

Development of Antisocial Behaviors

Chapter 11

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Antisocial Interactions

- What are antisocial interactions?

What are Antisocial Interactions?

- 1 inmate for every 110 people in USA (bjs.gov, 2013)
- Violence
 - USA (recent): Charlottesville, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs...
 - Worldwide: stabbings, shootings, bombings, vehicle attacks, beatings...
- Firearms second only to auto accidents in deaths age 10-19
 - 34% of children live in homes with guns
 - Homicide and suicide deaths peak in adolescence

What are Antisocial Interactions?

- Antisocial interactions and aggression are often times equal to one another.
- Two characteristics:
 - 1) highly intense
 - 2) Intentional
 - Not an accident – infer intentionality by accompanying behaviors like facial expression and verbalizations



What is Intentionality?



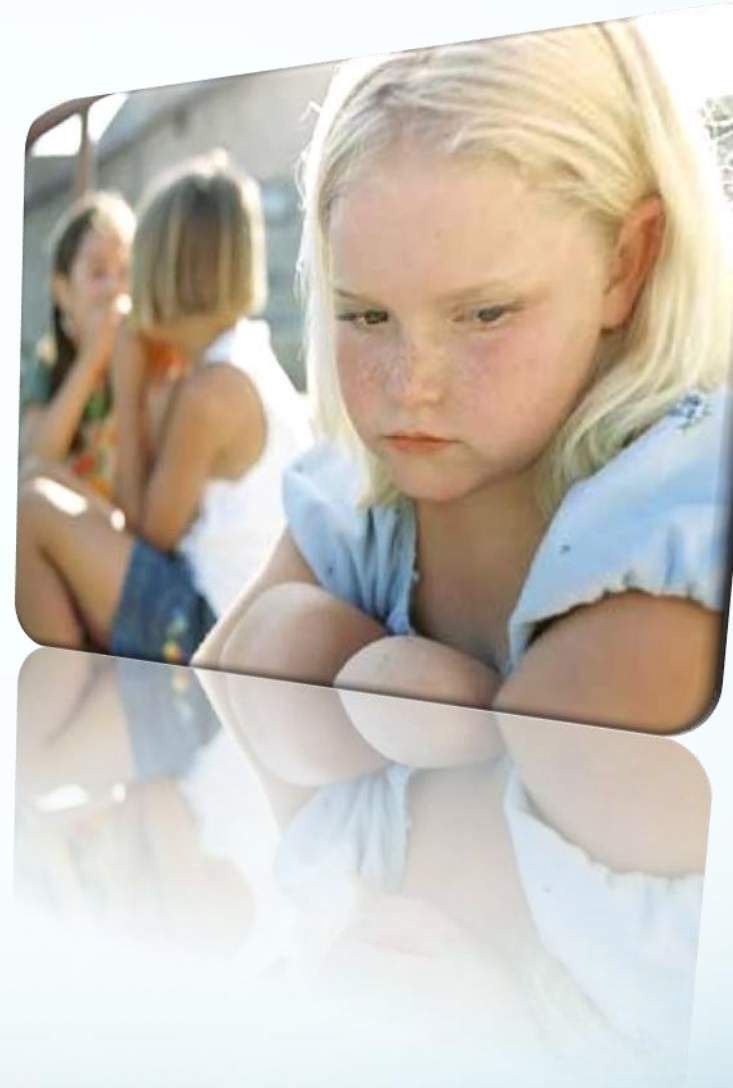
- Difficulty because it's inferred
- Casual Description:
 - Thinking about it before doing it
- Technical Description:
 - Knowing the assumed consequence of the behavior
 - Aggression
 - Conflicting contingencies of reinforcement and punishment
 - Go with the more salient alternative
 - Usually the impulsive one

Does genotype play a role in
intentionally aggressive
behaviors (e.g., bullying)?

Genotype – environment effect

Bullying

- a type of antisocial behavior in which the child picks on children smaller and weaker
- Bullies can be created in two ways:
 1. Active “genotype-environment”
 - Seek environments where aggressive behavior is reinforced
 - Typically large body build
 2. Active “person-environment”
 - Bullying reinforced



Bullying

- Typically, bullies are bigger than classmates and are often reinforced for being a bully (Hawkins, 1998)
 - Snacks, money, social reinforcers (can't beat 'em, join 'em), higher social status, fewer aversives
- Victims are usually weaker and smaller
 - Reinforcement trap – better to be victimized in the “cool” group than ignored in another (Olweus, 1993)
 - Higher reinforcement value
- Starts as early as preschool!!
- Aggressive patterns of behavior in childhood are linked to antisocial and psychotic behaviors later in life

The Origins of Aggression

The Ethological Perspective

- Aggressive behaviors evolved from natural selection
- Moyer identified seven types of aggression in animals, but these can readily be transferred to human behaviors as well.
- The seven behaviors are:
 1. Predatory: attack for food
 2. Intermale, spontaneous: establish dominance
 3. Terror induced: fight or flight
 4. Irritable: terminate irritable stimulus
 5. Territorial defense: invaded turf
 6. Defense of Young: offspring threatened
 7. Instrumental: to get something from environment



Think of human equivalents?

Ethological Perspective: The Control of Aggression

In addition to these seven instincts, animals have **unlearned mechanisms** to inhibit aggression within their species so not to go extinct.

Animals will fight within their species almost to the death, and then let the intruder go. (Timberwolves, pigeons)



A Behavioral Systems Approach

- The Role of Genetic Makeup
 - Men with extra Y or more testosterone more aggressive (although studies inconclusive)
 - Larger physical size
 - e.g. larger baby evokes rough play from parents, more likely to be aggressive
 - Psychotic individuals feel less physical pain (think of conditioned reinforcers/punishers)
 - Shock pairing
- It is not simple!
 - Aggression and control of aggression exists
 - Our culture determines the level of control
 - 7-10 times more likely to be murdered in US v. Europe

The Role of Interactional History

- Our interactional history = us
 - May change our behavior but can't change history
- Patterson et al. (1967)
 - Thousands of children and observations
 - Typical preschool provides many opportunities of aggressive behavior
 - Children who were most active were more likely to be aggressive
 - Children's aggressive behavior likely to be reinforced
 - Toy, cried, left the toy area
 - *If the victim successfully counteraggressed, THAT child was more likely to be aggressive in the future (it worked!) → Bully would choose new target (didn't work with that one, find another)*

The Role of Interactional History

- Pattern here?

Unassertive child →

aggressor initiates with child →

unassertive child fights back and is successful →

more likely to aggress towards others



The Role of Current Physiological Conditions

- Aggression
 - Emotional arousal
 - Unconditioned stimuli
 - Pain
 - Conditioned stimuli
 - Name calling, road rage, laughing/pointing
 - Leads to increased heart rate, muscle tension, flush, adrenaline
 - History still matters – determines CS
- Activation syndrome or fight-or-flight reaction (can't escape, terror-induced aggression)
 - Biting most reflexive



Current Environmental Condition Effects

Antisocial behavior = operant behavior

- Discriminative stimuli
 - See a toy, a submissive/small person, no caregiver
- Consequences
 - Reinforced (removal of aversive teasing or hitting, toy, attention)
- Setting events
 - Mood, physiological state

Flory (1969)

- Aggressive behavior may be elicited when reinforcement is withheld
 - SO MUCH in animal literature, some in humans

Besevegis & Lore (1983)

- Frequency of child misbehavior is higher when parent is present

Coercive Family Process

Basic Training of Antisocial Behavior in the Home

Patterson's Research



- Observational data of children and their families
- If antisocial behavior persists into adulthood
 - Then Antisocial Personality Disorder
- The longer these interactions go on, the harder they are to change
 - Must intervene early on
 - Think history here – easier to change if history is short
- The “coercive family process” (Fig. 11.2)
 - “Patterson has shown rather clearly that the roots of much human misery are in the moment to moment interactions that happen in families, schools, and workplaces.”

Patterson's Coercion

- Parenting by negative reinforcement
 - Much more negative reinforcement contingencies in abusive homes
 - Children much more likely to use physical and verbal aggression to escape aversive from parents, parents likely to do the same to escape the aversives from children – dangerous cycle
 - Conditioned punisher
 - Aggression at home = aggression at school
 - Rejection from peers difficult to bounce back from
 - Even small changes in coerciveness are accompanied by massive decreases in prosocial behavior

Patterson's Coercion

- Same issues in most failed marriages
 - More aversive control, fewer positive reinforcers
 - Avoid nagging v. “you’re so great!”
- Depression
 - Mothers who complained about their depression escaped nagging from family to behave in non-depressed ways

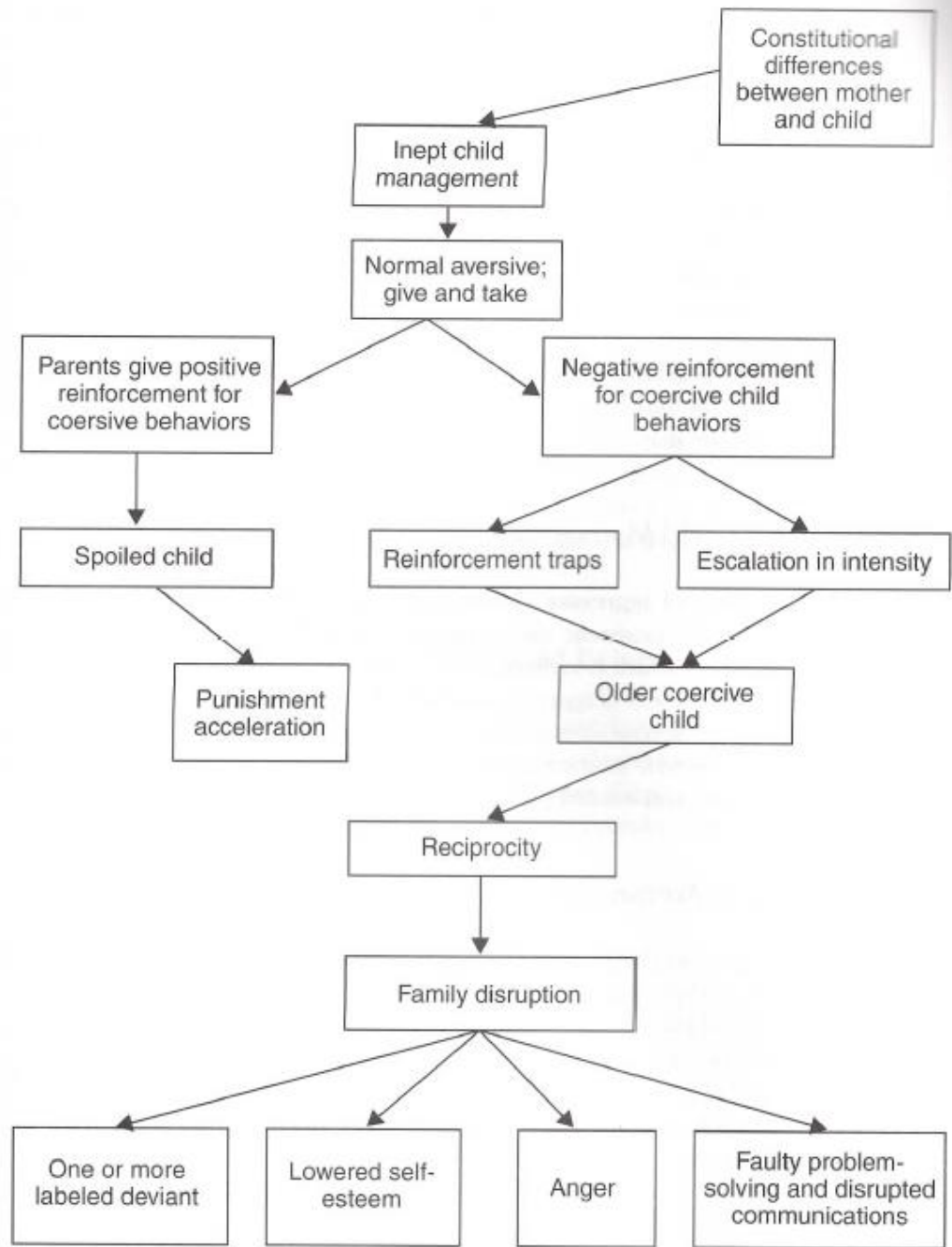


Figure 11.3 The Coercive Family Process

Constitutional Differences Between Children and Parents



- Differences in temperament and personality between children and parents may be problematic
 - Examples?
 - HA, Aut, difficult child

Inept Child Management

- Parents of aggressive children are usually inconsistent, use many commands, threaten, and use ineffective physical punishment.



- Mothers of aggressive children may not even recognize some of their behaviors as obnoxious.
- Mothers of antisocial children make an issue of minor annoyances.

Normal Aversive Give-and-Take



- Minor aversive interactions (whining, crying, throwing)
 - Occur about once every 3 minutes
- These behaviors are typically ignored
- When action is taken:
 - “stop” command
 - “nattering”



Normal Aversive Give-and-Take

- In **families with aggressive children**, minor coercive exchanges occur about once every $\frac{3}{4}$ of a minute
- These parents are:
 - Less likely to ignore
 - More likely to react
 - More punitive cons.
 - Fewer positives



Reinforcement Traps



- The naturally occurring negative reinforcement of both child and parent
- Family members are likely to engage and escalate in these behaviors with each other in the future
 - History
 - Punishment works

Escalation of Response Intensity

- Escalation in threats
- Escalation in intensity of voice
- Child escalates faster & to higher level than the mother
 - Mother gives in before child
 - (p. 386)



Family Disruption

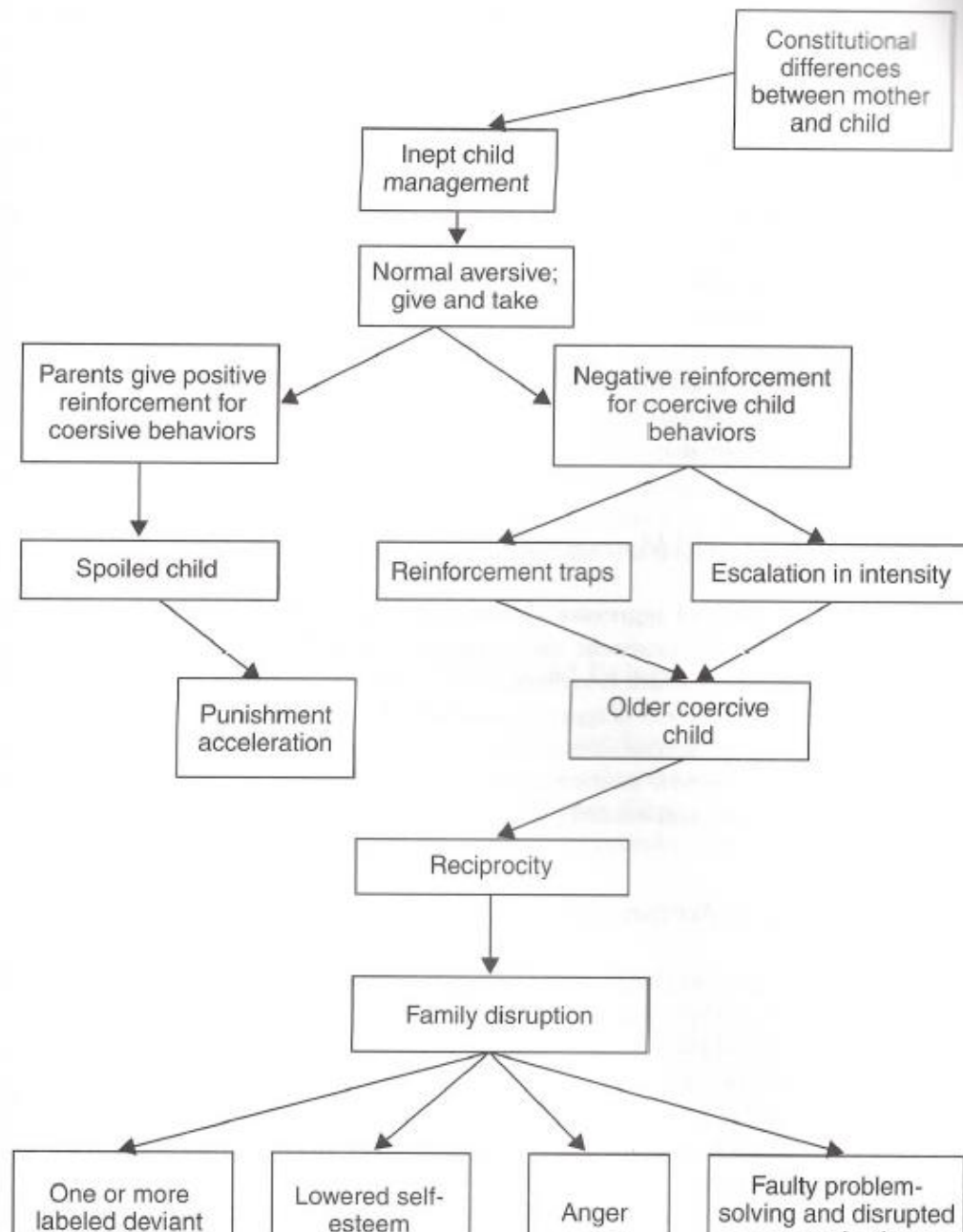
The reciprocity of aversive attacks can disrupt families in 4 ways:

1. Siblings, parents, or both may be labeled as “deviant”.
2. Family members develop negative self-esteem and disphoria.
 - I’m a brat, I’m a terrible parent
3. Family members experience anger.
4. Family communication is disrupted and members exhibit faulty problem solving.
 - Family members are now conditioned aversive stimuli to be avoided



Modeling of Aggressive Behaviors





Development of Aggression

Patterson identified a sequence of steps leading to delinquency in adolescence

Begins at home

3 ● CHILD AND ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

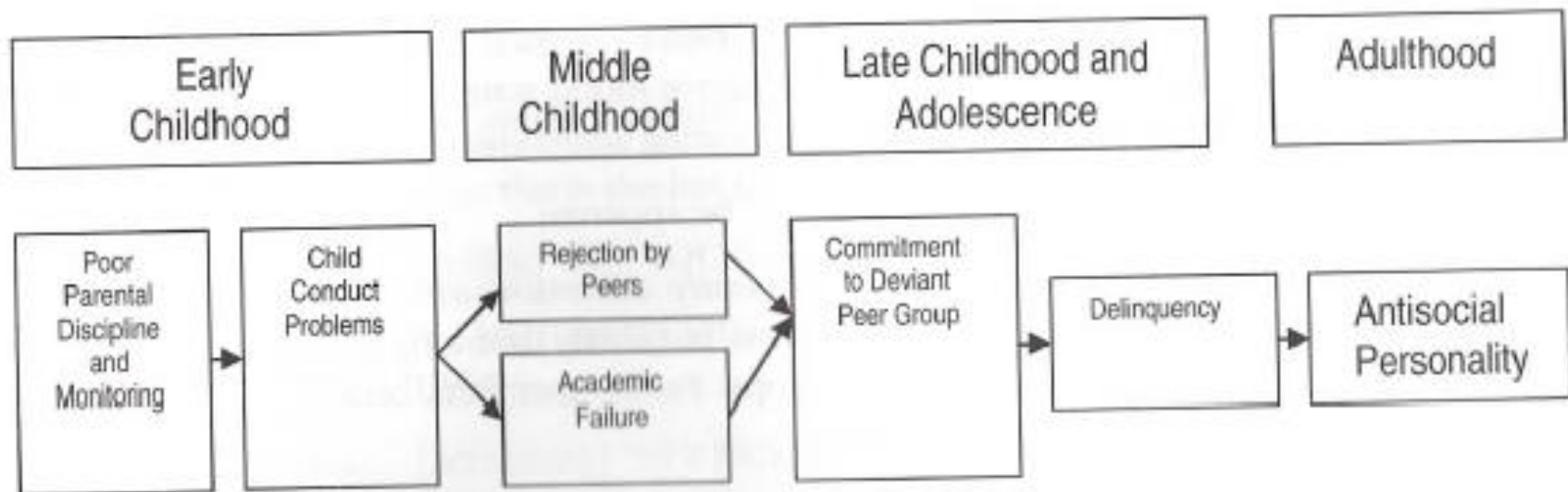


Figure 10.1 Developmental Progression for Antisocial Behavior

Phase 1: Aggression in Early Childhood

- Development of coercive family processes (as just described)
 - Children become so aversive to family that they are completely ignored
 - Go play outside, spend the night out, etc.
 - More likely to fall into a deviant peer group
- Shaping patterns into the new “normal”



Phase 2: Middle Childhood Rejection and School Failure

- Antisocial children do poorly in school
 - Noncompliance, escape/avoidance, and uncontrolled behavior interfere with learning
 - Rejected by teacher
- Peers actively reject antisocial children



Phase 3: Late Childhood and Adolescence, Deviant Peer Group

- Opportunities to succeed academically and socially are curtailed by development in phase 2
 - Gravitate to similarly antisocial and rejected peers
 - Modeling, reinforcement for antisocial bx and punishment for prosocial bx, provide rationalizations, motivation, attitudes
 - Creates a massively nonfacilitative environment for prosocial behaviors
- Dishion, Spraken, Andrews, & Patterson (1996)
 - Deviant (arrest record) + nondeviant dyads
 - Deviant reinforced antisocial statements
 - Nondeviants reinforced prosocial statement

Phase 4: The Adult Antisocial Personality

- “Legacy of school dropout, substance abuse, employment problems, marital problems, multiple offenses, incarceration, and institutionalization”
- Coercive characteristics learned in childhood and adolescence mean it is likely that the adult will continue to select and evoke environmental interactions that maintain antisocial behaviors
 - Higher divorce rate
 - “Downwardly mobile”
 - More drinking/drug problems
 - Higher incarceration

“Antisocial people tend to be lonely and loved by few”

Three Keys to Effective Parenting

- Be Positive

- “Catch them being good!”
- Positive reinforcement and avoid aversive
- Time-out – allows parents to escape aversives without reinforcing problem behavior

- Be Contingent

- Think “contingency”
- Immediate consequences, clear rules

- Be Consistent

- [8:55 Video of Positive Parenting Program Results](#)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5g20nXqU68>



Dining in Public With Children

(Let's end on a happy
note, shall we?)

- How could this be problematic?
- Why is it easier to dine with children at a fast food establishment?



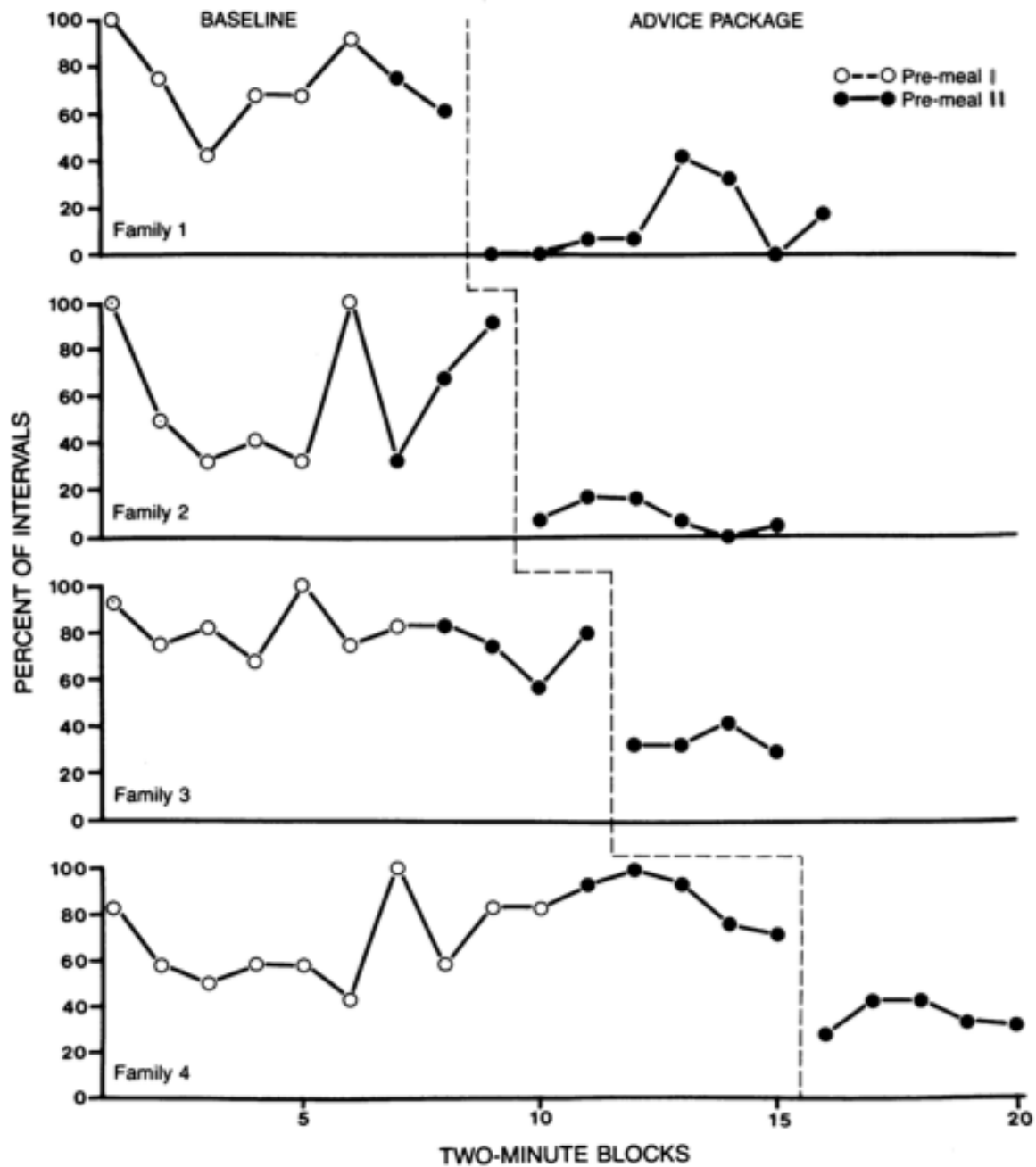
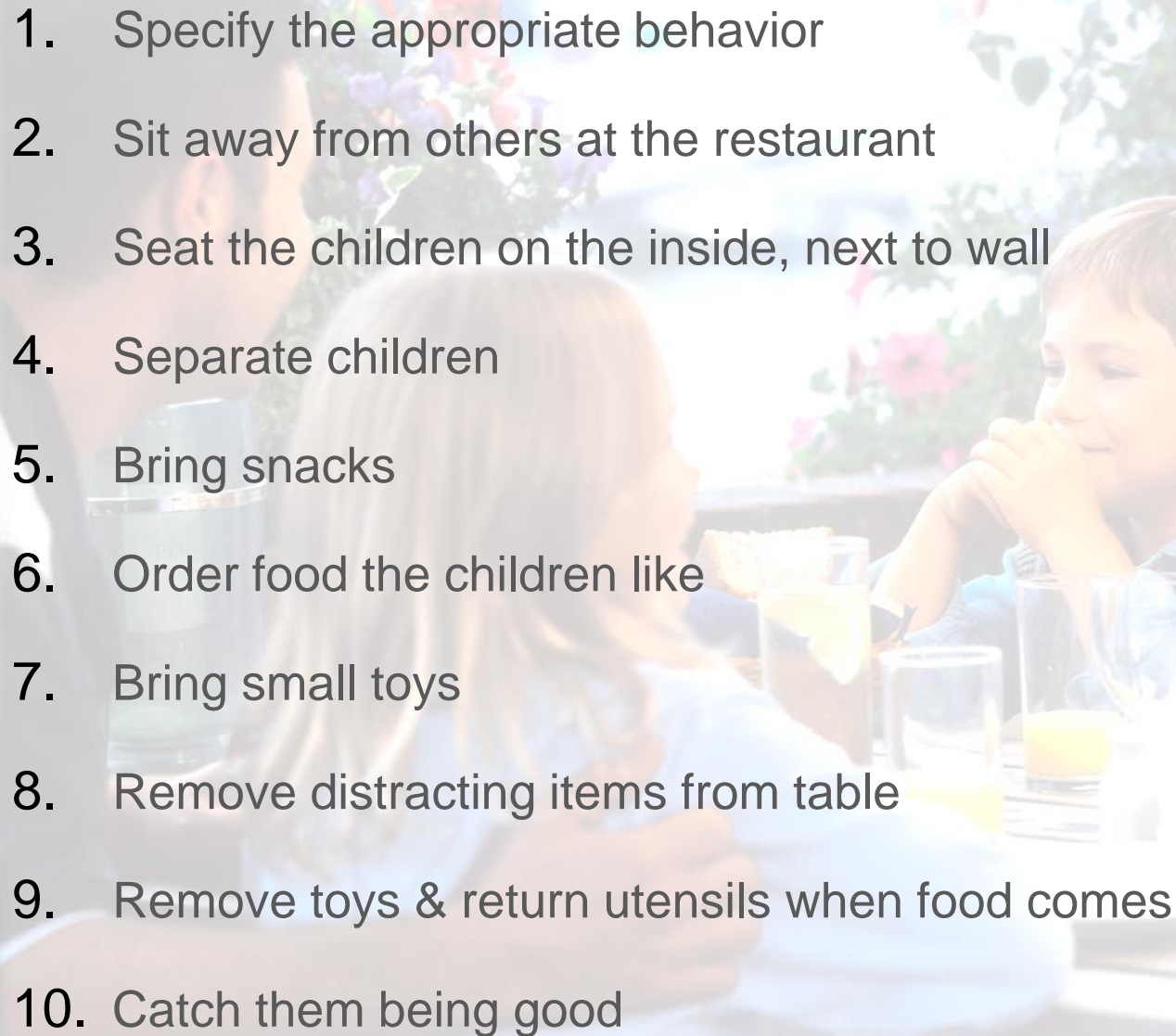


Fig. 1. Percentage of intervals across 2-min blocks of pre-meal inappropriate behavior by target children during baseline and advice package conditions.

10 Steps to Pleasurable Dining:

1. Specify the appropriate behavior
 2. Sit away from others at the restaurant
 3. Seat the children on the inside, next to wall
 4. Separate children
 5. Bring snacks
 6. Order food the children like
 7. Bring small toys
 8. Remove distracting items from table
 9. Remove toys & return utensils when food comes
 10. Catch them being good
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PRAISE AND DISAPPROVAL STATEMENTS

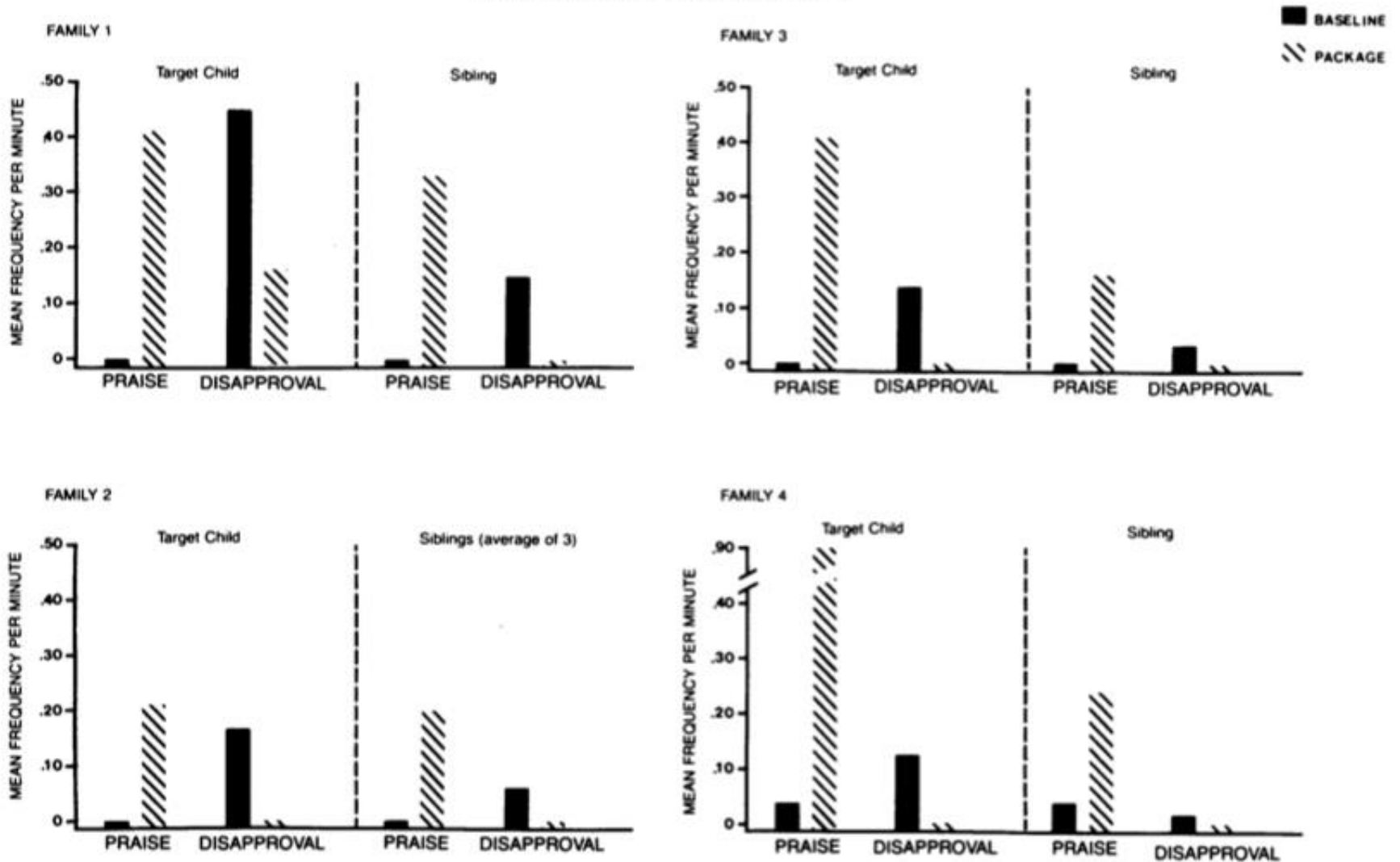


Fig. 3. Mean frequency per minute of parent praise and disapproval statements to target children and siblings during baseline and advice package conditions.

Consider This:

Knowing what you do about aggression and aggressive acts (e.g. gun violence), what kinds of cultural interventions would you put in place to decrease the occurrence of aggressive acts in the United States?