

The Explosive Child: A new Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children
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- ◆ Behaviorally challenging kids lack skills to not be challenging. They are lacking skills pertaining to flexibility, adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem solving. Not always skills easily identifiable.
- ◆ Kids are inherently motivated to do well- they do not seek to be challenging. The behavior should be viewed as a developmental delay instead of as a choice or a discipline issue.
 - ◆ *This was a big takeaway from this book from me and it is just a different way of looking at an issue I am currently struggling with. It helps with patience to have your inner dialog be that this is a developmental delay. I have always thought of it as a child lacking skills but the different wording of this really was helpful at least to me.*
- ◆ Rewards/punishment won't work because it won't address delay or teach the skills necessary.
- ◆ The first step in process is to identify lagging skills and unsolved problems.
 - ◆ *There is a chapter with guidelines on how to identify lagging skills. This was somewhat helpful as there are comprehensive lists of difficulties and skills. You can literally go down list and choose the ones you observe in your child. It also has discussion of the problems that arise that precipitate the events. It was helpful as an exercise to go thru the list and write down what I observed.*
- ◆ Three plans are highlighted. Plan A- is parents choose solution. Authoritative parenting. Plan B is problem solving

collaboratively- much like positive discipline. Plan C sets aside problems until later.

- ◆ Plan B- Three steps are outlined. One is the empathy step. This phase is to gather information about how child feels- the concerns that the unsolved problem presents. The second step is Defining the Problem. This is where you communicate your concerns about the same problem. The third step is you and child brainstorm possible solutions until you find one to try that is realistic and mutually satisfying to both parties. Basic problem solving model in place here- brainstorm ideas, try and retry until solved.
 - ◆ There are loads of specific scripted conversations to read and practice on how to use the techniques being suggested in real life situations. This is helpful for those who struggle with the nuts and bolts of how to carry out a new way of thinking about problem solving with children.
- ◆ Notes: It is important to not slide into plan A habits of offering up your own solutions or half solutions without letting child offer up solutions. It is crucial to carefully clarify the concerns and use things like reflective listening, asking questions, and listening to the perspective of the child.
- ◆ The rest of the book outlines common stumbling blocks like what if child can't find the words and can you still set hard limits.
- ◆ There is a chapter on familial relationships within families where challenging behavior is present. It gives examples of using same problem solving plan B to settle sibling rivalry issues. And also addresses strain on marriages and other relationships.
- ◆ Also chapter on schools and how they deal with challenging behavior and also why it may be different for kids at school.

There are lots of examples in the book, loads of stories and dialog that play out successful and not so successful uses of strategies. This is not MY personal favorite- I would rather have

info and then try it myself. But if you are the kind of person that learns from watching or reading role plays or from reading case studies, this book does a good job with that.

In general this book was nothing earth shattering. It is basic information that I have heard from many other sources BUT it is told in a different way with a little different perspective. For that reason, I felt that it was good to read if not to really study. I am struggling right now with an explosive child and even just the different ways of looking at the behaviors was helpful, even if the actual information was mostly things I already had been taught.

I do think one advantage to this book is that it is speaking to parents. There are lots of case studies and empathy for parents who feel frustrated by this behavior. It would be good to suggest to parents.