

Ep #11 What is the Teaching-Family Model?

In this episode, I want to talk about the Teaching-Family Model. It's the model we use on smarter parenting to help teach behavioral skills. I want to talk about its history, where it comes from, and I also want to give you insight into what makes it so successful. This is episode 11.

Smarter Parenting welcomes you to our podcast series, The Parenting Coach for ADHD. Here to heal and elevate lives is your parenting coach, Siope Kinikini.

Hey, everybody. Hi. I hope everybody is doing well. I am super excited actually to talk about something I am very passionate about and that is the Teaching-Family Model. Now, a lot of people may be wondering what exactly is the Teaching-Family Model. Quite simply put it is a model, a behavioral model that is used by professionals to help shape the behavior of children in a positive way.

I wanted to talk a little bit about how it came to be, why it's been so successful over the years, and how it's being used now currently around the world by different agencies and by people who are working with very difficult populations, kids who have been removed from the home, who have behavioral issues, who also have mental issues and things that they are working through.

One of the things in telling this story is to understand actually what was happening before the Teaching-Family Model arrived on the scene. In order to understand the story of the Teaching-Family Model, we have to understand what psychology and what professionals were talking about as far as parenting before it arrived on the scene.

Now, if you were to go back in time and see what a parent was doing with their child say the 1910's or 1920's and we're talking just a hundred years ago, you would be shocked at what professionals were telling parents to do with their kids. Here's one example. In 1910, it was believed that a held baby was a spoiled baby, so new mothers were told to ignore the most fundamental needs of a baby, which was to hold the infant. Now, they could hold the infant. It was recommend if they were feeding or changing a diaper, but other than that, they were not to hold the child, and this was taken from A Handbook of Obstetric Nursing. That's a mouthful. Ugh, anyways.

In this book that came out about how to raise your children in 1911, it warned mothers that mothers who constantly touch or cuddle their children, they would spoil their children and that their children would grow up to be "little tyrants." Amazing, right? This was in 1910, and you would think that they would figure things out after that, but it continued. This whole philosophy of touching and loving your child was actually shunned by professionals.

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In the 1920's, it said that ignoring your child is the way to build good, strong character. Right? One of the lead behaviorists at the time named John Watson, he warned parents that touching and holding your children would spoil them, and that you should never hug them, and you should not kiss them, and you should not let them sit on your lap. Okay? His suggestion was you would have to... The best way to interact with your child is to shake their hand. You could give them a pat on the head if they made an extraordinarily good job, but it was this distancing of physical touch that was recommended.

Now, again, this is from a professional. Okay? This was going around, these ideas. In the 1930's, you'd think it would get better, but it continued on and they said, "Hey, your child could benefit from fresh air, but put your child in a cage like literally, put them in a cage, and you could build a metal cage. Put your baby in it, and then hang precariously out the window, of course."

Okay, so yeah. Some mothers during that time would buy a contraption. In fact, there are some pictures in old magazines, and you can see them online where there are these cages that... In apartment buildings, they would just put their children out in these cages outside of these high-rise, high-story buildings, multiple stories, and that's where the kids would get some air, fresh air. Okay? Yeah. Wow. We have come a long way since then.

In the 1940's, it continued with this don't cuddle your boys. There was a campaign for that. An author named Philip Wylie was very specific in his book called *Generation of Vipers*. He started a critique in the 1940's of American culture that mothers were cuddling their children, their boys specifically too much, and he blamed those mothers for doing that.

Now, that is a far cry from where we are now where mothers are often loving their children, and touching, and they're encouraged to do that, but just understand that a hundred years ago, it was a different story. Actually, for generations after that, it was a completely different story where professionals were making recommendations that you don't touch your child, you don't cuddle your child, et cetera.

Well, they started to realize that there were some problems with this in that when children were placed in a hospital, little babies, and the professionals were asked not to touch the children, they started to notice that the children that were actually touched, and held, and cared for lived longer, and then children that were left to their own without touch died. I mean, they started to notice that there was a huge disparity in this idea, and so out from this philosophy came, "Hey, we need to re-examine how it is we're interacting with children. How are we raising them, and what is the best way to raise healthy children?"

Fast forward to the 1960's, and there were all these thoughts about, "How can we improve this? How can we help improve the development of children?" One of the founders of the Teaching-Family Model, his name was Mont Wolf. Now, you may not think that is very familiar.

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His name is not very familiar to you. However, Mont Wolf is the discoverer of timeout, the whole concept of timeout.

Now, the way that he modeled timeout, and the way that he used it initially, and the way that it was planned out has evolved over time. People have taken the concept and have adjusted it to their own needs, but the way that Mont had established it was a very effective way in helping children deal with their difficult emotions. Now, Mont, and other behaviorists, and psychologists, and psychiatrists, all these people involved in trying to understand how can we best help children received a grant, and in the University of Kansas, they were able to establish some studies to evaluate how best to interact with children.

What they did was they... In a group home setting, some of the very most difficult behaviorally-challenging children were placed in the home, and they were applying different techniques to figure out what work best and what skills would help them shift their behavior so they can reintegrate back into their families, and it was throughout this study that the Teaching-Family Model was born, and this model has been around since that time and has gone through multiple iterations in proving itself.

Now, what a lot of people don't know is the Teaching-Family Model is also the same model that is used at Boys Town. Now, Boys Town is probably more familiar to the majority of the population in America because of the film Boys Town with Father Flanagan that was released way back when. It's an old movie with Spencer Tracy, wonderful movie, and Mickey Rooney, but... and the transformation and the changing of a child.

Boys Town adopted the Teaching-Family Model, and it's a model that they use today. In fact, other agencies around the world use this particular model in helping to shape the behavior of children. You can jump on the Smarter Parenting website, and you can actually see a video that explains the Teaching-Family Model, how it's grown, and who's using it, and the effectiveness of the model itself.

The model is something that we use on Smarter Parenting. We take those skills that have been used for a long time since the 1960's and we've used them in a way that we can teach it online to help parents with children and their behavioral issues at home. We want to provide that as an easier way for them to access this material and to use it, so you can access those there.

Now, you should understand that the Teaching-Family Model is a very flexible model in that it can be replicated in different areas. Initially, it started off as something that they used in group homes with children who had very, very severe difficult behavioral issues, and as time has gone on, they've taken that model and adjusted it for home-based treatment, so home-based includes a professional coming into a home, and working with a family, and teaching these skills to help strengthen the family relationship in the home.

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Also, moved it over into foster care where you can use the same skills over in foster care, so there's this progression of being able to use it with different populations of kids in helping to shape them, their behavior to be more positive in different settings, and Smarter Parenting is obviously a way to do it online. It kind of went through this gradual... In a gradual way, it grew so we could share it with multiple people in multiple ways, and Smarter Parenting is a way for people to consume it on the internet in an easy way and in an adaptable way that they can adjust it to their family.

It's a fascinating model. There is just so much history behind it, but just understand that there was a progression. It was actually born out of, "How can we best help families and children be successful? How can we help children with behavioral issues be more successful?" That's where the model actually is focused. Everything about the model is pretty amazing. It's interesting to attend a conference because the Teaching-Family Model has a conference every year to meet with other practitioners who are using it with different people.

There is an agency actually working with disabled people using this specific model, and they found that they are able to adapt it to adjust for their special needs clients that they're working with. There are people using the model actually in different countries, and culturally, it's adaptable as well, and so we provide this as an offering to help families around the world the Teaching-Family Model and also, with different behavioral issues.

Now, remember. It stems from a very, very group-home-type intervention, but can be adapted. It's adaptable for very different children who may need it, so that's a little bit about the Teaching-Family Model, its history, who's using it around the world. It talks a little bit about how it came to be, early influencers like Mont Wolf, for example. Super important to understand these things as we continue to work and improve relationships with families.

Now, for the Teaching-Family Model, there are actually five elements that make the Teaching-Family Model so successful and powerful, and those five elements are things I'm going to cover in a separate podcast, and I'm going to spend time talking about each of them, but the five things that make the Teaching-Family Model very unique and very powerful are the following.

First, it's the relationship. The Teaching-Family Model is focused on relationship, strengthening the relationship, helping the relationship grow, and evolving this type of positive relationship with the parent and the child. The second element is time, and that is, when do you do what you need to do in order to build that relationship and strengthen it? Time also deals with how much time you should be spending doing something with your child and teaching the skills. The second thing is teaching, and that's what you need to be teaching. The Teaching-Family Model actually gives you very specific steps and guidelines on what it is that you need to do in order to improve your child's behavior.

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Now, there is something called quality components, which is the fourth thing. Quality components involves how you do it successfully, so there are different nuanced things that you can try while you're doing the skills that will help make it more effective with your child, and the final element that makes the Teaching-Family Model even more successful is role-playing, which is actually how do you do it? How do you make this a habit? How do you cement those connections inside your child's brain so what you're doing and what you're teaching becomes a natural and a habit part of their being? Okay?

Of the five elements, I want you to pay close attention to what they answer. First is relationship. That is the why we do what we do. That is the purpose is to build a relationship. The second one is time, when you're going to be doing something. We explain when to do it, when is the best time to do it, when to use what skill, and when to back off and find a different alternative way to deal with a certain behavior.

The third thing is what. Okay? That's the teaching. We actually will teach you what you need to do. We teach you what is effective in a specific behavior. Then, we come to quality components, which is number four, and in the quality components, we tell you what works best, how to tweak it for a child who has ADHD, for a special needs child, for a child who may have high functioning autism. I mean, there are different approaches and it's nuanced, so it's almost artistic in a way in being able to do them.

Then, the final thing is role-playing or practicing, and that's actually in the doing, and so the doing is such a powerful piece. When a child is able to do what it is that they need to do and the more often they do that, it becomes muscle memory for them, and that is the power of the Teaching-Family Model is it incorporates all of these including building those connections in their brain so they can behave the way that you want them to behave and they can behave in appropriate ways regardless of the situation.

Now, these five elements are powerful elements, and I'll talk more about each of them during this series, and so listen carefully to what it is about these different elements that will make you a successful parent and actually help you and your child build the relationship that you want. I mean, everything, everything in the Teaching-Family Model is focused on relationship. It really is, and if we can build those relationships and strengthen those, that's where we're going to see the most lasting change.

One of the examples that I use for families is that we focus on strengthening relationships. I mean, if you think about the relationships you have, our relationships actually shape our behavior. If you take someone who is very religious and has a relationship with their god, you'll find that they will alter their behavior in order to maintain that relationship. Right? It's the same thing with parents and with children. If we're able to build, and establish, and strengthen our relationship using these skills, and that's the focus of the Teaching-Family Model, then your children will actually work towards strengthening that bond and that connection with you as a parent.

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I am so excited to share everything about this model with everybody that will ever listen because it really is a game-changer for so many families. I've been doing in-home work actually for over 10 years where I've gone into homes of multimillionaires and people who didn't have a home or people who were renting or whatever and every family in between implementing the same skills, and they've been successful. They've been successful in building those relationships long after I've gone. They're not perfect by any means, but they're able to work through things together, and that for me is success.

Yeah. I'm just going to end this one here because I think I've talked too much, but I am super excited to talk about each of these aspects of the Teaching-Family Model in podcast to come. If you found what I've shared helpful, then please share it with a friend. Also, subscribe to our podcast. You can find our podcast on pretty much every podcast listening apparatus that is available, and again, give us a review. If you've liked what we had to say, please give us a review, and if you didn't like what we had to say, then don't give us a review. How is that? Anyways, until next time. I will see you later. I hope you have a good one. All right. Bye.

For more information on the Teaching-Family Model check out the following resources:

[The Teaching-Family Model](#)

[Our Teaching-Family Model family](#)

[The Teaching-Family Association](#)

[The ADHD Smarter Parenting Podcast](#) with Siope Kinikini

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