important when it comes to children dealing with behaviors, and the infants with low levels of negative affect benefit even more. Hughes (2020) also found that early difficulties with EF

contribute to the individual differences in externalizing behavior, even before children's second birthdays. These findings support the executive dysfunction account of child externalizing behavior (Hughes, 2020).

Roberts (2018) investigated if early language delays affect disruptive behaviors. Study participants included 1,259 mothers of children between the ages of 18 and 36 months old, who answered questions about their child's language skills, behaviors, sex, and about their poverty status. Roberts (2018) study shows that there is a relationship between children's disruptive behaviors and their language skills: When children have language delays, they cannot express their needs and wants verbally and do so via behavior such as tantrums and aggression.

Bazhydai (2020) realized the importance of social skills that children need just like Roberts (2018) did. Thirty-one 24-month-old children from a local community in a small city in Northwestern England participated in the experiment (Bazhydai, 2020). Researchers tested how children figured out how to work the two different types of toys. They had different adults go in with different expressions, such as sad, happy, excited, and more, to show the children how to work the toys. What the researchers can conclude is that they did not have support for PP, as this view would assume that pedagogical cues should not only have a positive effect on transmission when manipulated alone, but that they should also override other cues, neither of which researchers able to show.

Early Childhood Behaviors

Perry and Dollar (2021) had 362 caregivers — primarily mothers, but also fathers and grandmothers — take the Early Emotion Regulation Behavior Questionnaire, which assesses children's emotion regulation behavioral strategies in both positive and negative emotional

contexts Their findings suggest that the questionnaire is a psychometrically sound instrument that can readily be used to collect rich and predictive data on children's socioemotional functioning (Perry & Dollar 2021).

To find a way to help reduce aggressive behaviors, Purwati and Japar (2015) conducted a study with two experimental groups, consisting of a total of 14 early childhood-age children. One group received using cognitive intervention and the other one received behavioral intervention. (Purwati & Japar, 2015) They found 1) there is a significant difference on aggressive behavior of early childhoods between male and female caused by the intervention; 2) there is an influence of cognitive and behavioral intervention toward aggressive behavior; the change of aggressive behavior caused by cognitive intervention is higher than behavioral intervention; 3) there is an influence caused by intervention of interaction and sex toward aggressive behavior of early childhood (Purwati & Japar, 2015). Cognitive intervention had greater results than behavior interventions.

To learn more about behaviors and addressing behavioral problems in early childhood, Sánchez (2022) explored using robotics to help teach children prosocial behaviors in the classroom environment. The three-phase study began first with teachers and support teachers, who were asked to keep diaries of information throughout the day. That data was then used to create activities for three-year-old students in the second phase of the study, which concluded with a post-test by the teachers and data collection from the phase two results. (Sánchez, 2022) Sánchez (2022) found that robotics helped the development of computational thinking and help students learn new ways to solve problems.

Waller (2016) research explored whether early callous-unemotional behaviors at ages 2-4 predict behavior issues when a child is 9.5 years old. The nine-year study of 731 mother/child

participants involved annual assessments of children's behaviors using demographic questionnaires from the ages of 2-10.5 years old (Waller, 2016). The study showed children who were three years old and up the deceitful-callous behavior predicted worse behaviors later in their childhood, but children identified as callous-unemotional as needing interventions were helped (Waller, 2016).

Early individual differences in self-control are predictive of numerous developmental outcomes, such as physical health and risk-taking behaviors (Mulder et al., 2019). Mulder (2019) tested how young children manage to exert self-control by giving children two different tasks, two weeks apart. The first task assessed the child's attention and language abilities, while in the second task, the child was given a snack and asked them to wait. They also received a present 20 minutes later and were asked to wait to open it again (Mulder et al., 2019). Mulder (2019) found that 70% (42/60) of the children managed to delay on request for the snack and 73% (40/55) of the children managed to delay during opening the gift.

Yu-Lefler et al. (2022) researched the resources aimed at helping teachers who are having students with disruptive behaviors. Early childhood disruptive behaviors are common mental health problems among American youth, and if poorly managed, pose costly psychological and societal burdens (Yu-Lefler et al., 2022). Yu-Lefler et al. (2022) reviewed more than 23 publications and used PsycINFO to identify peer-reviewed literature published in English from 2005 to 2021 and found only three that described outcomes accountability efforts specifically for early childhood problems. Yu-Lefler et al. (2022) concluded there is a lack of scientific research in regarding outcomes accountability systems in clinical programs treating early childhood disruptive behaviors and more research is needed to help understand and take care of young children.

Home, Life, and Behaviors

Kelly (2021) conducted a qualitative examination of family and educator perspectives on early childhood behavior supports, concluding that support for behaviors is important but both the parent and teachers have to be on board. Over a four-year, multistage intervention with 12 families and 11 educators, Kelly (2021) explored what perspectives of families and educators had in key areas of effective behavior support, how communication and collaboration between families and educators facilitates the behavior support process, and what supports families and educators desire in the behavior support process. Kelly (2021) found that communication is key to helping eliminate negative behaviors.

Da Silva (2022) looked at how moral emotions could be detected by an Emotional Questionnaire. Over a two-year period, Da Silva (2022) had 377 parents in the Netherlands who had children between the ages of 2.5 years old to 6.5 years old answer the questionnaire about their child. Da Silva (2022) found that this tool is a great way to find out what parents think and know about their child's behaviors.

Lu (2022) also wanted to understand parents' thoughts on their child's behavior and compared it with their children's speech to explore any connection between behaviors and late-talking toddlers. The research was done in Taiwan over a two-year period with 31 late talkers and 31 typical language talking toddlers. Lu (2022) discovered a higher percentage of children with persistent behaviors among the LT toddlers than the TLD toddlers and found that children with a larger vocabulary exhibited fewer withdrawal behaviors.

Deichmann and Ahnert (2021) looked at how children cope with frustration, tantrums, and the effect of maternal and paternal behaviors. Deichmann and Ahnert (2021) research

included 158 children who ranged from 15-39 months old from two-parent families. Deichmann and Ahnert (2021) found that frustrations and tantrums are provoked by the experimental procedure but vary from day-to-day situations. There were several aspects of the children's frustrations that were left unnoted, and the study suggests children's behaviors are culturally shaped.

The Cause of Early Childhood Behaviors in the Classroom

Reyes (2021) addressed challenging behaviors in challenging environments, including the classroom, one of the most challenging environments. Reyes (2021) included 51 classrooms, 57 preschool teachers, and 190 preschool students in Ohio in a yearlong study that offered a treatment group more control over students than a control group had.

McLeod (2016) wanted to find out exactly what practices helped teachers affect behaviors in the classroom the most. A review of 228 research articles revealed 24 different common practices helped the teachers be successful in the classrooms. Ma and Lillard (2017) researched pretend play and what the purpose of it. Ma and Lillard (2017) speculate that one possibility is to hone social sensitivities, first allowing children to interpret pretend behavior and then to apply those skills more broadly, to better interpret other communicative gestures as well. By using pretend play in the classroom children can learn and practice different behavior situations and learn how to handle them. Learning to read such signals as a child might serve a developmental purpose analogous to engaging in play fighting, which also involves reading and interpreting social signs and serves an important developmental purpose in other species Ma and Lillard (2017).

Lippard (2017) demonstrated the importance of teacher-child relationships to the classroom environment in research involving 1,100 children of early childhood age. Thompson (2023) also believed in the importance of teachers learning about the. Thompson (2023) wanted to see if teachers could figure out how to use new material such as the Pyramid Behavior Intervention Services model with fidelity. After a year of giving teachers surveys and training tools, Thompson (2023) concluded teachers need help and resources to use it with fidelity.

The unstructured, self-directed nature of playground environments can help children develop a variety of foundational social and emotional skills (Yang et al., 2022). Yang et al. (2022) explored whether children who engaged in outdoor recess regularly displayed fewer challenging behaviors on the playground. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that preschoolers engage in at least 60 minutes of structured and 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity each day (Yang et al., 2022). Just like Thompson (2023), Yang et al. (2022) concluded that children have to be taught how to behave while on the playground. Yang et al. (2022) found out that getting on the children's level when talking to them helps the child have a better understanding of the rules and expectations while on the playground. Yang et al. (2022) also found that by creating a lesson plan for the playground and talking about it before going outside with the children is a better way of keeping children safe and having them understand the rules.

Children also have to be taught how to behave in the classroom (Redeş et al., 2023). Redeş et al. (2023) explored using an Integrative–Qualitative Intentional Behavior plan in a classroom to reduce problem behaviors, receiving 224 valid and confirmed replies to their question throughout October and November 2022. Redeş et al. (2023) found that by giving teachers training and providing them with the information they need can be successful teachers,

without those resources' teachers have more disadvantages when it comes to teaching. The Marzano model provides an evidence-based framework for effective teaching and learning. Thompson (2023) and Yang et al. (2022) both agreed with Redeş et al. (2023) on the importance of teaching both the students and teachers about behaviors. When teachers and students receive coaching about expected behaviors and how to achieve it, they will be successful in life.

Methods

Research Question

The research question posed during this action research project is: What are the behaviors and interactions between two- and three-year-olds?

Participants and Research Site

This action research project was conducted in the researcher's home and participants' homes. Fifteen teachers who have taught two- or three-year-old children and 19 mothers were asked to complete an approximately five-minute-long survey on JotForm. There are two different surveys, one for the mothers and one for the teachers.

Intervention

The intervention implemented in this research project increases the knowledge of two- and three-years-olds' behaviors for both parents and teachers.

Timeline

This research project was conducted during the fall of 2023. Surveys were circulated and data was collected over a two-week period, and then responses were analyzed over three weeks. Local teachers were invited to participate via Facebook and by phone. Mothers who have had two- or three-year-old children in the past seven years were also recruited.

Variables

The independent variable in this research study is the two- and three-year-old children. The dependent variable in this study are the groups surveyed: mothers and teachers.

Measurement Tools

The data collected from the two surveys was used to analyze the behavior differences between two- and three-year-old children. The data was used to identify the areas in which most children had behavior issues. Teachers also expressed how they can help children handle their behaviors.

Countless research projects show that two-year-old children have more behaviors than three-year-olds. It has been anticipated that three-year-olds exhibit more negative behaviors than two-year-olds. This research project posed no risks to participants and was conducted over the internet at the participants' homes. The research involves normal educational practices with the intention of improving the researcher's personal teaching practices. This research project met the criteria for approval by the Northwestern College's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and was approved.

Data Collection

The mothers' survey consisted of 20 questions; tally marks were used to record the number of responses for each question. The questions had four different possible answers; "never/rarely," "sometimes," "often," and "very often." The surveys also recorded the child's sex.

The teachers' survey consisted of four essay questions to gauge their thoughts on children's behaviors. The teachers were then asked to respond to six multiple choice questions about behaviors in their classrooms and how they handle them with "disagree," "neutral," or "agree." Additional data was collected on each teacher's highest level of education and what ages they have taught.

Findings

Data Analysis

This study concluded that two-year-old children exhibit more behavior problems than three-year-old children do, as observed by both mothers and teachers.

Mother Surveys

The data, collected over a two-week period, showed that two-year-olds had more negative behaviors than three-year-olds. The mothers answered a total of 20 questions about all different types of behaviors their child might exhibit. The answers ranged from "never/rarely" to "very often." Data was sorted by the question and the age of the child. A total of 11 mothers answered the questions about their two-year-olds and eight mothers answered the questions about their three-year-olds.

Two and Three Year Old Behaviors- Parent Survey

Parents Name

First Initial   Last Initial

Relationship to child   **Childs actual age**

Childs age for survey   **Childs Sex**
                                   ☐ Male
                                   ☐ Female

Mark the number that best describe the child's behavior.

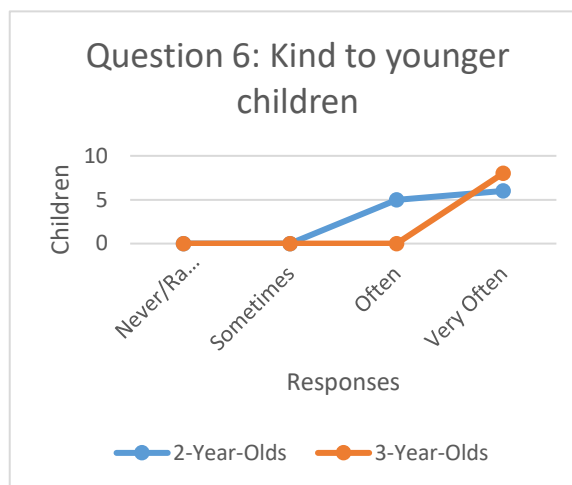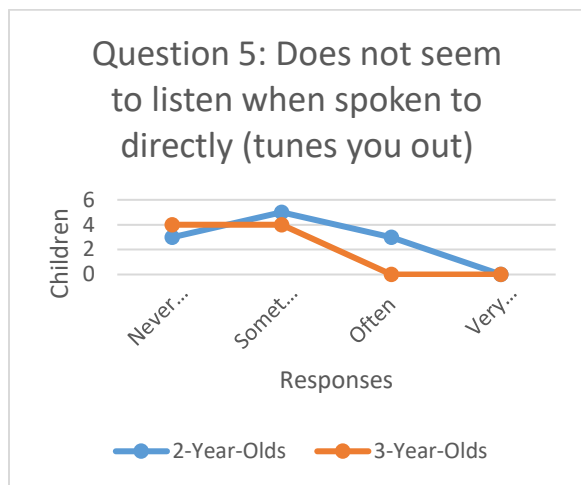|	Rarely or never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. Often loses temper	○	○	○	○
2. Generally well behaved, usually does what adults request	○	○	○	○
3. Often fights with other children or bullies them	○	○	○	○
4. Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence	○	○	○	○
5. Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly (tunes you out)	○	○	○	○
6. Kind to younger children	○	○	○	○
7. Hits, bites, or pinches other children	○	○	○	○
8. Has difficulty playing quietly (alone or in groups)	○	○	○	○
9. Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long	○	○	○	○
10. Is "on the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor"	○	○	○	○
11. Reacts in an aggressive manner when contradicted or teased	○	○	○	○
12. Talks excessively	○	○	○	○
13. Does not seem to feel badly after misbehaving	○	○	○	○
14. Gets very upset when separated from parents	○	○	○	○
15. Is easily distracted	○	○	○	○
16. Has difficulty awaiting turn	○	○	○	○
17. Shares toys or items with others	○	○	○	○
18. Interrupts or intrudes on others	○	○	○	○
19. 0	○	○	○	○
20. Helps others	○	○	○	○

Submit
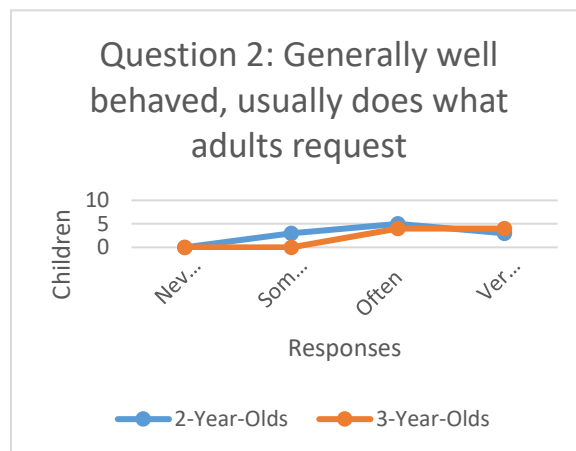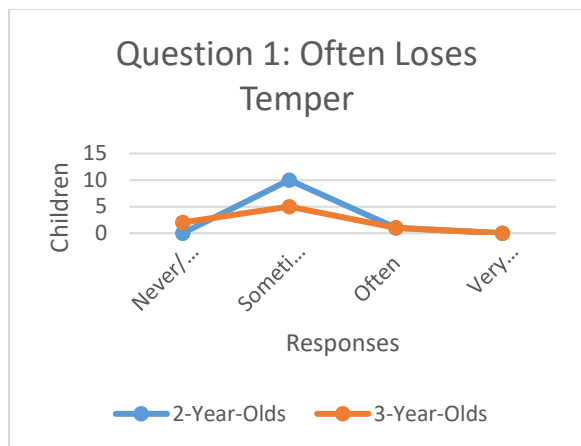
Responses to Question 1 indicate 10 two-year-olds lost their tempers more frequently than the 5 three-year-olds did. No children lost their tempers very often and only one two-year-old and one three-year-old lost it often. This suggests that as the children mature in age, they learn how to control their temper. Question 2 shows that the majority of the two groups, five two-year-olds and four three-year-olds, often are well behaved and do what is asked of them, while three two-year-olds and four three-year-olds are very often well-behaved.
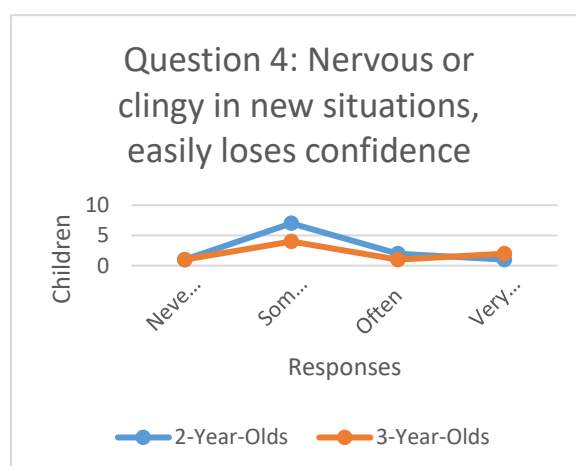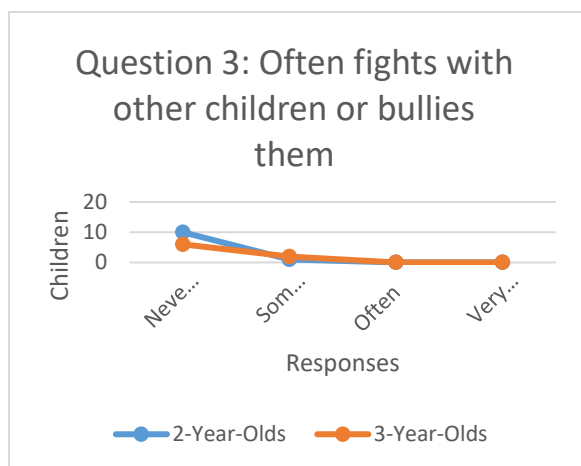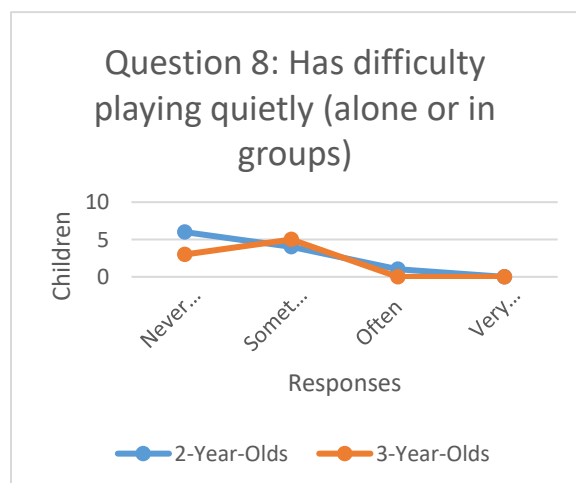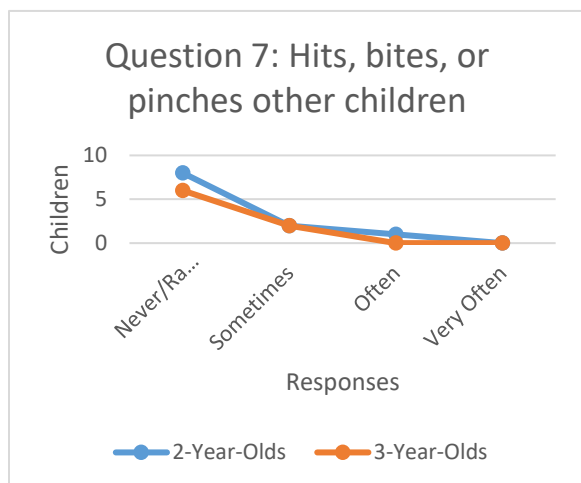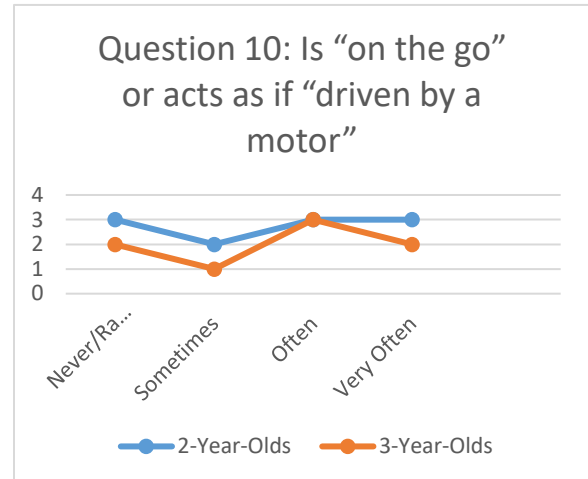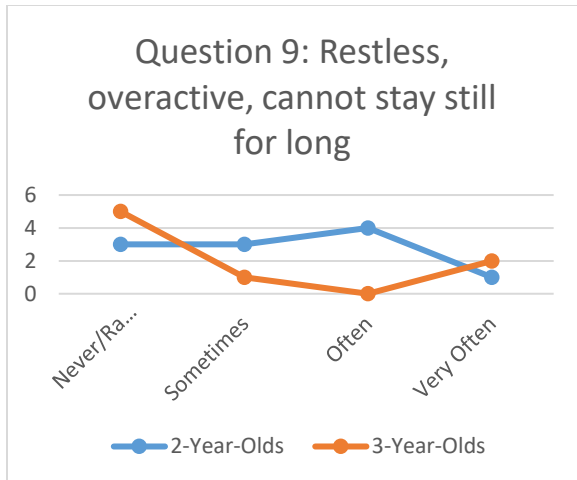

When the mothers were asked how often their child fought with others (Question 3), 10 of the two-year-olds' mothers said rarely/never and six of the three-year-olds' mothers said rarely/never. Only one mother of a two-year-old said her child sometimes fought and only two

mothers reported their three-year-olds fought. No mothers said their child fought often with others. Ma and Lillard (2017) talk about the importance of children learning about play fighting and as the child ages they learn the difference between real fighting and pretend fighting.

Question 5: Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly (tunes you out)

Question 6: Kind to younger children

The behaviors exhibited by young children are not always negative. Responses to Question 6 show of the eight three-year-olds, all of them are always kind to others. Among the two-year-olds, five were often kind and six very often kind. Mothers reported on Question 7 that eight of the 11 two-year-olds never hit, bite or pinch other children, while two do it sometimes and one does it often. The mothers of three-year-olds reported six of the eight never do it and only two do it sometimes. When children have language delays, they cannot express their needs and wants so they exhibit behaviors instead like tantrums and aggressiveness like hitting, biting, or pinching (Roberts 2018).

Question 7: Hits, bites, or pinches other children

Question 8: Has difficulty playing quietly (alone or in groups)

Question 9: Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long

Question 10: Is "on the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor"

Responses to Question 9 rate two-year-olds' restlessness in every category, but a majority of three-year-olds never show restlessness. This shows the researcher that as the children ages towards their third birthday and after they develop skills that help them have longer attention spans. The children can work longer on tasks and have more attention on learning activities. For Questions 10 and 11, which explore whether children are "on the go" or react aggressively when contradicted or teased, show similar responses for the two age groups — reflecting that children of different ages they can still exhibit similarities.

Question 11: Reacts in an aggressive manner when contradicted or teased

Question 12: Talks excessively

Question 13: Does not seem to feel badly after misbehaving

Question 14: Gets very upset when separated from parents
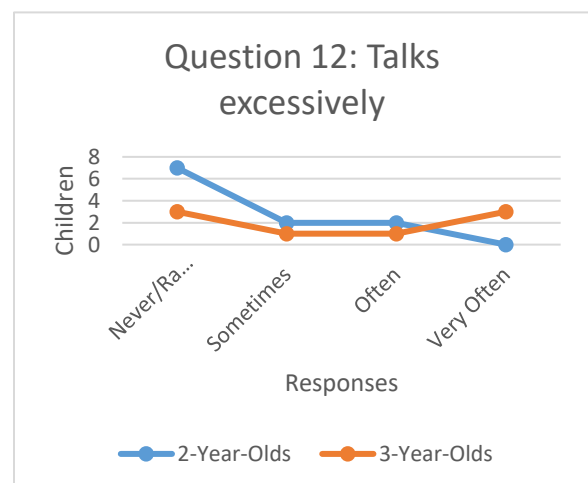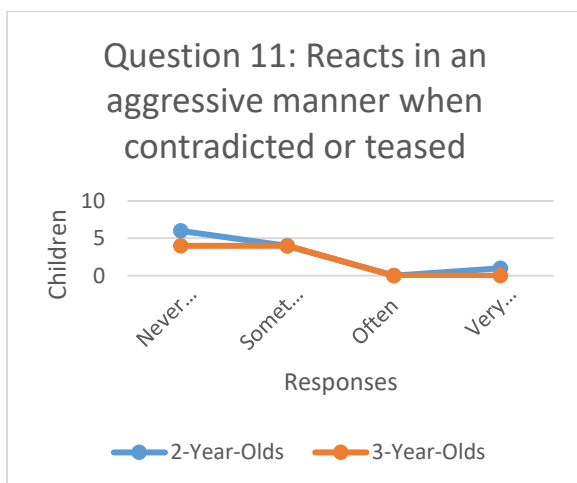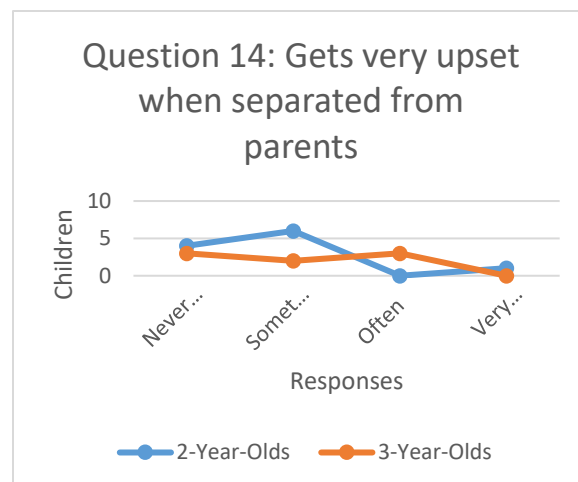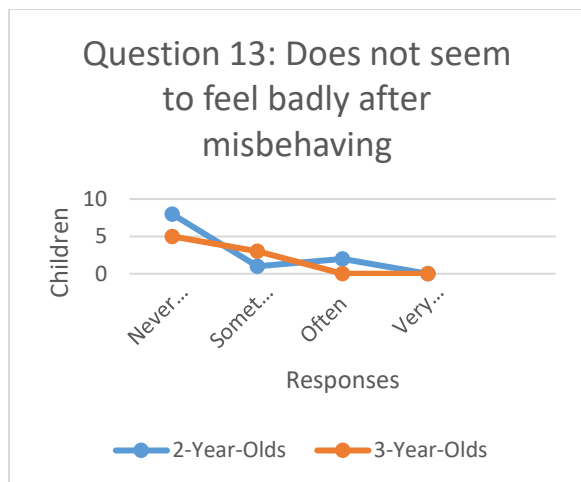
A majority of the children in Question 13 never fail to show they feel bad after misbehaving; one two-year-old and three three-year-olds sometimes show no feelings, and 2 two-year-olds often do not seem to care if they misbehave. This relates back to Question 9 about the children being able to attend for longer periods of times. Two-year-olds cannot concentrate on one thing for a longer amount of time, which teachers and parents have to remember and thus reteach expected behaviors to two-year-olds more often than they would with older children. Six of the two-year-olds were rated as often easily distracted on Question 15, compared with just one three-year-old, while five three-year-olds are sometimes distracted compared with four two-year-olds.

Question 15: Is easily distracted

Question 16: Has difficulty awaiting turn

Question 17: Shares toys or items with others

Question 18: Interrupts or intrudes on others
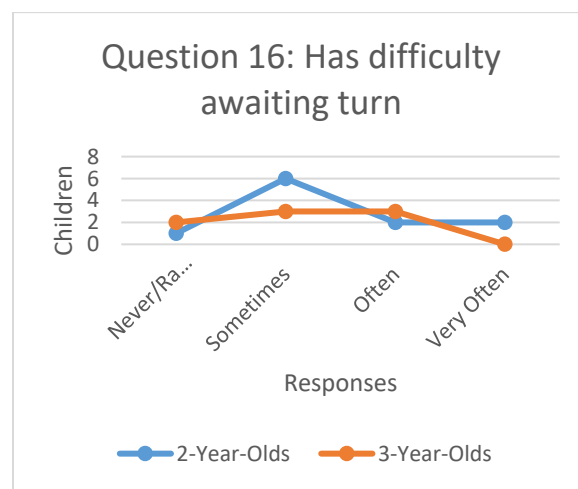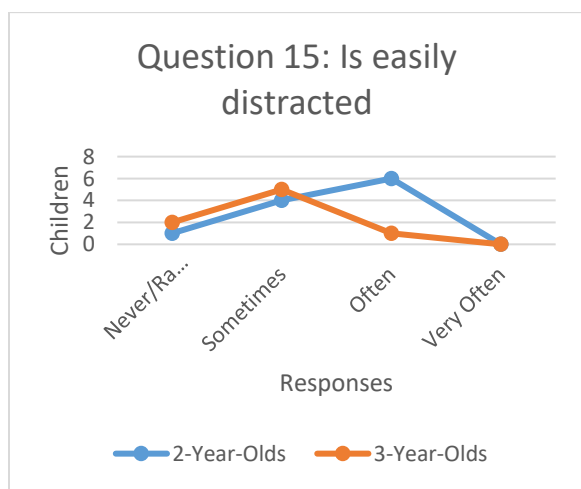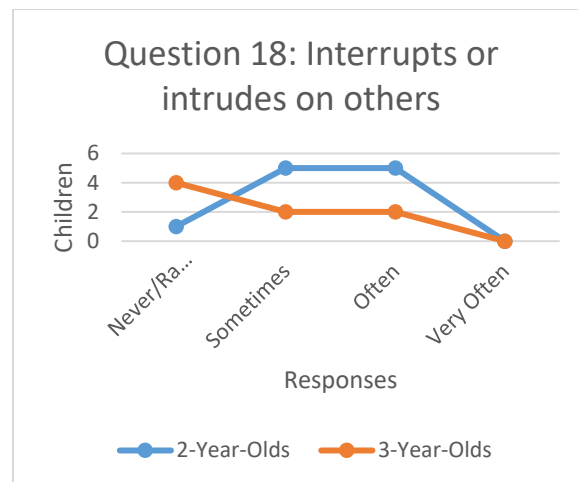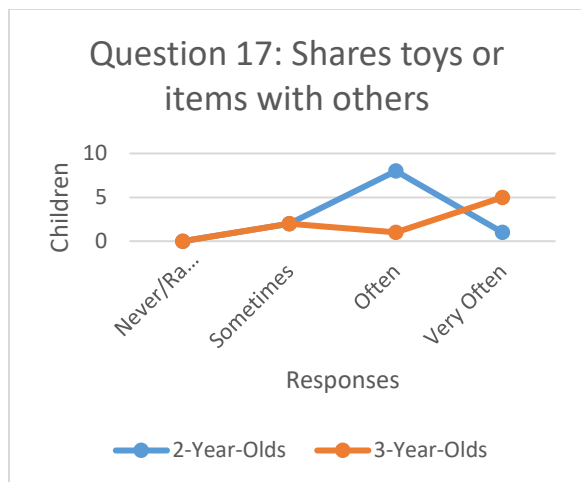
Question 16 looks at how the two-year-olds and three-year-olds interact with others. Responses show six of the two-year-olds have trouble waiting their turns, two often have trouble, and two very often have issues, while only one two-year-old has no problems waiting. Among three-year-olds, two children never have issues waiting, three sometimes do and three often do. Mothers reported all the children share toys with others well — for the two-year-olds, two were rated as sharing sometimes, eight share often and one shares all the time, while two of the three-year-olds share sometimes, one shares often and five share all the time. Mulder (2019) researched the delay of gratification with children and stated the younger the child is, the harder it is for them to wait and take turns.

Question 19: Says please and thank you

Question 20: Helps others
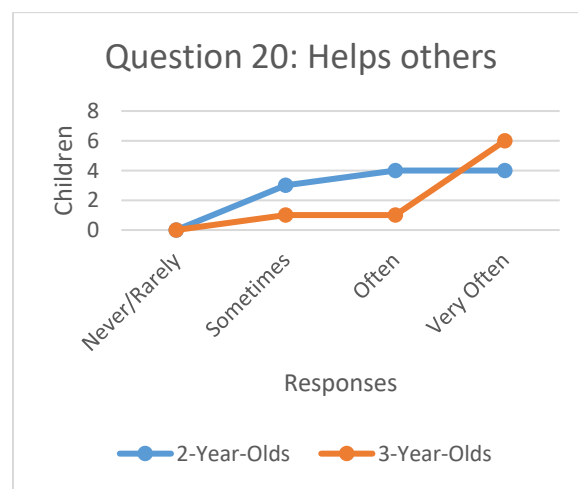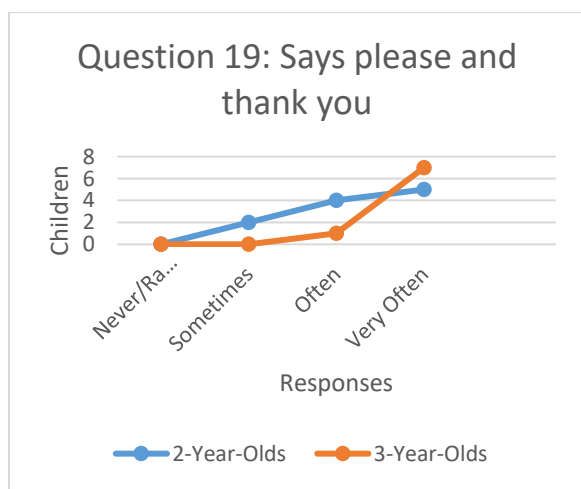
Analysis of the mothers' survey results shows two-year-old children had more behavior issues than three-year-olds. The majority of mothers rated the two-year-olds as exhibiting aggression sometimes and often but said three-year-olds did so never/rarely or sometimes. Deichmann and Ahnert (2021) looked at the mother-child relationship and saw that the children had great attachment security with their mothers than their fathers. Only mothers filled out the surveys for this study, and the mothers only spend a great deal of time with one child — theirs.

Teacher Surveys

The data collected over the two-week period for the teachers included their education level and the grade they teach. Teachers were asked to answer three different questions with essays, then to respond to six statements with either disagree, neutral, or agree.

Teacher Survey on Behaviors for 2- and 3-year-olds.
Please fill out this form to provide details of the behavior observation.

Teacher Initials   Age taught

Please state your highest academic qualification?

Do you think 2-year-olds or 3-year-olds have worse behaviors?

What Behaviors are the worst to you and why?

Why do you think children have behaviors?

What helps a child have good behavior in school?

Next

Multiple Choice

My main responsibility is to teach academics, not to teach students how to behave.
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

I can prevent most behavior problems by posting expectations, teaching those expectations and rewarding students when they exhibit those expectations.
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

How students behave in my class is primarily related to my classroom management strategies and the relationships I have with each student.
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

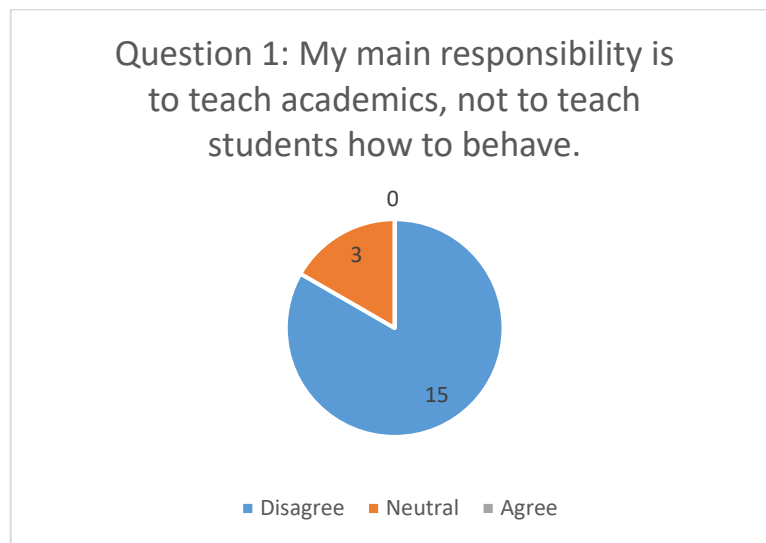As a child gets older their behaviors start to worsen.
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

Schools are responsible for teaching academics, whereas parents and the students themselves are responsible teaching and learning behaviors.
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

Even without parental involvement and support, schools can effectively teach students' behavioral expectations and social skills.
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

Teachers Education Levels

Masters Degree, 2
Bachelors Degree, 4
High School Diploma, 11
Associates Degree, 1

Question 1: My main responsibility is to teach academics, not to teach students how to behave.

0
3
15

■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree
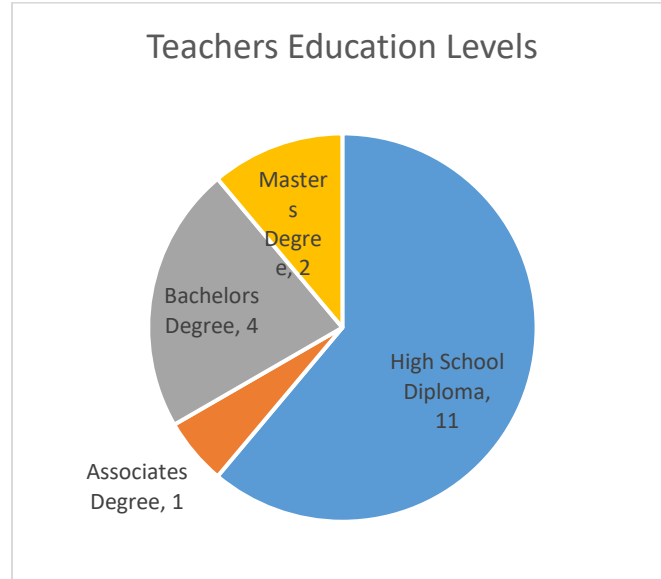
When asked what their main responsibilities are in the classroom, 15 of the 18 stated that they disagree that teaching the students how to behave is not part of their job. The teachers then had to answer this essay question: What helps a child have good behavior in school? Positive reinforcement was repeated five different times in the 18 teachers' responses. Teachers also noted consistency was also very important to having structure and relationships with each child. When asked in the second multiple-choice question if they established expectations for

children's behavior and rewarded students who met those expectations, 12 of the 18 teachers

agreed, while six of them stayed neutral — but none disagreed.

Question 2: I can prevent most behavior problems by posting expectations, teaching those expectations and rewarding students when they exhibit those expectations.

0

6

12

▪ Disagree ▪ Neutral ▪ Agree
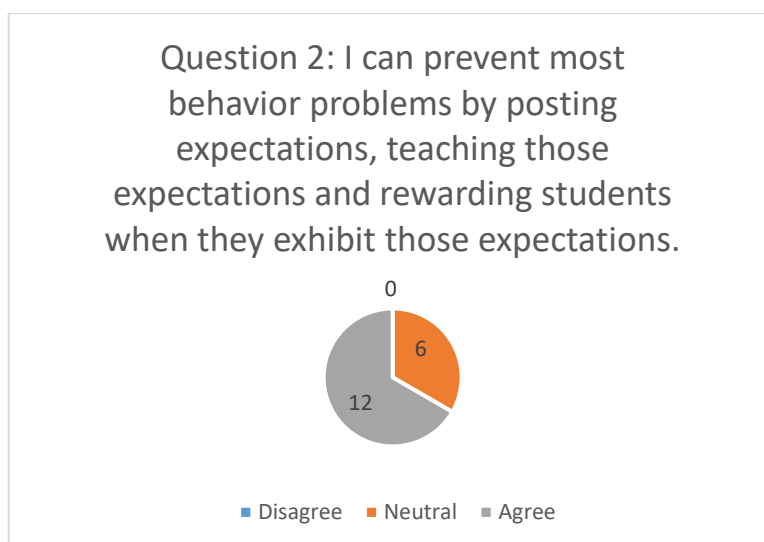
The 18 teachers were asked what they think drives children's behaviors. Most of the

teachers stated that children do not have the communication skills they need to express their

wants and needs. The children are still learning their own feelings and how to express it to

others.

Question 3: How students behave in my class is primarily related to my classroom management strategies and the relationships I have with each student.

0

8

10

▪ Disagree ▪ Neutral ▪ Agree
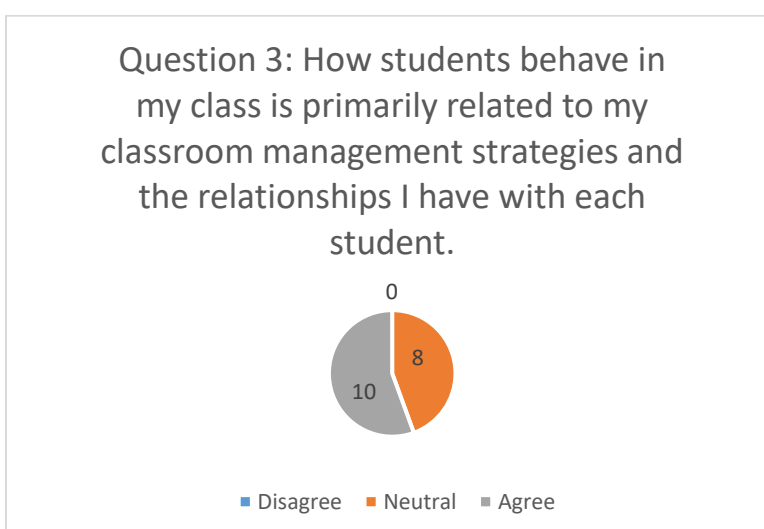
A majority of the teachers — 10 out of 18 — agreed on Question 3 that how the children act depends on how they run their classroom, while 8 of the 18 teachers offered neutral responses.

Question 4: As a child gets older their behaviors start to worsen.

0

5

13

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
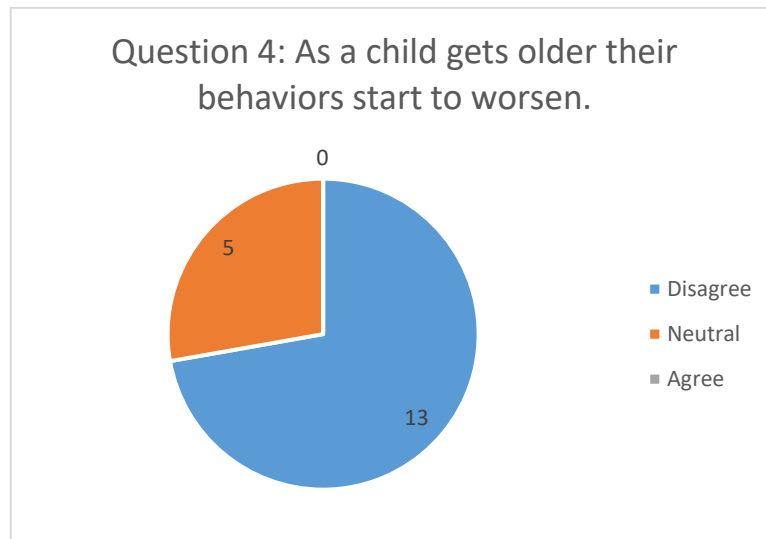
Most teachers — 14 of the 18 — also responded that it is not up to the schools to just teach children academics and leave behavior to the parents, but that schools have a role in teaching children how to behave. Teachers were split on Question 6, which asked if schools can teach children effective behavior and social skills without parental involvement: Half of the teachers chose neutral, while five of them disagreed and four agreed.

Question 5: Schools are responsible for teaching academics, where as parents and the students themselves are responsible teaching and learning behaviors.
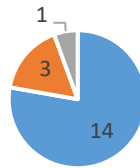
Disagree Neutral Agree

Question 6: Even without parental involvement and support, schools can effectively teach students' behavioral expectations and social skills.
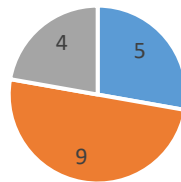
Disagree Neutral Agree

Discussion

Summary of Major Findings

      The data collected during this research study indicates that two-year-old children exhibit more challenging behaviors than three-year-olds do. As children age, they become more mature and learn how to handle situations. Reflecting on all 20 studies from the past 10 years shows that two-year-olds do not have the skills to handle their behaviors and they have to be taught. As the child grows, they start to develop and gain knowledge and skills on how to handle their challenging behaviors.

      Nineteen mothers answered questions about their child's behavior ranging from aggressive behaviors to social-emotional skills. When looking at previous research, we see that mothers have a tendency to only see one side of their child and it tends to not be the challenging behavior side. Mothers are there for the child and learns how to handle and cope with their behaviors.

      The 15 teachers believe that children in both age groups are capable of having behavior issues. In addition, the teachers believe behavior in the classroom is up to the teacher and their management strategies and they can teach the children to eliminate unwanted behaviors. Teachers can do this with the help from the school district and parents. By involving all the parties involved with the child and their life, the child can learn the expected behaviors and succeed throughout their life.

      Overall, the study shows that a two-year-old can exhibit "The Terrible Twos" but as we reflect on the teachers and their answers, we see evidence children can be taught. According to several of the studies, every child has possibilities — we just have to teach them. By creating relationships with each and every child we can learn where they need the support and as

educators, we can find ways to give it to them. Every person in the child's life is important and plays a major role in teaching the child. By giving the teachers and parents the resources they need, they can learn new behavior interventions to help every child.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations that could impact the results of the research study conducted and in answering the question posed: What are the behaviors and interactions between two- and three-year-olds? Limitations to this study include the mothers and teachers' honesty when answering questions and the small number of participants. Mothers may not want to share their child's misbehavior and they are more used to their child and how they behave. By the time the child turns three the mother is aware of their child's challenging behaviors and do not notice it. Additionally, having more participants answer for both the mother survey and the teacher survey would bring in more data, and the larger sample size would allow for more thorough analysis.

Further Study

Further study could include in-classroom and in-home observation and documentation of children's behavior. This would give the researcher additional documentation and more consistent information on how two- and three-year-old children behave. The researcher could also take the documentation that was collected and create behavior modification plans for the children who are in need to test different strategies. In addition, the researcher should find more participants for all the areas. Adding additional participants to the study will grow the data to a larger scale. With only 19 mothers involved the data is limited, when adding more then you receive more perspectives of different mothers and teachers.

After the researcher adds more participants and documentation, educators use this information to create management plans for their classroom. Educators will be able to see where two- and three-year-olds exhibit the most negative behaviors and figure out ways to help the children manage their behaviors. Data from inside the classroom and inside the home offer several different perspectives that can help those trying to help the child with challenging behaviors succeed.

Conclusion

The findings in this study show that two-year-old children display more negative behaviors than three-year-olds do. As children turn three, they start to exhibit fewer of these behaviors. Throughout the research study, the researcher tallied the number of mother and teacher responses to the behavior surveys and kept track of the data to explore whether three-year-old children offered more challenging behaviors than two-year-olds, but the data shows that two-year-olds exhibit more of these behaviors than three-year-olds. The teacher survey revealed that the educators believed that all children are capable of having negative behaviors and it is how the teachers and families taught the children how to regulate and handle their behaviors.

This research reflects the findings of other studies involving early childhood behaviors. Teachers should be provided opportunities to explore and learn how children express their feelings and needs to others. They also should be given opportunities to continue their education on children's behaviors and how to teach the children how to handle and express them to others.

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