AFFECTIVE AND BEHAVIORAL COMPONENTS OF ADULT VERBAL RESPONSES TO PARENT-CHILD PROBLEM SITUATIONS

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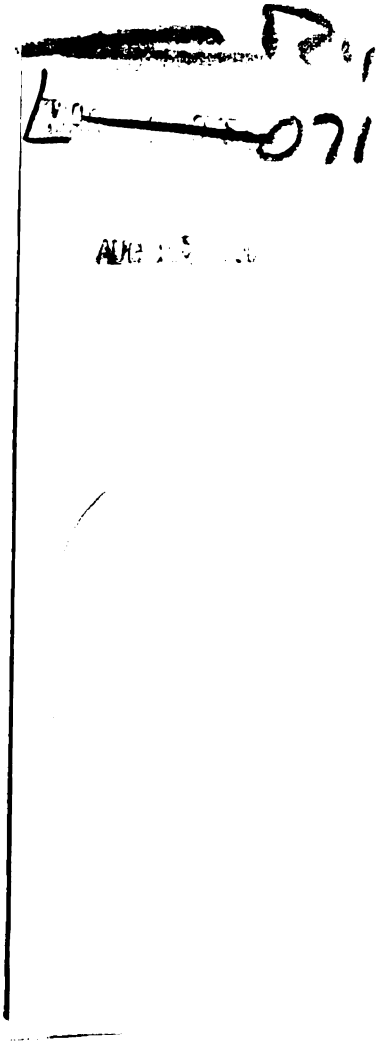

ABSTRACT

AFFECTIVE AND BEHAVIORAL COMPONENTS OF ADULT
VERBAL RESPONSES TO PARENT-CHILD PROBLEM SITUATIONS

By

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The purpose of the present investigation was to study how adults (college students) respond to children in hypothetical problem situations along specified affective and behavioral dimensions. Trends in the responses were described, as were male-female differences. The relationship between adult effectiveness in dealing with the problems and the degree to which his own needs were being frustrated by them was also examined. It was hoped that the study would be of use both in: (1) providing data on affective and behavioral communication in parent-child interactions; and (2) contributing information to improve the effectiveness of parent education programs.

The Sensitivity to Children test, an open ended test of adult verbal responses to various hypothetical parent-child problem situations, was completed by male and female college students. It was scored along 13 affective and behavioral categories. The data was analyzed by: (1) Mean comparisons of all responses categories with the STC items for the total group (100 males and 100 females); and (2) analysis of variance for all categories of sex by type

of situation. The type of situation was determined by Gordon's (1970) classification of problem ownership.

Child owned problems occur when the problem is primarily with the child in satisfying his needs. As expected, adults were able to respond more effectively to these than with parent owned problems, in which the child's behavior was frustrating the parent's needs. In child owned situations adults responded with significantly more affective communication; whereas in parent and parent-child equally owned situations responses were more in terms of directing the child's behavior. Thus the data provided some support for the hypothesis that in problem situations in which the adults needs are primarily being frustrated, he will respond less sensitively and effectively than in those situations where the needs of the child are being frustrated.

In general though the data revealed that adults infrequently respond to the child on an affective level in these problem situations. They tend to respond more often by directing the child's behavior. Females responded significantly more often than males on three of the affective and behavior control categories.

Discussion centered around explaining the relationship between problem ownership and need frustration, in terms of inappropriate adult and child perception of responsibility for the problem, which results in a lack of self differentiation. Problems in the methodology of the study were reviewed. Potential improvements in design and areas for future research were examined. The implications of the findings insofar as they relate to utilization in parent education programs was also discussed.

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by

Allan Scholom

A THESIS

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Dedication

". . . Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Jesus Christ

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To Jim Mullin, a friend, and ever helpful guide through the sometimes frustrating world of the computer.

To Nancy Bossenbroek, who typed a difficult manuscript with a smile.

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And to myself, who did alright through a long struggle and is now content to let this thesis be.

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The young child questioned in the profundity of innocence--"How do you know how to be a mommy and a daddy?"

The parents replied, each ultimately resorting to the core of his experience to offer what he knew was as yet uncertain to himself.

Were the questions to be rephrased, somewhat more directly we might ask: "Where does one learn how to be a parent?" Quite obviously we soon realize the astonishingly simple fact that nowhere outside of our own childhood experiences whatever they may have been, are we exposed in a systematic way, to anyother approach to child rearing. What is accutely lacking is one founded upon the knowledge gained through research in the behavioral sciences. Reflecting upon the multitude of "do's and don't's" we are required to learn in our compulsory system of education, one finds herein a striking paradox as to why we do not yet have a parent education program in our school curriculum.

Surely we cannot overestimate the importance of child rearing attitudes and practices upon the maintenance of any social system. Why then do we not have such programs?

At the heart of an answer to this lies the nature of what we, in "common sense", take for granted; what we *a priori* assume to be true. Namely, that raising children is in essence so subjective an

area of judgment that we must inevitably decide for ourselves what to do. Who has not heard the popular refrain, "Don't anybody tell me how to raise my kids!" This all too dramatically captures the atmosphere surrounding the prevailing winds of yesteryear.

That psychologists in the past may have covertly helped to maintain this attitude is exemplified by Baldwin, Kalhorn and Breece (1945) in one of the classic studies of parent-child relationships. The authors contend that ". . . emotionally mature parents will be able to discover for themselves satisfactory methods for handling children."

Given the nature of the task, one can understand the intensity of the attitude of total parent responsibility for child rearing. Responsibility does not however preclude the possibility of learning new methods and skills, with which to help guide the way through the myriad of complex problems confronting every parent. As Baldwin et al. further asserted, ". . . The discovery of adequate methods of handling children is not an inevitable consequence of a mature emotional adjustment with the child . . . For such parents specific education in methods of child training is desirable." (p.74)

Over a quarter of a century later we have moved into a critical stage insofar as parent education is concerned. On a societal level, we seem to be presently beginning to recognize and accept not merely the desirability of, but rather the need for parent education. This is perhaps best exemplified by the popularity of Ginott's Between Parent and Child (1966) and Gordon's Parent Effectiveness Training (1970), just as the success of "Sesame Street" underscored the need for supplemental cognitive education.

This may be a sign that the aura of skepticism and lack of faith pervading the society at large with regard to the applicability of psychological data to practical problems may be nearing an end. The responsibility for this change would appear to reside somewhere at the intersection of the societal need (in this case for new methods of child rearing), and the development of the field (child and family psychology) to the point where relevant contributions satisfying such needs may be realized.

The work of Carkhuff and Truax (1965), Guerney (1968), Stollak (1968), Zax, Cowen and Laird (1967), is illustrative of this trend toward integrating the laboratory with the "real" world. These investigators have demonstrated that parents, undergraduates, teachers, and various groups of paraprofessionals can be trained to perform vital mental health roles, ranging from play therapist to learning to be a more effective parent.

In spite of such efforts there remains as yet a wide communication chasm between what is known by psychologists and what is disseminated to the lay population. Gordon (1970) contends that, "unfortunately those who have uncovered new facts and developed new methods have not done a very good job of telling parents about them. We communicate to our colleagues in books and professional journals but do not communicate as well with parents, the rightful consumers of these methods." (p.5)

In response to this information gap Gordon has developed a "Parent Effectiveness Training" program (1970). The experiences, insights and practical approaches evolving out of this course constitute the substance of his book. While the approach is a

pragmatic one, the underlying conceptual framework is grounded firmly both in current communication theory (i.e., Jackson, 1957; Haley, 1962) and the psychological philosophy of the Rogerian school of child development (i.e., Axline, 1947; Moustakas, 1959), although neither is specifically referred to in the text.

Conspicuously absent from the book, as is also the case with Ginott, is any research evidence. The collective wisdom espoused in these efforts flows consistently from the theory, while conveying an intuitive feeling for the potential health of parent-child relationships were one to apply these principles. However, that the need exists for empirical validation is assumptive if the self-correcting feedback process of research and practice is to maximize the effectiveness of potential parent education programs.

Communicating Acceptance

The foremost theoretical as well as practical issue herein concerns the fostering of acceptance of the child's basic self by communicating to him the crucial distinction between what he feels and how he behaves. Simply stated, one can accept the child's feelings (self) while not accepting his behavior, but to do so one must communicate the difference clearly. Ginott (1966) and Gordon (1970), as well as Axline (1947) and Moustakas (1959), all emphasize this issue.

In Gordon's words, "When parents say something to a child they often say something about him. This is why communication to a child has such an impact on him as a person and ultimately upon the relationship between you and him." (p.46)

The communication of acceptance lies at the heart of the development of the child's most fundamental sense of self; his self-concept or self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967). The first critical problem therein is the communication itself. Gordon maintains that, "It is one thing for a parent to feel acceptance toward a child. It is another thing to make that acceptance felt. Unless a parent's acceptance comes through to the child it can have no influence on him. A parent must learn how to demonstrate his acceptance so that the child feels it." (p.38)

Linden and Stollak (1968) stress the same point. "Whether or not one can project or 'put himself in another's shoes' is only part of interpersonal sensitivity. Another major variable is the communication of whatever empathy one feels." (p.217)

On the other hand, a generation ago Durkin, Glatzer, and Hirsch (1944) argued that, "On the whole it does not matter what a mother says to her child if her feelings toward her child are healthy, while the mother who does all the acceptable things to her child without really loving him has often a severe problem with the child." (p.68). It is the emphasis on communication that perhaps most dramatically reflects the change in psychological speculation regarding child rearing.

Psychological thought has thus evolved from vague attitudinal acceptance criterion to concrete behavioral ones. With this recognition of the importance of communicating acceptance one would anticipate a large body of evidence specifically related to this issue. However there are relatively few studies that have dealt directly with parents communicating the critical distinction

between accepting a child's feelings, without necessarily accepting his behavior.

Sensitive and Effective Parent Behavior

Before maximally effective parent education programs can be developed, information concerning what is actually happening in parent-child relationships, and with what effect must be gathered. Consequently research must first aim at seeking out what parents and children are doing in real life situations.

Following from this point of departure numerous questions may be raised. Foremost is the need for statements as to how often parents:

1) are aware of the child's feelings;
2) accept the child's feelings; and
3) communicate acceptance of the child's feelings regardless of their acceptance of his behavior.

From the parents' perspective, one might inquire as to whether parents communicate clearly:

1) their own feelings to the child
2) their expectations (directions) regarding the child's feelings and behavior;
3) the relationship between their feelings and behavior to the feelings and behavior of the child.

Moustakas, Sigel and Schalock (1956) found that "the behavior of adult and child tended to vary from one situation to another (playroom to home)." Consequently, if we realize that "a parent's feelings of acceptance will also change from one situation to the

next" (Gordon, 1970), we might then ask in what situations is a parent more likely to be accepting.

Interacting with this situational variable is what we shall call a "need" dimension. In any particular parent-child interaction a problem may be conceptualized as existing predominantly in one of three places:

1) with the child because he is being frustrated in satisfying a need;
2) with the parent, similarly (Gordon, 1970, p.64); or
3) with parent and child about equally.

Consequently if a parent's needs are being thwarted in his interaction with the child, this may affect his acceptance of the child's feelings.

This relationship between parental needs vs. child needs calls into question the role of the child in affecting the interaction. One may then wish to know when and how much the child influences the process (Baldwin, et al., 1945; Bell, 1971; Riskin, 1962; Haley, 1962).

Another variable of interest concerns the connection between direction and explanation by parents in response to problem situations. Hoffman (1963) found a relationship between parents who gave explanations with their directions and "considerateness" toward others in their children, a quality which is presumably linked to self esteem.

Finally as Jackson (1958) points out, "Few studies which concern parental action or parental attitudes fail to mention differences between the sexes." Insofar as all of the questions outlined above are concerned, there may indeed be significant male-female differences.

One purpose of the present study was to obtain empirical data relevant to those issues. To this extent one objective of the

study may be seen as descriptive in nature, in that the focus of concern was on gathering information regarding what adults might do in real life problem situations.

Harboring within such situations are the roots of a fundamental issue in psychology: that of the organism (internal) interacting with the environment (external). Herein we have the variables of: (1) need frustration (i.e. parent vs. child vs. parent and child); and (2) situational differences (i.e. problems occurring at home vs. those while visiting or shopping).

The extent to which these variables interact may be more clearly seen in the following example. A problem involving sexual behavior vs. one of bedtime hours is likely to evoke differential needs regardless of the situation. On the other hand, such problems are necessarily influenced by the situation (i.e., when other children and/or adults are present, as well as where the problem occurs).

Theoretical Considerations

In terms of a unifying conceptual theme the various aspects of the study intersect around the issue of clarity of communication. For this reason, this variable may be seen as a point of integration not only empirically, but in a theoretical vein as well.

With regard to the latter, when reviewing the literature on parent-child relationships one may extract two basic approaches. One approach may be characterized as a process oriented methodology stressing mode, form, and style of interaction, as exemplified by the work of the communication theorists (i.e., Jackson, Haley, and Bateson). The other approach may be seen as more content oriented,

emphasizing specific dimensions, qualities, and messages as evidenced by the investigations of Baumrind (1967); Becker (1964); Hoffman (1963); and Sears, Maccoby and Levin (1957).

While both views differ in methodology, description and classification of phenomena, and theoretical explanation, the fact remains that ultimately they are concerned with the same problem. At no point is this more evident than in the notion of clarity of communication (content--what is being said + process--how is it being said = clarity of communication--how is what being said). Even if we conceive of process and content as a different dimension continuum on a circumplex type model, we find they intersect, and thereby integrate around this issue. Once the relationship between the two has been conceptualized, they cease to exist at cross purposes, but rather complement each other.

Thus, in a theoretical sense the present study was also aimed at demonstrating the integration of process oriented with content oriented approaches around the issue of clarity of communication. Throughout the emphasis was on clearly defining the parameters of communication between parent and child. Was this or that kind of statement communicated in this or that type of situation.

Content of Parent-Child Communications

When one reviews the literature on content oriented experiments some basic trends can be seen. Foremost among these is the global representation of the variables under study. Rather than concentrating on specific behaviors, general categories of behavior are typically organized along various continua for purposes of model building

(i.e., the circumplex model of Schaefer, 1959--love↔hostility, control↔autonomy; Becker, 1964--warmth↔hostility, restrictiveness↔permissiveness).

Even studies utilizing direct observation techniques cluster the discrete behaviors in similarly broad dimensions (i.e., Baumrind, 1967, uses such global child behavior categories as self-control, self-reliance, peer affiliation, and approach-avoidance tendency, and similarly with parent behavior categories, like control and maturity demands). Thus what one is left with as a result of this type of methodology is a set of general behavioral dimensions each empirically bearing some relationship to the other.

While this type of design lends itself most efficiently to formulating relationships between variables, one may lose some specificity of content in the process. In other words the actual content of the parent-child interaction may be somewhat obscured if the emphasis is on grouping behavior into clusters of more general factors.

In this regard the present study was designed to examine more closely the content of parent-child communication in terms of some specific affective and behavioral categories. To this extent one aspect of this investigation was geared toward description of the content of adult responses to certain parent-child problem situations.

Parent Responses to Problem Situations

The original study utilizing the type of methodology employed in the present investigation was conducted by Jackson (1955).

Jackson used the technique of asking subjects to state how they would respond to various parent-child problem situations. The emphasis here was on examining the specific statements that adults used in responding to these situations so as to more accurately describe what was being communicated. Jackson's goal was to investigate techniques of parental control in terms of male-female differences. A "coercion" continuum was developed based upon a comprehensive scoring system in which each sentence of each situation was coded.

By taking high and low scores from along the continuum together with discrepancy scores (high minus low), Jackson's findings refuted the popular sterotype of the "punitive male" and "permissive female." More specifically he found "that mothers subscribe to methods of control that are more coercive than those suggested by fathers. However, mothers are more likely than fathers to couple those highly coercive methods with some of the milder methods of control."

Perhaps the most relevant result of the Jackson study to the present one, is the finding that a "one to one relationship between a problem situation and a method of control rarely exists. Parents are quite versatile." This would seem to point toward the possibility of significant differences in adult response as determined by the type of problem situation.

While Jackson's research instrument and the type of scoring system employed parallel those utilized herein, a point of departure in the present study was the attempt to determine the effects of the type of problem situation (Parent vs. Child vs. Parent-Child) on

the behavior of the adults in the investigation.

Methods of Study and Reciprocal Parent-Child Influences

Jackson's rationale for his particular methodology evolved from the limitations of other widely used techniques. Reports of parents or children concerning past parental actions or personality traits (i.e., questionnaires, clinical interviews), and assessment techniques of parent's attitudes toward children who differ in behavior, have been classified by Bell (1958) as postdictive rather than predictive. These retrospective studies assume that there is some relationship between the parent's verbal report and his action in the home. Although studies striving to come to grips with this problem have been numerous, Mannino, Kisielewski, Kimbro, and Morgenstern (1968) maintain that results heretofore have been inconclusive.

Having exhausted the retrospective methodologies we arrive at direct observational techniques, where a parent and child are viewed interacting in some artificial playroom situation (Hatfield, Ferguson and Alpert, 1967; Liberman, Stollak and Denner, 1971; Saxe and Stollak, 1971; Schulman, Shoemaker and Moelis, 1962). It is with this approach that we bridge the gap between the content and process oriented methodologies. As Peterson, Becker, Helmer, Shoemaker and Quay (1959) assert, "In a study of parent-child relationships, . . . we are not dealing with unidirectional causalties; we are dealing with interaction." (p.128)

It is within this framework that we may uncover the behavioral as well as conceptual connection between the two systems. By shifting the focus from the parent (cause) to the child (effect) model of

parent-child relationships implicit in the methodologies employing retrospective reports, attitude surveys, etc.; to an interaction schema, we move from "inferential" to "descriptive" experimentation (Haley, 1962).

This represents a shift from a linear approach (cause-effect: from a parental attitude we infer a relationship to a child's behavior), to a circular model, where each response of the parent is a stimulus for the parent, with all stimuli and responses possessing reinforcing properties. Thus feedback from both parent and child creates a circular communication process where the behavior of the parent affects and is affected by the behavior of the child (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967). In a sense then interaction <u>is</u> communication, and it is therefore impossible not to communicate in an interaction.

According to Haley (1962), "If we examine parents and child as a stable system with each person governing the behavior of the other two, it is possible to describe patterns in the ways they influence each other" (p.270).

Similarly Riskin (1962) maintains that, "proceeding from the general concept that the family is a dynamic system it follows that children have an important function to play in maintaining an effective balance in the system" (p.345).

Thus, in communication theory the child is seen as an equal participant in the parent-child interaction, a role neglected by most content oriented conceptualizations. In responding to this void Bell (1971) contends that child behavior is rarely an independent variable. Furthermore, until recently there have been no hypotheses regarding the child's stimulating effect on the parents. Bell's

remarks echo those of communication theory in that "parent and child are clearly a social system, and in such systems we expect each participant's responses to be stimuli for the other." While pointing out the fact that in the last decade numerous researchers have commented on the lack of attention paid to the child's contribution to parent-child relations Bell is arguing for the circular model of interaction, thereby bridging the gap between the two approaches.

Of specific interest in this study was the function of the child's behavior as a stimulus in problem situations. A distinction was drawn between situations where the child's needs are predominant versus those in which the needs of the parent take precedence. The communication of acceptance may then be adversely affected in situations where the child stimulates parental needs. Thus the parent's capacity to respond to the child's feelings may be dependent upon the extent to which his needs are being frustrated by the child's behavior (and vice versa).

In endeavoring to integrate both content and process aspects in parent-child interactions, Wimberger and Kogan (1968) emphasized the necessity of coding mother-child <u>interactive</u> behaviors. Their purpose was "to accomodate certain basic principles of communication theory such as the necessity of considering both content and relationship (process) aspects of interaction, the importance of describing phenomena between people rather than within individuals, and the systematic and repetitive patterns that characterize particular communication styles" (p.271). It is when these "systematic and repetitive patterns" become "dysfunctional" that we may speak of a lack of clarity of communication in the ongoing interactive process

between parent and child. It is within the context of chronically poor communication that we witness the development of psychopathology (Ruesch, 1953).

The issue of clarity of communication appears, not only as a unifying concept for two divergent theoretical perspectives regarding parent-child relationships, but moreover as the common denominator cause in the development of psychopathology ranging from low self esteem (Coopersmith, 1967) to schizophrenia (i.e., the "double bind" theory of Bateson, Jackson, Haley, and Weakland, 1956).

It would be ultimate understatement to say that we are not talking about a simple notion. Nor may it be useful to think of it in any way other than an abstract concept, metaphor, or hypothetical construct. For in the final analysis what we must know is <u>how</u> one may be clear in his communications, <u>how</u> a parent makes a child understand that he understands. But before we can answer the question of how to change what exists, we must know first what exists.

Thus there is the need to describe what actually happens in <u>real life</u> situations between parents and children. Herein lies the basic rationale for the present study. A critical limitation of almost all observational investigations in the playroom or home concerns the infrequency of <u>need arousing</u> activity. The relationship viewed under these conditions does not often simulate the day-to-day problem situations parents and children encounter.

While one procedure might involve provoking some parent-child conflict to create a more "true to life" interaction (Rowland, 1969), the present study utilizes a simulation of various commonly occurring parent-child problem situations. Responses to these were gathered

from a large number of college sophomores and juniors without children, and were thereby presumed to be somewhat reflective of the child rearing practices they would be using as parents.

The present study touches only the top of the iceberg insofar as dealing with many of the afore mentioned issues are concerned. However, the author deemed it important to review some of the critical issues in the area (although they go beyond the scope of the present study); and their implications, so as to underscore the need for further research geared toward implementation in parent education programs. It was hoped that the data would provide a starting point from which to more clearly delineate some of the prepotent problems to be dealt with in the area of parent-child interaction.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

One part of the present study is descriptive in nature, aimed at determining more clearly how adults respond to hypothetical parent-child problem situations along specified affective and behavior control dimensions. More specifically how frequently do adults respond to children in such situations with statements communicating:

1) their own feelings;
2) awareness of the child's feelings;
3) clear directions for the child's behavior; and
4) relating their feelings and behavior to the feelings and behavior of the child?

Furthermore are there male-female differences in communicating to children within the categories outlined above?

The other aspect of the investigation concerns the relationship of need frustration in determining effective adult response to children in the problem situations. Gordon (1970) has asserted that in problem situations in which the adults needs are being frustrated (parent owned), he will be less effective in responding to the child, than in situations where the child's needs are being frustrated (child owned).

Thus in child owned problem situations, do adults respond more effectively than in parent owned situations. More specifically, it is hypothesized that:

1) Adults will respond with more statements regarding the child's feelings as well as their own feelings in child owned situations; and
2) adults will respond with more statements regarding behavioral directions for the child in parent owned situations.

METHOD

Subjects

The protocols of 100 males and 100 females were randomly selected from approximately 400 completed by Michigan State University sophomores and juniors. They had responded to an advertisement in the University newspaper soliciting participants for a two year "sensitivity to children" training program. They were to receive course credit each term if selected to participate.

Procedure

All subjects were given a fifteen minute lecture during which the nature of the project was explained to them as completely as possible without divulging experimental information. They were informed that their selection for the program would be based upon the results of the battery of tests to be administered. Testing took place over four consecutive evenings with different groups.

The Sensitivity to Children Test (STC)

The Sensitivity to Children Test (developed by Stollak) is an open ended test of adult free verbal responses to problem situations involving a parent-child interaction. There are sixteen items each with a different problem. The test is designed to measure how an adult will typically respond, using actual dialogue, to a

child in a wide variety of situations.

The items were divided into those situations that predominantly frustrate parent needs (3, 7, 8), child needs (4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16), both parent and child needs (2, 5, 11).

Items 1, 10, and 13 were eliminated from the study because of the complications in classifying them according to the rules of problem ownership.

The Scoring System[1]

The scoring system consisted of the following 13 categories:

1. Is there a statement of the child feelings?
   "You seem sad", "You look happy."

2. Is there a statement of the adult feelings?
   "I feel sad", "I am happy."

3. Is there a relating of child feelings to adult feelings?
   "When you look upset, I become sad."

4. Is there a relating of child feelings to adult behavior?
   "When you look upset, I try to cheer you up."

5. Is there a relating of child behavior to adult feelings?
   "When you yell, I get angry."

6. Is there a relating of child behavior to adult behavior?
   "When you yell, I tell you to stop."

7. Are directions given to the child to change behavior?
   "You must wash before dinner."

8. Is the child given specific directions regarding present behavior--the way to act in the present?
   "You must stop hitting your sister."

9. Is the child given specific directions regarding future behavior--the way to act in the future?
   "You must never hit your sister."

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[1]Developed cooperatively by Dr. Gary Stollak and the author.

10. Is the child given specific directions regarding present feelings--the way to handle feelings now?
"If you are angry at your sister, tell her so."

11. Is the child given specific directions regarding future feelings--the way to handle feelings in the future?
"Whenever you get angry at your sister, you must tell her so."

12. Is there an attempt to obtain more information regarding child feelings?
"Tell me what's on your mind."

13. Is there an attempt to obtain more information regarding child behavior?
"Tell me what happened."

All categories were dichotomously scored for each item as being present or absent. In other words, category 1 (Is there a statement of the child feelings?), could be scored either yes or no for each item.

The scoring system was designed to specify clearly how adults respond to children in problem situations along three basic dimensions. The first involves being aware of and concerned about the child's feelings (categories 1, 10, 11, 12). This is presumed to relate to the development of the child's feelings of self-esteem and worth. The second group deals with relating the child's feelings and/or behavior to adult's feelings and/or behavior (categories 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). These bear some relationship to the child's development of interpersonal skill and competence (how one person effects another). The third set involves the issue of communicating clear directions to the child regarding his behavior (categories 7, 8, 9, 13). This relates to the child's ability to master his environment through the socialization process (learning what he can do and how he can do it).

Scoring the Data

Four undergraduates were employed as raters to score the test.[2] Training took place in two three hour sessions during which sample protocols were discussed and scored.

Reliability measures were computed on the basis of five additional tests, not included in the statistical sample, scored by all four raters and the author. Scores were generated by comparing the four raters with the author who was considered to be the "expert."

The rationale for this procedure was based on the notion that the reliability of a test is ultimately determined by the ability of its developer to communicate his scoring system to the raters. Thus the objective may be seen as establishing agreement between the raters and the experimenter.

Reliability was thereby calculated by the per cent agreement between all four raters and the author. The scores of each rater were compared with the scores of the author. For example if three of four raters agreed with the author, the per cent agreement would be 75. This was done on each category and STC item for each of the five sample tests.

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[2]The author wishes to express his appreciation to Kathy Barrie, Lew Borman, Deletha Crum, and Eli Karmini for their diligence and accuracy in scoring the protocols, and moreover for their tolerance during the author's more harried moments.

RESULTS

Inter-Rater Reliability

Table 1 indicates the per cent agreement averaged across all items on the STC. Reliability scores for each category ranged from 72% to 95% with an overall mean of 86%. See appendix A for the per cent agreement between the four raters and the author for each category and STC items.

Table 1

Reliability For Each Category Averaged Across Items

Category	Reliability (based on percent of agreement between raters and experimenter)
1. Statement of child feelings	87
2. Statement of adult feelings	91
3. Relating of child feelings to adult feelings	93
4. Relating of child feelings to adult behavior	89
5. Relating of child behavior to adult feelings	95
6. Relating of child behavior to adult behavior	73
7. Directions given to the child to change behavior	72
8. Child given specific directions regarding present behavior	74
9. Child given specific directions regarding future behavior	81

Table 1 (Cont'd.)

Category	Reliability
10. Child given specific directions regarding present feelings	92
11. Child given specific directions regarding future feelings	94
12. Attempt to obtain more information regarding child feelings	90
13. Attempt to obtain more information regarding child behavior	84
Mean %	86

Analysis of Responses by Categories

One objective of the study was to describe how adults respond to children in problem situations along various affective and behavioral dimensions. This aspect of the data analysis is addressed to this issue. More specifically the mean scores and standard deviations for each category summed across all 13 STC items for the total group, males, and females was examined. This summary data is presented in Table 2. See appendix C for the breakdown of this data by category and STC item.

Table 2

Mean scores and standard deviations for each category summed across all STC items for the total group, males, and females.

	Category	Total	Males	Females
Means	1.	1.34	1.14	1.55
Standard deviations		1.77	1.95	1.55
	2.	0.78	0.62	0.93
		1.20	1.18	1.21
	3.	0.19	0.15	0.24
		0.60	0.51	0.68
	4.	0.63	0.67	0.59
		1.17	1.39	0.91
	5.	0.29	0.27	0.31
		0.65	0.58	0.72
	6.	5.44	5.19	5.70
		3.12	3.88	3.34
	7.	5.57	5.08	6.04
		3.11	3.24	2.98
	8.	4.06	4.04	4.07
		3.18	3.12	3.25
	9.	2.00	1.98	2.02
		1.80	1.75	1.85
	10.	0.17	0.17	0.17
		0.49	0.43	0.55
	11.	0.15	0.18	0.11
		0.55	0.70	0.35
	12.	1.93	1.77	2.09
		2.09	2.08	2.09
	13.	2.32	2.50	2.14
		1.91	2.05	1.76

The mean scores on Table 2 indicate the average number of times each category was scored in the entire test by the total group, males separately, and females. The mean scores have a potential range of 0.0 to 13.00 (0.0 to 1.00 for each STC item summed across 13 items).

In examining Table 2 what stands out most significantly are the relatively low mean scores in most of the categories. In only three of 13 categories did the mean scores ever exceed 3.0 (6- relating of child behavior to adult behavior; 7- directions given to child to change behavior; and 8- child given specific directions regarding present behavior). It is interesting to note here that the above categories involve only the behavioral aspects of parent-child communication rather than the affective elements.

In the eight categories involved with awareness and communication of either or both the feelings of the child or adult, the mean score never exceeded 2.0 for all 13 items. Only in categories 1 and 12 was the mean score more than one response for the entire test.

By comparing the mean scores of category 1 (statement of child's feelings) with category 7 (directions given to child to change behavior) one finds a highly significant difference ($t = 11.83$ $p < 0.002$). This is illustrative of the finding that throughout the test adults tended to respond more to the childs behavior than to his feelings. Categories 8 and 10 (child given specific directions regarding present behavior vs. feelings) reflect this difference ($t = 12.16$, $p < 0.002$), as do categories 3 and 6 (relating of child feelings to adult feelings vs. child behavior to adult behavior; $t = 13.38$, $p < 0.002$).

Another result of interest was the finding that adults expressed their own feelings (category 2) far less often than did they recognize the feelings of the child (category 1; $t = 2.62$, $p < 0.02$). Similarly adults tended to relate the child's feelings to their behavior (category 4) more often than relating their own feelings to the child's behavior (category 5; $t = 2.46$, $p < 0.02$). Thus, adults were less communicative of their own feelings in these problem situations than in reflecting those of the child.

Insofar as male-female differences were concerned, there were three categories achieving significance. Females communicated more of their own feelings (category 2), as well as those of the child (category 1) significantly more often than males ($t = 1.83$, $p < 0.1$, and $t = 2.14$, $p < 0.05$, respectively). Furthermore females also directed the child to change to his behavior (category 7) significantly more often than males ($t = 2.14$, $p < 0.05$). In terms of these three affective and behavioral categories females were clearly more communicative.

To summarize, the results from Table 2 indicated, in general: (1) A relative lack of response to the child's feelings; (2) even less expression of adult feelings; (3) almost no communication of any relationship between the child's and adult's feelings; (4) comparatively more adult response in terms of communicating clearly regarding the actual behavior of the child--giving directions to change; and (5) significantly more communication by females than males along three affective and behavioral dimensions.

Analysis of Variance: Sex of Subject X Ownership of Problem

This aspect of the data analysis pertains to the: (1) Male-female differences in each of the 13 response categories; (2) differences in adult (both males and females combined) responsiveness to the STC items when clustered into parent, child, and parent-child equally owned problem situations; and (3) the sex by problem type interaction effects.

A 2 x 3 analysis of variance (Winer, 1972) was performed for each response category. The main effects for sex, type of problem situation, and the interaction of these factors were examined. The Newman-Keuls method (Winer, 1972) was utilized to determine significant inter-group differences (parent vs. child vs. parent-child) within these factors.

Table 3A

Category 1, Statement of Child Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0669	1	0.0668	2.5551	0.106
Type of Situation	0.9851	2	0.4925	18.2707	0.0005
Interaction	0.0812	2	0.0406	1.5070	0.222
Error	16.0216	594	0.0270		

Table 3B

Category 1, Statement of Child Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Males	5.0	5.7	11.6	22.3
Females	5.3	6.7	17.0	29.0
Total	10.3	12.4	28.6	

The results indicate that there was a marginally significant male-female difference for category 1 across all STC items (females > males, $p < 0.106$). However, there was no significant difference in interaction for males vs. females in any of the three types of problem situations (parent, child, or parent-child). There was also a significant differences ($p < 0.0005$) in the way adults (males and females) responded in category 1 in the particular type of problem situation. (Table 3A) The child's feelings were stated significantly more often (Newman-Kuels $p < 0.01$) in child owned problems than in parent-child owned problems (Table 3B).

Table 4A

Category 2, Statement of Adult Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0669	1	0.0667	3.0839	0.076
Type of Situation	0.1733	2	0.0867	3.9880	0.019
Interaction	0.4593	2	0.0230	1.0593	0.347
Error	12.8767	594	0.0217		

Table 4B

Category 2, Statement of Adult Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Males	4.7	6.7	4.0	15.4
Females	4.3	10.3	7.0	21.6
Total	9.0	17.0	11.0	

For category 2, again there was a significant sex difference without any interaction effects (females > males, $p < 0.076$). There

was again a significant difference ($p < 0.019$) in the way adults responded in the type of situation (Table 4A). The Newman-Kuels analysis indicated that adults state more of their own feelings ($p < 0.01$) in parent-child situations than parent or child owned problem situations. (Table 4B).

Table 5A

Category 3, Relating of Child Feelings to Adult Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0063	1	0.0063	1.3301	0.248
Type of Situation	0.0180	2	0.0090	1.8895	0.152
Interaction	0.0074	2	0.0037	0.7817	0.458
Error	2.8370	594	0.0047		

Table 5B

Category 3, Relating of Child Feelings to Adult Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	1.0	1.7	0.7	3.4
Female	0.7	2.7	2.0	5.4
Total	1.7	4.4	2.7	

For category 3, there were no significant sex, situational or interactional effects, insofar as relating the childs feelings to the adult feelings concerned.

Table 6A

Category 4, Relating of Child Feelings to Adult Behavior

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0195	1	0.0195	1.5967	0.204
Type of Situation	0.2542	2	0.1272	10.3610	0.0005
Interaction	0.0264	2	0.0132	1.0792	0.341
Error	7.2884	594	0.0122		

Table 6B

Category 4, Relating of Child Feelings to Adult Behavior

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Item Ownership			
	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	3.0	4.0	6.6	13.6
Female	1.7	1.3	7.1	10.1
Total	4.7	5.3	13.7	

While there were no significant male-female or interaction effects in category 4, there were differences ($p < 0.0005$) in the way adults responded by problem type situation (Table 6A). Adults related the child's feelings to their behavior significantly more often (Newman-Kuels $p < 0.01$) in child owned situations than with parent or parent-child problems (Table 6B).

Table 7A

Category 5, Relating of Child Behavior to Adult Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0002	1	0.0002	0.0326	0.835
Type of Situation	0.0926	2	0.0463	6.2536	0.002
Interaction	0.0361	2	0.0180	2.4426	0.088
Error	4.4031	594	0.0074		

Table 7B

Category 5, Relating of Child Behavior to Adult Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	2.7	3.3	1.4	7.4
Female	0.3	5.0	2.1	7.4
Total	3.0	8.3	3.5	

For category 5, there were no significant sex differences. There was however a level of marginal significance reached ($p < 0.09$) in the way males versus females responded in a particular type of situation. There were also significant differences ($p < 0.002$) in all adult responses to the type of situation (Table 7A). The Newman-Kuels analysis indicated that adults in general relate the childs behavior to their own feelings more often ($p < 0.01$) with parent-child problems than parent or child problems. However the test of simple effects revealed that in parent owned problems males respond more in this manner than females ($p < 0.05$), whereas females tend to respond this way more often in parent-child and child situations (Table 7B).

Table 8A

Category 6, Relating of Child Behavior to Adult Behavior

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.2343	1	0.2343	2.0899	0.145
Type of Situation	1.4732	2	0.7366	6.5701	0.002
Interaction	0.2500	2	0.1250	1.1151	0.329
Error	66.5992	594	0.1121		

Table 8B

Category 6, Relating of Child Behavior to Adult Behavior

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	37.3	50.7	36.9	124.9
Female	46.3	49.7	40.3	136.3
Total	86.6	100.4	77.2	

For category 6, there were no significant sex or interaction effects. There was a significant difference ($p < 0.002$) in adult responses to problem type (Table 8A). The Newman-Kuels test showed that adults relate the child's behavior to their own behavior more often ($p < 0.01$) in parent-child situations than parent or child situations. Females tend to do somewhat more of this than males (Table 8B).

Table 9A

Category 7, Directions Given to Child to Change Behavior

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.8598	1	0.8598	9.8055	0.002
Type of Situation	2.0873	2	1.0436	11.9013	0.0005
Interaction	0.2899	2	0.1449	1.6532	0.192
Error	52.0907	594	0.0876		

Table 9B

Category 7, Directions Given to Child to Change Behavior

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	47.3	43.7	33.7	124.7
Female	50.0	57.0	54.6	161.6
Total	97.3	100.7	88.3	

There was a level of significance reached in category 7 both for male-female differences in all situations ($p < 0.002$), and in adult responses to differing types of situations ($p < 0.0005$). There was no significant interaction effect (Table 9A). Results of the Newman-Kuel analysis indicated that overall adults tend to give directions to the child to change behavior more often ($p < 0.01$) in parent-child problem situations than child or parent situations, and furthermore that responding in this way is more common with child problems than parent problems ($p < 0.05$). Females on the whole tended to do more of this, particularly in parent-child and child situations ($p < 0.01$, Table 9B).

Table 10A

Category 8, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Present Behavior

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0005	1	0.0005	0.0057	0.898
Type of Situation	1.7525	2	0.8762	9.3308	0.0005
Interaction	0.0055	2	0.0027	0.0294	0.971
Error	55.7848	594	0.0939		

Table 10B

Category 8, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Present Behavior

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	38.7	36.0	25.7	100.4
Female	38.0	36.7	26.3	101.0
Total	76.7	72.7	52.0	

For category 8, no main effects for sex or interaction were reported, but type of situation was again a significant factor ($p < 0.0005$, Table 10A). Adults tend to give specific directions regarding present behavior to the child more often in parent and parent-child problem situations than in child problem situations ($p < 0.01$, Table 10B).

Table 11A

Category 9, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Future Behavior

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0009	1	0.0009	0.0252	0.848
Type of Situation	0.5213	2	0.0260	0.6802	0.507
Interaction	0.0071	2	0.0035	0.0936	0.911
Error	27.7618	594	0.0383		

Table 11B

Category 9, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Future Behavior

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	13.3	16.0	15.7	45.0
Female	14.3	15.7	16.1	46.1
Total	27.6	31.7	31.8	

For category 9, there were no significant differences found for sex, situation, or interaction, insofar as the child being given specific directions regarding future behavior is concerned.

Table 12A

Category 10, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Present Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0002	1	0.0002	0.1051	0.742
Type of Situation	0.0447	2	0.0223	9.7343	0.0005
Interaction	0.0012	2	0.0006	0.2777	0.758
Error	1.3659	594	0.0022		

Table 12B

Category 10, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Present Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	13.3	16.0	15.7	45.0
Female	14.3	15.7	16.1	46.1
Total	27.6	31.7	31.8	

There were no significant effects for sex or sex X situation interaction for category 10. A significant situational effects was found ($p < 0.0005$, Table 12A). The Newman-Kuels indicated that adults tend to give the child specific directions regarding present feelings most often in child owned problem situations ($p < 0.01$, Table 12B).

Table 13A

Category 11, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Future Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0010	1	0.0010	0.3899	0.540
Type of Situation	0.0227	2	0.0113	4.0569	0.018
Interaction	0.0082	2	0.0041	1.4665	0.232
Error	1.6639	594	0.0028		

Table 13B

Category 11, Child Given Specific Directions

Regarding Future Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	0.7	0.0	2.3	3.0
Female	0.3	0.7	1.1	2.1
Total	1.0	0.7	3.4	

Once again there were no significant male-female or interaction effects for category 11. A significant difference for type of situation was found ($p < 0.02$, Table 13A). The Newman-Kuels indicated that adults tend to give the child specific directions regarding future feelings more often in child than parent or parent-child situations ($p < 0.01$, Table 13B).

Table 14A

Category 12, Attempt to Obtain More Information Regarding Child Feelings

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0348	1	0.0348	0.8465	0.361
Type of Situation	0.5463	2	0.2731	6.6392	0.001
Interaction	0.0796	2	0.0398	0.9681	0.380
Error	24.4386	594	0.0411		

Table 14B

Category 12, Attempt to Obtain More Information Regarding Child Feelings

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	10.3	15.3	14.3	39.9
Female	9.3	16.3	18.9	44.5
Total	19.6	31.6	33.2	

In category 12 there again were no male-female or interaction effects but there was an effect for type of situation ($p < 0.001$, Table 14A). Adults attempt to obtain more information regarding the child's feelings more often in parent and parent-child situations than child situations ($p < 0.01$, Table 14B).

Table 15A

Category 13, Attempt to Obtain More Information Regarding Child Behavior

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Ratio	p
Sex	0.0873	1	0.0873	1.9792	0.156
Type of Situation	0.1492	2	0.0746	1.6916	0.185
Interaction	0.0103	2	0.0051	0.1172	0.889
Error	76.2045	594	0.0441		

Table 15B

Category 13, Attempt to Obtain More Information Regarding Child Behavior

Mean Frequency Per Item for 100 Subjects

	Parent	Parent-Child	Child	Total
Male	16.3	19.7	20.3	56.3
Female	14.3	18.0	16.7	59.0
Total	30.6	37.7	37.0	

There were no significant sex, situation, or interaction effects found regarding adults attempting to obtain more information regarding the child's behavior (category 13).

Table 16

Summary of Significant or Marginally Significant Results From the Analysis of Variance Tables (p levels)

	Factor		
	Sex	Type of Situation (Parent vs. Child vs. Parent-Child)	Interaction
Category			
1	0.106 (F > M)	0.0005 (C > P & P-C)	-----
2	0.076 (F > M)	0.019 (P-C > P & C)	-----
3	-----	-----	-----
4	-----	0.0005 (C > P & P-C)	-----
5	-----	0.0002 (P-C > P & C)	0.088
6	-----	0.002 (P-C > P & C)	-----
7	0.02 (F > M)	0.0005 (P-C & P > C)	-----
8	-----	0.0005 (P-C & P > C)	-----
9	-----	-----	-----
10	-----	0.0005 (C > P & P-C)	-----
11	-----	0.018 (C > P & P-C)	-----
12	-----	0.001 (C & P-C > P)	-----
13	-----	-----	-----

To summarize, child owned problems were responded to significantly more often with those categories concerned with awareness of, and communication directed toward the child's feelings (1, 4, 10, 11 and 12). Adults responded significantly more often to parent-child owned situations in categories involving adult feelings (2), and relating child behavior to adult feelings and behavior (5 and 6). Giving the child directions to change his behavior (categories 7

and 8) were responded to most often in both parent and parent-child owned problem situations.

Thus the data seem to form a continuum of effective communication from child owned situations, to parent-child and parent owned situations (from more communication of affect to more communication related to behavior).

Females tended to reflect more of the child's feelings (category 1), express more of their own feelings (category 2), as well as directing the child to change his behavior (category 7), more often than males.

DISCUSSION

Dimensions of Affective and Behavioral Communication

One objective of the present study was to provide information as to what adults might do in parent-child problem situations, insofar as communicating clear affective messages and directions for child behavior. Perhaps the most inclusive statement one could make in this regard is that on this test adults respond infrequently on an affective level. More specifically the data indicate that adults demonstrate a relative lack of response regarding statements about the child's feelings and their own feelings. They do tend to give comparatively more messages concerning directions for the child's behavior. Relating the child's feelings to their feelings is almost non-existant, although there is some relating of child behavior to adult behavior.

Throughout an assumption of the study has been that a necessary condition for the maintainence and development of the child's feelings of self worth and esteem, is that acceptance must be communicated to him by the parent. Intention is irrelevant. Communicating acceptance at least in part involves: (1) recognizing and expressing the child's feelings; (2) expressing ones own reactions to the child's feelings and behavior, and relating the two; and (3) sending clear messages to the child as to what is expected of him. The data indicate that the adults in this study were simply not responding

to children in these ways.

The results also lend some support to the cultural expectation of viewing the female as more "feeling" oriented than the male. Females do in fact respond more on some affective categories than males. Furthermore whereas the domain of the mother is seen as primarily with the family's emotional life, the father is presumed to have greater responsibility in determining the actual behavior of the family members. However, the data indicate that females also tend to direct and control the child's behavior significantly more than males. This finding would seem to call into question the status of the father's role in the family insofar as child rearing is concerned.

The data appear to be consistant with the findings of Jackson (1955), in that females respond with a wider range of discipline to children. In combination, the results of both studies suggest that females communicate more with the child both on affective and behavioral levels. It would appear that in terms of expressing feelings as well as in dealing with behavior, females tend to be somewhat more responsive than males. To this extent the cultural sterotype of the father having the final word on family behavior may be somewhat mispercieved.

However the more important issue raised in this study concerns the relative lack of sensitive and effective responses across both sexes. Females in this study may indeed have scored somewhat better than males, but the data seem to clearly suggest that neither sex does very well. Why we do not respond to children, and to each other in the most sensitive and effective manner available to us

is a question the importance of which one can only understate. Within the context of this study, suffice it to say that there is indeed far to go for all.

Relationship of Need Frustration and Problem Ownership to Effective Communication

The other goal of the present study was directed toward clarifying the relationship between need frustration (i.e., parent vs. child vs. both), and the ability of adults to respond sensitively and effectively to the child in various problem situations. Gordon (1970) has argued that 99% of all parents communicate ineffectively with their children, especially when the child's behavior is somehow interfering with the parents satisying their own needs. Thus we would assume that a parent is most able to deal effectively with the child's needs when his own are not being frustrated.

The results indicated considerable support for this contention. Adults were found to respond significantly more often to the child's feelings in child owned problem situations (i.e., theoretically, situations where the parents needs were not frustrated--the problem rested primarily with the child's needs being unsatisfied). In situations where the parent's needs were the ones being frustrated, and those where both the parent and child needs were unsatisfied, adults responded with significantly more direction to the child to change his behavior.

The data form a continuum of effective communication ranging from most effective in child owned problems situations (in which more affect was communicated) to parent-child and parent owned situations (where communication was directed more toward behavior).

If we assume it is more sensitive and effective to respond to a child's feelings before dealing with his behavior, then the findings may be viewed as support for Gordon's assertions. It would seem that the more the adult's needs are being frustrated in a parent-child problem situation, the less he will be able to respond to the child in a positive fashion. Thus the data point toward the existence of a need dimension in adults that is directly related to their ability to respond to the child in a sensitive and effective way.

Before positing an interpretation of this need dimension, I would like to clarify a question the data seem to be raising regarding the differential effects of the factors interacting with this need dimension. Specifically we do not know the effects of (1) the individual needs and dynamics of the adult; (2) the individual needs and dynamics of the child; (3) the nature of the problem (i.e., a sexual issue vs. one involving bedtime hours), and (4) the demand characteristics of the situation (i.e., a problem occuring at home vs. one in the supermarket).

Insofar as the first factor is concerned the data do provide some basis for interpretation. We will assume that there exists some adult need to be a "good parent," which to a varying degree effects one feelings of adequacy and self worth. Between this internal need and the external problem situation let us place some mediating variable of self differentiation. In other words, the degree to which one is able to separate his own feelings and behavior from those of the child (i.e., a child may be masturbating and enjoying it simply because he wants to; this may have nothing to do with

the adults perception of this behavior, (which may range from seeing it as a satisfaction of the child's needs or a threat to the adult's needs).

We may now hypothesize that:

The greater the adult's needs for adequacy are tied to being a good parent,

the less he will be able to differentiate his own feelings from those of the child,

the more easily threatened and frustrated he will become by the child's feelings and behavior,

the less his ability will be to respond to the child in a sensitive and effective way.

A corollary to this follows that the closer a child's feelings and behavior come to frustrating or threatening the adult's needs (feelings of adequacy hooked up with being a good parent), the less the adult will be able to respond sensitively and effectively.

Let us now extend the notion of self differentiation to the issue of parental responsibility. If an adult thinks the child is acting in some way that he would rather change, and if he perceives that he is to a varying degree responsible for this behavior, he may then feel frustrated as a result of his need to be a good parent and an adequate human being. Certainly there is an infinite complex of feelings capable of being elicited from the individual dynamics of the adult and child that may result in any given adult experiencing a child's behavior as unsatisfying. However, his incapacity to act toward the child effectively would seem at least in part a function of his inability to differentiate his own feelings from those of the child, and there-

by experiencing a disproportionate degree of responsibility (with its concommitant frustration), for the child's behavior. He may then either actively try to change the child's behavior, or withdraw from the interaction altogether. (Gordon 1970, Becker 1964). In either case neither his own feelings nor those of the child are attended to, a situation that can only result in lessening degrees of satisfying communication and mutual acceptance.

Direction of Effect

While the data provide no real evidence to deal with the issue of direction of effect, they do provide a starting point from which one may make some speculations. The importance of this issue cannot be overstated since it is here that we may see the implications of reciprocal parent-child influences most clearly. If we start at the point where a parent has ineffectively responded to a child's behavior, how then does this effect the child. We may assume that on some level the child will react affectively to the parent's behavior (it will make him feel one way or another). Herein we witness one link is a reciprocal chain of frustrating communications. For example on STC item 9, in which the child is found masturbating, the parent angrily tells the child to stop. The child may then respond with some kind of self defense, or passive acceptance, which may in turn result in more anger from the parent with the former response, or in the latter case with some guilt.

In either response pattern the child perceives that his behavior has had some negative effect on the parent. Because the child does not want to continually incur the wrath of his parents, he will take

an inappropriate degree of responsibility by attempting to make certain this does not happen again. But in the process he may deny his own feelings, or experience shame which will in turn effect future interactions in that his capacity for self differentiation will be impaired. Thus, it is as always a two way street.

To the extent that reciprocal parent-child influences are always operating, we may wish to qualify the notion of parent, child, and parent-child owned problems. In retrospect that this is a somewhat misleading system of classification becomes evident when we consider that any interaction between parent and child or, for that matter anyone with anyone, could be seen to involve the needs of both. That the data point toward the existance of some dimension of need frustration and satisfaction effecting the ability of adults to repond sensitively to children in various problem situations is clear (the greater the parental satisfaction, the greater the effectiveness of communication).

However, it may be that the interaction of child and parent needs in any given situation may be the more prepotent variable in determining what is communicated. Furthermore it would appear that measuring the reciprocal effects of parent-child communication may more accurately reflect the interdependency of parent-child needs. The data herein suggest more of a set to respond perhaps more indicative of attitude than behavior. In this regard studies aimed at dealing with process type variables would appear to be in order.

Methodological Issues

The STC items were designed to simulate real life problem

situations. They were not designed to measure the relative effects of individual needs and dynamics, the nature of the problem, or situation. In this regard directions for future research evolve out of the unresolved questions concerning the differential effects of: (1) the individual dynamics both parent and child bring to the situation; (2) the nature of the problem (the type of issue involved) and (3) the demand characteristics of the situation, (where and in whose presence it occurs) in contributing to mutually responsive communication between parent and child.

Neither were the STC items created specifically according to the rules of problem ownership (Gordon, 1970). Furthermore they were divided ultimately on the basis of subjective judgements on the part of the author. In spite of these influences the data did lend support to the notion that parents will be more sensitive and effective in communicating with the child when their own needs are being satisfied.

The scoring system itself represents a complex methodological problem. An important objective of the scoring system was to delineate clearly specific affective and behavioral dimensions. However, while attempting to achieve clarity of response classification there was a sacrifice in ability to integrate the categories into meaningful factors. Thirteen independent variables proved to be somewhat cumbersome both in data analysis and interpretation. For the future it would seem more productive to design a system that may more efficently lend itself to clustering of related variables into factor groupings and composite scores for more parsimonious analysis.

Furthermore it would appear useful to create an "acceptance continuum" whereby one could rank order the categories. This would permit even more refinement in data analysis, and generate more substantial interpretation.

Another modification might utilize all equally weighted "effective" response categories in which a total effectiveness score for all categories could be tabulated. This could be used in more comprehensively comparing situational (item differences), since one would be able to generate a category summary score.

The limitations of using written reports from only one half of the parent-child interaction in obtaining information on process aspects of communication, and direction of effect are obvious. Future research concerning the clarity of affective and behavioral communication between parent and child must for maximal data input, focus on the interaction process utilizing observational techniques enhanced by videotape recording. However whereas an important aspect of the present study concerned the use of real life problem situations, so observational methodology must move toward either: (1) simulating real life problems in the laboratory by creating a problem between the parent and child while in the playroom (such as Rowland, 1968); or (2) "move" into the home or school perhaps with the use of videotape equipment recording <u>everything</u> in the course of a day (Shefflin, 1970).

The sample employed was chosen from the student body of a state University. The students had volunteered to participate in a sensitivity to children training project. Thus the biases of social class, educational achievement, and most importantly a positive set toward

children must be taken into account. One would anticipate that these factors would tend to increase their responsiveness along the categories in the study. Thus at the very least we may assume that the rest of the population is no more responsive.

Also open to question is the correlation between what people say they would do on written responses to real life problems and what in fact they actually do in real life (Mannino et al., 1961). If anything one could reasonably expect real life stress to further diminish effective response. It seems safe to conclude that real life sensitivity to children would be no more effective than with pencil and paper.

CONCLUSION

Two major themes may be emphasized in the present study. In general college students infrequently communicate affect clearly to the child (either the child's or their own) in parent-child problem situations, and when they do, it is significantly effected by the extent to which their needs are being frustrated. Thus the data, while defining some what more clearly what the state of affairs is insofar as the issue of affective communication between parent and child is concerned, underscores the need for parent education courses to teach skills in this area.

Information obtained concerning the relationship between need frustration and ability to respond effectively may be utilized in designing aspects of parent education programs to deal directly with issues arising out of the parents difficulties in coping with their own feelings, and the role the child plays in the process. Future research efforts that seem relevant in this vein might involve more clearly delineating the communication patterns between parent and child that produce mutual frustration. Particular emphasis could be placed on identifying common points of negative affective escalation or unresponsiveness. Similarly research on process variables in affective communication seems indicated. How a parent talks to a child may be recorded at the various points in a parent effectiveness program and fed back to him over time for training purposes. This may also be used as data to measure the differential effects of such variables as voice intonation, facial expression,

and physical distance on the unfolding of the interaction.

The overriding objectives of such research must be directed toward providing information useful to parent education. There is perhaps no other domain where the efforts of science and the needs of society come together more profoundly than in the relationship of parent and child. Enough said, for the real issue is, as always, before us.

But what may we say of real importance? Much is known about what needs to be done to help a child grow up to like himself, like other people and whatever else one chooses to say about mental health. The point is then that we must learn how to teach what we know.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Advertisement for Subjects

If you are interested in helping young children with emotional problems and/or learning about and practicing techniques which could help you become a more effective parent, teacher or child care worker, and are willing to invest 3-4 hours a week during the Fall, Winter and Spring quarters in an intensive practicum experience, please come to Room 111 Olds Hall today at 7 P.M. or 9 P.M.

Those selected to participate will be able to recieve course credit during the Winter and Spring quarters.

APPENDIX B

Reliability for Each Category and STC Item

Category	STC Item												
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	12	14	15	16
1	80	85	70	95	80	100	100	85	95	70	95	75	100
2	80	85	90	95	100	100	100	85	100	90	90	75	95
3	75	90	95	100	80	90	100	100	100	80	100	95	100
4	75	90	85	90	85	90	95	95	90	95	90	80	95
5	85	90	90	85	100	100	100	95	05	100	100	90	100
6	70	70	65	65	65	70	80	85	70	80	55	80	90
7	70	95	60	75	65	70	75	80	55	65	60	75	90
8	50	60	60	85	90	45	90	90	85	65	60	100	85
9	100	60	95	65	70	85	85	75	100	85	90	70	70
10	100	100	85	80	80	95	95	100	100	90	90	90	85
11	100	95	100	95	75	100	95	95	85	95	90	100	85
12	100	95	50	75	85	95	95	95	95	95	100	95	95
13	80	65	55	80	85	100	90	90	95	100	95	95	90

APPENDIX C

Response means and standard deviations for the total group, males, and females for each category and STC item.

Appendix C is a matrix consisting of the mean scores and standard deviations for the 13 categories and 13 STC items. The mean score represents the average number each category was scored in each STC item by the total group, males separately, and females. The mean scores have a potential range of 0.0 to 1.00.

STC ITEM

	Category	Item 2			Item 3		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.105	.090	.120	.050	.040	.060
St. Dev.		.307	.287	.327	.218	.197	.239
	2	.090	.060	.120	.040	.050	.030
		.287	.239	.327	.196	.219	.171
	3	.045	.040	.050	.005	.000	.010
		.208	.197	.214	.071	.000	.100
	4	.040	.060	.020	.030	.020	.040
		.197	.239	.141	.171	.140	.197
	5	.010	.010	.010	.010	.020	.000
		.100	.100	.100	.100	.141	.000
	6	.500	.490	.510	.440	.420	.460
		.501	.502	.520	.497	.496	.501
	7	.450	.350	.550	.705	.680	.730
		.499	.479	.500	.457	.469	.446
	8	.350	.350	.350	.485	.470	.490
		.478	.479	.479	.501	.502	.502
	9	.040	.030	.050	.090	.090	.090
		.179	.171	.215	.287	.288	.288
	10	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	11	.005	.000	.010	.005	.010	.000
		.071	.000	.100	.071	.100	.000
	12	.185	.190	.180	.115	.140	.090
		.389	.394	.386	.320	.345	.287
	13	.150	.160	.140	.135	.150	.120
		.353	.368	.348	.343	.359	.326

STC ITEM (Cont'd.)

	Category	Item 4			Item 5		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.255	.200	.310	.035	.030	.030
St. Dev.		.437	.402	.469	.184	.184	.171
	2	.030	.030	.040	.100	.090	.110
		.184	.171	.197	.301	.287	.314
	3	.020	.010	.030	.005	.000	.010
		.140	.100	.171	.071	.000	.100
	4	.155	.180	.130	.020	.030	.010
		.323	.386	.332	.140	.171	.100
	5	.005	.010	.000	.065	.050	.080
		.071	.100	.000	.247	.219	.273
	6	.490	.430	.550	.455	.480	.430
		.501	.498	.500	.495	.502	.498
	7	.265	.220	.310	.565	.500	.630
		.442	.416	.465	.497	.503	.485
	8	.245	.210	.270	.345	.360	.330
		.431	.409	.446	.479	.485	.473
	9	.025	.010	.040	.320	.330	.310
		.157	.100	.197	.568	.473	.465
	10	.020	.030	.010	.005	.010	.000
		.140	.171	.100	.071	.100	.000
	11	.010	.010	.010	.000	.000	.000
		.100	.100	.100	.000	.000	.000
	12	.445	.370	.520	.260	.240	.280
		.498	.485	.502	.440	.429	.409
	13	.460	.530	.390	.395	.400	.390
		.499	.501	.490	.489	.462	.490

STC ITEM (Cont'd.)

Category		Item 6			Item 7		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.150	.130	.170	.020	.020	.020
St. Dev.		.358	.337	.378	.140	.141	.141
	2	.080	.060	.100	.010	.010	.010
		.272	.238	.301	.100	.100	.100
	3	.025	.010	.040	.000	.000	.000
		.159	.100	.197	.000	.000	.000
	4	.055	.060	.050	.010	.020	.000
		.229	.239	.219	.100	.141	.000
	5	.045	.020	.070	.005	.010	.000
		.208	.141	.256	.071	.100	.000
	6	.525	.540	.510	.520	.490	.550
		.501	.501	.502	.501	.502	.500
	7	.685	.600	.780	.570	.600	.540
		.466	.492	.416	.496	.492	.500
	8	.525	.520	.540	.545	.570	.520
		.501	.502	.501	.495	.498	.502
	9	.270	.250	.290	.105	.100	.110
		.445	.435	.456	.307	.302	.314
	10	.040	.050	.030	.005	.010	.000
		.197	.219	.171	.071	.100	.000
	11	.045	.050	.040	.000	.000	.000
		.208	.219	.197	.000	.000	.000
	12	.205	.160	.250	.030	.030	.030
		.405	.368	.435	.171	.171	.171
	13	.395	.380	.410	.045	.060	.030
		.485	.477	.494	.208	.239	.171

STC ITEM (Cont'd.)

Category		Item 8			Item 9		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.085	.090	.080	.135	.100	.170
St. Dev.		.280	.288	.277	.343	.302	.378
	2	.085	.080	.090	.045	.030	.060
		.280	.273	.288	.208	.171	.239
	3	.020	.030	.010	.005	.010	.000
		.140	.171	.120	.071	.100	.000
	4	.030	.050	.010	.065	.050	.080
		.171	.219	.100	.247	.219	.273
	5	.025	.040	.010	.005	.010	.000
		.157	.197	.100	.071	.100	.000
	6	.295	.210	.380	.340	.350	.330
		.457	.409	.488	.425	.479	.473
	7	.185	.140	.230	.260	.260	.260
		.389	.349	.423	.440	.440	.440
	8	.125	.120	.130	.180	.220	.140
		.332	.327	.338	.385	.416	.349
	9	.220	.210	.230	.090	.090	.090
		.415	.409	.423	.287	.288	.287
	10	.010	.010	.010	.025	.040	.010
		.100	.100	.100	.149	.197	.100
	11	.010	.010	.010	.005	.010	.000
		.100	.100	.100	.071	.100	.000
	12	.150	.140	.160	.095	.070	.120
		.358	.349	.368	.294	.256	.327
	13	.275	.280	.280	.085	.080	.090
		.448	.451	.451	.280	.273	.288

STC ITEM (Cont'd.)

Category		Item 11			Item 12		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.050	.050	.050	.115	.070	.160
St. Dev.		.218	.219	.219	.320	.256	.368
	2	.065	.050	.080	.060	.050	.070
		.247	.219	.273	.238	.219	.256
	3	.015	.010	.020	.010	.000	.020
		.122	.100	.141	.100	.000	.141
	4	.020	.030	.010	.060	.030	.090
		.140	.171	.100	.238	.171	.288
	5	.045	.030	.060	.025	.030	.020
		.208	.167	.235	.157	.171	.141
	6	.550	.550	.550	.485	.450	.520
		.499	.500	.500	.501	.500	.502
	7	.490	.460	.510	.490	.490	.490
		.501	.501	.501	.501	.502	.502
	8	.390	.360	.420	.325	.340	.330
		.489	.482	.456	.470	.475	.465
	9	.110	.120	.100	.180	.190	.170
		.314	.327	.301	.385	.394	.378
	10	.000	.000	.000	.005	.000	.010
		.000	.000	.000	.071	.000	.100
	11	.005	.000	.010	.040	.080	.000
		.071	.000	.100	.435	.614	.000
	12	.030	.030	.030	.055	.070	.040
		.171	.171	.171	.229	.286	.197
	13	.020	.030	.010	.010	.010	.010
		.140	.171	.100	.100	.100	.100

STC ITEM (Cont'd.)

Category		Item 14			Item 15		
		Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.070	.080	.060	.210	.150	.270
St. Dev.		.256	.272	.239	.408	.359	.446
	2	.105	.090	.120	.030	.000	.060
		.352	.376	.327	.171	.000	.238
	3	.015	.020	.010	.015	.000	.030
		.122	.141	.100	.122	.000	.171
	4	.045	.050	.040	.075	.050	.100
		.208	.215	.197	.264	.219	.302
	5	.040	.030	.050	.005	.010	.000
		.197	.171	.219	.071	.100	.000
	6	.390	.420	.360	.310	.240	.360
		.489	.496	.482	.464	.429	.477
	7	.435	.360	.510	.350	.330	.370
		.497	.482	.502	.498	.473	.485
	8	.295	.230	.350	.155	.160	.150
		.459	.423	.479	.363	.368	.359
	9	.175	.140	.210	.090	.090	.090
		.381	.349	.409	.287	.288	.287
	10	.020	.010	.030	.020	.010	.030
		.140	.100	.171	.140	.100	.171
	11	.005	.000	.010	.050	.000	.010
		.011	.000	.100	.071	.000	.100
	12	.065	.080	.050	.100	.110	.090
		.247	.272	.219	.301	.314	.288
	13	.145	.230	.070	.035	.020	.050
		.353	.423	.256	.184	.141	.215

STC ITEM (Cont'd.)

Category		Item 16		
		Total	Males	Females
Mean	1	.065	.080	.050
St. Dev.		.247	.273	.219
	2	.030	.020	.040
		.171	.141	.187
	3	.005	.000	.010
		.071	.000	.100
	4	.025	.040	.010
		.157	.197	.100
	5	.005	.000	.010
		.071	.000	.100
	6	.145	.120	.170
		.313	.327	.378
	7	.105	.100	.110
		.307	.302	.314
	8	.095	.120	.070
		.294	.327	.256
	9	.285	.330	.240
		.453	.473	.429
	10	.020	.000	.040
		.708	.000	.196
	11	.010	.010	.010
		.100	.100	.100
	12	.195	.140	.250
		.397	.349	.435
	13	.160	.170	.150
		.368	.318	.349

APPENDIX D

Two completed STC's -- one with relatively ineffective responses, the other with comparably effective responses.

STC

NAME:_____AGE:_____ SEX (M or F):_____

Telephone No.:_____DATE:_____

Instructions

A series of situations will be found on the following pages. You are to pretend or imagine you are the parent (mother or father) of the child described. All the children in the following situations are to be considered between four and six years old.

Your task is to write down exactly how you would respond to the child in each of the situations, in a word, sentence or short paragraph. Write down your exact words and/or actions, but please do not explain why you said or did what you described. Again, write down your exact words or actions as if you were writing a script for a play or movie (e.g., do not write "I would reassure or comfort him," instead, for example, write "I would smile at him and in a quiet voice say, 'Don't worry, Billy, Daddy and I love you.'").

If you have children, their names and ages:

Name Age

2. YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND (WIFE) ARE GOING OUT FOR THE EVENING. AS YOU ARE LEAVING YOU BOTH SAY "GOOD NIGHT" TO YOUR SON, FRANK. HE BEGINS TO CRY AND PLEADS WITH YOU BOTH NOT TO GO OUT AND LEAVE HIM ALONE EVEN THOUGH HE DOESN'T APPEAR SICK AND THE BABYSITTER IS ONE HE HAS PREVIOUSLY GOTTEN ALONG WELL WITH.

Inef.

I would take him in my arms, kiss him and convincingly say, "Frank, your a big boy now, and you have to help Jean take care of the baby."

Ef.

"Frank, your father and I have been planning to go out all day and you and Joanie have a happy evening planned here at home. I know you feel that you may be missing out on something you would enjoy. I'll phone later in the evening to check on how things are going here. Joanie knows where to call us if she needs to. Joanie will put you to bed and we'll be home after that. I would give him a hug and kiss and say 'Goodnight', Frank. I hope you and Joanie have a pleasant evening."

3. AFTER HEARING A GREAT DEAL OF GIGGLING COMING FROM YOUR DAUGHTER LISA'S BEDROOM, YOU GO THERE AND FIND HER AND HER FRIENDS MARY AND TOM UNDER A BLANKET IN HER ROOM WITH THEIR CLOTHES OFF. IT APPEARS THAT THEY WERE TOUCHING EACH OTHER'S SEXUAL PARTS BEFORE YOU ARRIVED.

Inef.

I would walk in and could not hide my shock by saying, (yelling) "Lisa, you are not supposed to do that, now all of you put your clothes on, then come out here and we'll talk about why."

Ef.

"I see you all decided to take your clothes off. It's often more confortable to be without clothes and I know you must be curious to learn how other's bodies are different from your own. Lisa, you know in our home we feel nudity is quite natural and enjoyable. Some people have different feelings about this so I think it would be good if we talk to Tom and Mary's parents to learn what their feelings are."

4. YOUR DAUGHTER BARBARA HAS JUST COME HOME FROM SCHOOL; SILENT, SADFACED, AND DRAGGING HER FEET. YOU CAN TELL BY HER MANNER THAT SOMETHING UNPLEASANT HAS HAPPENED TO HER.

Inef.

I would get out some cookies, bring them to her room, table (whatever) and say cheerfully, "What did you learn in school today, Barbara?"

Ef.

I would give her a hug and kiss and say, "You look as though you are unhappy about something. I would like to know what is bothering you. Let's sit down here while you tell me and then we can talk about whatever it is."

5. YOU WALK INTO YOUR BEDROOM AND FIND YOUR SON BERNIE PUTTING YOUR WALLET (POCKETBOOK) DOWN WITH A $10.00 BILL IN HIS HAND. IT IS CLEAR FROM HIS ACTIONS (LOOKING SHOCKED AT YOUR ARRIVAL, PUTTING HIS HAND WITH THE MONEY BEHIND HIS BACK) THAT YOU HAVE CAUGHT HIM STEALING.

Inef.

I would walk in and ask him, "Bernie why take Daddy's money when you know all you have to do is ask for it, but why do you need so much?"

Ef.

"Bernie, I see that you have taken $10.00 from my purse. You probably feel that it is exciting to have money and that you could get something you want with the money. $10.00 is a fairly large amount of money--even for an adult, and very necessary for buying the things our family needs. Money is a very serious matter. If you have questions about how our family uses the money we have we will answer you. We will discuss anything you feel you need money for, but it is not something you may take without asking. I want you to put the $10.00 back into my purse. If this happens again I shall have to take one of your priviledges away--such as locking up your bike for a week."

6. AFTER HEARING SOME SCREAMING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, YOU GO THERE AND FIND YOUR DAUGHTER SUSAN HITTING HER TWO YEAR OLD BABY SISTER.

Inef.

I would walk in, pick up the baby and Susan and calmly ask her "Susan, why did you hit the baby, you know she's smaller than you and will get hurt."

Ef.

Going to Susan and putting hands on her shoulders to move her away from the baby, saying, "Susan, I see that you have been hitting your sister. You must be feeling quite upset and angry to feel like hitting. I know that something must have caused you to be upset. Two year olds do not always know how to be fair and can often be very irritating when they want their own way. The next time you have a problem with her and you feel very angry, please call me to help solve things. I do not approve of your hitting her."

7. IT IS 8:00 P.M., AND THAT IS THE TIME YOU AND YOUR SON GARY HAVE PREVIOUSLY AGREED IS HIS BEDTIME FOR THAT EVENING. BUT HE WANTS TO STAY UP AND PLAY.

Inef.

"I would sit him down and ask him, Gary, you know how much you like school, don't you? Well, you also know how hard it is to get up in the morning when you go to bed at eight. So, if you don't want to miss school you better go to bed now."

Ef.

"Gary, we have decided together that 8:00 is a reasonable time for you to go to sleep tonight so that you may get enough rest. You feel now that you aren't as tired and want to continue playing. I think that since you and I did make an agreement earlier and since you do need to go to bed now in order to get enough rest for tomorrow that we will have to enforce the 8:00 bedtime."

8. WHEN EMPTYING THE GARBAGE CAN, YOU FIND AT ITS BOTTOM THE BROKEN REMAINS OF A TOY YOU HAD GIVEN YOUR SON DAVID TWO WEEKS AGO. IT IS CLEAR THAT HE DIDN'T WANT YOU TO FIND OUT ABOUT ITS BEING BROKEN.

Inef.

I would leave it unmentioned.

Ef.

"David, I find that your new toy is broken and that you have thrown it away without telling me. You must feel bad that it is broken and you felt afraid or embarrassed to tell me about it. I would like to know how the toy got broken--whether someone treated it too roughly, or if it was an accident. When something is broken, and attempt should be made to repair it before throwing it away. We'll take these pieces and see if we can fix it. I would like you to tell me now how this happened."

9. BEFORE GOING TO BED AT 10:00 P.M., YOU GO INTO YOUR SON BERT'S BEDROOM TO SEE IF HE HAS THE BLANKET OVER HIM AND TO TUCK HIM IN, IF NECESSARY. YOU FIND HIM AWAKE AND MASTURBATING. HE SEES YOU LOOKING AT HIM AND AS YOU APPROACH HIM HE STOPS AND PULLS THE BLANKET UP TO HIS CHIN.

Inef.

I would ask him "Why are you doing that," and then try to explain to him that it is normal, but not accepted which will probably do no good at all.

Ef.

"Bert, I'm surprised you're still awake. You must have been thinking about something to stay awake for so long. Sometimes it feels good just to relax and enjoy the ways your body feels. I just came in to make sure you were covered so that you wouldn't get chilly. I'm ready to go to bed now too. If you have feelings or thoughts that you want to discuss before going to sleep sometimes, we can always take time for that." Giving him a hug and kiss, say, "Goodnight Bert."

11. YOU HAVE COMPLETED SHOPPING IN A LOCAL SUPER MARKET, AND AS YOU ARE CHECKING OUT YOUR SON LEE SAYS HE WANTS A CANDY BAR. IT IS CLOSE TO DINNER TIME, SO YOU SAY "NO" TO HIS REQUEST. HE THEN LIES DOWN AND BEGINS SCREAMING AND KICKING AT YOU.

Inef.

I would immediately pick him up and "give in" by making a deal by saying, "Lee, you can have the candy, but you must eat it only after dinner, maybe with dessert."

Ef.

(Assuming he is screaming so that conversation is impossible.) "I would pick him up in whatever way possible--that is trying to avoid being kicked in the head or anywhere else, carry him to the car and deposit him the back seat. When he is quieter I would say, "I said no to your request for candy. You perhaps thought that if you made a scene in the store that I would give in to quiet you down. My reason for saying no was that you have not had your dinner yet and candy would make you feel as though you don't need a good meal. Once I have made such a decision and given you an answer that kind of behavior with the screaming and kicking will not make me change my mind. If you are angry you certainly may tell me so and we will discuss your feelings. Please do not try that kind of behavior again or we will have to decide on an appropriate punishment."

12. YOU ARE HELPING YOUR DAUGHTER RUTH WITH AN ARITHMETIC PROBLEM AND SHE SEEMS TO BE HAVING DIFFICULTY. SHE SUDDENLY EXCLAIMS: "I AM SO STUPID! I NEVER KNOW THE ANSWERS TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS THE TEACHER ASKS ME. I DON'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL ANYMORE."

Inef.

I would close the book and ask her "Now, Ruth, why are you going to school, but to learn? Believe it or not, I didn't know the answers either, when I was your age."

Ef.

"This problem seems difficult for you to solve, when you keep working with something that is difficult to understand it is easy to feel frustrated and that you don't want to think about it. You have already learned many things quite well. Nobody expects you to know all of the answers. I'm sure that soon enough you will be able to do this arithmetic easily. Lets put the arithmetic away for now. Tomorrow when we're more relaxed we can do some reviewing that will help us think more clearly about this difficult problem."

13. YOUR SPOUSE HAS JUST PUNISHED YOUR DAUGHTER LILLIAN FOR SOME RULE INFRACTION. LILLIAN BECOMES HYSTERICAL AND RUNS TO YOU CRYING.

Inef.

I would not spoil her, but say "Lillian you know you were wrong and Daddy only did what he warned you he would do."

Ef.

"Lillian, let's please sit down here and you calm down so we can talk. Your father punished you because you did something that you know you aren't supposed to do. You are upset that your father punished you. You may feel that you have been treated unfairly and we can talk about that if you do. Your father and I agree on the rules we have in our family so you know that if you broke a rule and were punished that I will not sympathize."

14. YOUR SON ALBERT HAS COME HOME FROM SCHOOL FULL OF ANGER. HIS CLASS HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO GO TO THE ZOO FOR WEEKS AND HE WAS VERY EAGER TO GO. HOWEVER, IT RAINED TODAY AND THE TRIP HAD TO BE RESCHEDULED. HE ANGRILY EXCLAIMS: "I HATE THAT SCHOOL. JUST BECAUSE IT RAINED WE COULDN'T GO."

Inef.

I would sit down with him and say, "Al, when it's raining, the monkeys and tigers all have to be inside their cages, so if you did go, you would't be able to see anything."

Ef.

I agree with you that it is very disappointing to have plans that you have been making for a long time are cancelled or changed. You feel upset that you have to wait longer to do something that you want to do very badly. You must understand even though you are disappointed that the trip would not have been enjoyable in the rain. I know waiting is hard, but you will probably be able to go in just a few days."

16. UPON RETURNING HOME FROM SCHOOL YOUR SON JOE EXCITEDLY TELLS YOU ABOUT HOW HIS FRIEND MARK WAS PUSHED INTO A RAINFILLED PUDDLE BY SOME OLDER BOYS. JOE SAYS THAT THEY WERE JUST WALKING HOME FROM SCHOOL WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN THREE SIXTH GRADERS RAN UP FROM BEHIND AND SHOVED MARK INTO THE PUDDLE AND RAN AWAY LAUGHING.

Inef.

I would tell him, "Joe, you realize how bad this was and those sixth graders should be punished, but now you also know when you're a sixth grader--you don't push first graders around."

Ef.

(Assuming that excited does not mean upset or afraid.)
"You seem quite excited by what happened. You may have felt that it was funny or exciting to see Mark get all wet. Mark most likely feels somewhat upset at being pushed around by older boys. I don't think that it is fair for older boys to take advantage of children your size. If such a thing should happen again perhaps we should have a talk with the teacher."