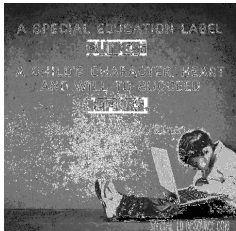


What Do "Troubled" Children Look Like?

Presented by Philip Young
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Get to know your students individual strengths and weaknesses.



What do troubled children look like?

- "Troubled Children" come with a plethora of labels:
 - Behavior Disordered
 - Seriously Emotionally Disturbed
 - At Risk
 - Conduct Disordered
 - Oppositional Disordered
 - Anti-Social
 - Attention Deficit Disordered
- Labels may be different, but "tough" students have common traits and behaviors that are easy to identify.



What is a "tough kid"?

- Generally not covered in most college courses in education.
 - SCDE School Safety Taskforce
- 2-5% of all students meet definition of "tough kid".
 - Most likely you will have at least 1 or 2 of these tough students in your class each year.

To have one in your classroom is to recognize one.

Common traits and behaviors

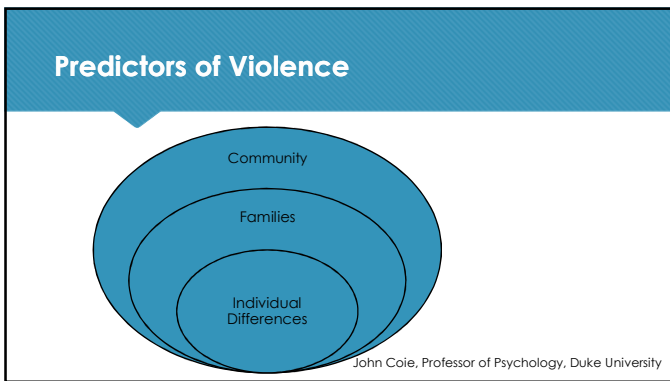
- Behavioral Excesses
 - Aggression
 - Noncompliance and Coercion
- Behavioral Deficits
 - Academic Deficits
 - Social Skills
 - Rule Following and Self-Management

THE KIDS WHO NEED THE MOST LOVE WILL ASK FOR IT IN THE MOST UNLOVING OF WAYS.

Excesses

- Excessive types of behavior
 - Arguing with teachers
 - Defiant when given a request
 - Aggression
 - Tantrums
 - Rule Breaking
- Central characteristic of Tough Kids is frequency or degree:
 - Average student also argue, are non-compliant, and fight.
 - Tough kids have a high degree of these behavioral excesses.





Community

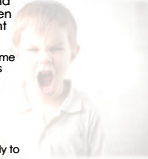
- Poor, high crime neighborhoods.
 - Set standards for behavior that encourage violent solutions to disagreements or interpersonal tension, and they promote an attitude of suspicion about the motives and intentions of other people so that kids learn to strike out first before the other person has a chance to hurt them.
- A neighborhood with high rates of poverty, of joblessness and of crime can be a risk factor, but obviously many children grow up poor and in troubled neighborhoods without turning to violence, so there is more to it than community by itself.

Families

- Some parents unintentionally "train" their children to be aversive and aggressive by only paying attention to them when they behave in these ways and by failing to respond positively when their children are socially appropriate and use non-aversive or confrontational behaviors to get what they want.
 - In more extreme cases, serious abuse can leave some children so emotionally unstable that they react unpredictably to stress, particularly events that make them fearful or angry.
- Abuse, Neglect
- Poor parenting from the parents (low involvement and monitoring of the child's behavior; inconsistent and harsh discipline)
- Perhaps the condition of the family is the most important factor for a very young child. Criminologists have focused particularly on physical and sexual abuse and emotional neglect as leading to early antisocial behavior, with emotional neglect playing just as critical a role as actual abuse.


Individual Differences

- Genetic Differences
- Early Traumas (birth trauma)
- Impulsive and inattentive children are difficult to rear in the best of conditions, and when family and neighborhood circumstances add to the problem, these children often are unprepared, emotionally, cognitively, and socially, for the development challenges ahead of them.
 - This can place them on a pathway where their problems escalate and they may become successively alienated from teachers, peers and even family so that their only support is from other delinquency prone youth. This happens especially often when they attend schools with a high density of children who are equally unprepared for school.
- Difficulty making and keeping friendships or being accepted by other children.
- Early aggressive behavior by the child
 - Recent research has shown that the very small proportion of children who are most likely to become juvenile delinquents and later serious adult criminals tend to exhibit antisocial behavior by the age of 6 or 7, in other words, by the time they arrive at first or second grade.



Noncompliance and Coercion

- King-pin behavior
 - All other behavioral excesses revolve around noncompliance.
- Noncompliance = not following a direction within a reasonable amount of time.
 - Most of the arguing, tantrums, fighting, rule breaking is to avoid requests or required tasks.
 - Coercive Pain Control or Behavior Escalation



Behavior Escalation *(or How We Make Kids Worse Over Time)*

Withdraws or Changes Request/"Negotiates" (OK, you can have 5 more minutes)	Tantrum/Aggression Stops
Large Threats (I guess you don't want to go on the fieldtrip...)	Tantrum/Aggression
Small Threats/Warnings (If you don't, you won't get...)	Argue
Verbal Prompts (Come on, Let's go. If you do, I'll give you...)	Delay
Request in Question Form (Would you sit down? Could you get your book out? Are you ready to work?)	Ignore
Adult	Student

Noncompliance

- Once a student's compliance to an adults request falls below 40%, the student will stand out as tough.
- Most students comply with about 80% of a teachers request.
- Tough Kids comply with 40% or less of teacher's requests.



Common traits and behaviors

- Behavioral Excesses
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 - Noncompliance and Coercion
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Behavioral Deficits

- If a student uses pain control behaviors of arguing, aggression, excuse-making, and throwing tantrums to avoid compliance, then basic skill development in other areas can lag behind.
 - Academic skills
 - Social Skills
 - Self-management skills or rule following behavior.
 - Delayed gratification

Contact Information

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