Impact of Non-Parental Child Care on Child Development

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Abstract

Previous studies have been done to determine the impact of non-parental child care on a child’s behavior and development. Research suggests that quality of child care and time spent in child care impact behavior, emotional, social, and cognitive development. This review examines how the practices of non-parental child care impact child behavior and development. This review also suggests that implementing Adlerian components to non-parental child care will increase the positive impact on a child’s behavior and development. The author suggests that further research is needed to examine the practices and structure of current non-parental child care to determine the cause of the negative impacts of non-parental child care.

Keywords: child care centers, day care centers, early childhood education, child development, non-parental child care
Impact of Non-Parental Child Care on Child Development

Previous studies have shown that the number of mothers in the work force has steadily increased since 1950. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011), 63.9% of mothers with children under the age of six work outside of the home. In 58.1% of households with two parents, both parents work outside of the home. Children between the ages of three and five, who are receiving non-parental child care, increased from 53% in 1991 to nearly 60% in 1999 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001). The children of working parents are being cared for by child care centers, home day care centers, family members, or friends. There is a growing concern about the effects of time spent in non-parental child care and the quality of care received on the development of children.

A study conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) suggests that 85% to 90% of out-of-home child care is not considered to be of high quality (Greenspan, 2003). Another study reported that the majority of children in day care centers are receiving care that is poor to mediocre. “These findings are consistent with a study that examined the quality of care in family child care homes” (Dodge, 1995, p. 1186). Research found common themes for poor to mediocre non-parental child care, some of which include untrained staff, lack of procedures for working with behavior problems, lack of parent education programs, lack of parent resources, and a lack of parent communication.

Statement of the Problem

Non-parental child care impacts children in several areas of development such as social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral, both positively and negatively. Dodge (1995) found:

Teachers across the country describe children who are fearful and stressed, fall apart easily and need constant adult attention and direction, are angry or withdrawn and unable
to say why they have these feelings, lack the social skills to work cooperatively with others, are aggressive in their relationships with others, or have few play skills. (p. 1175)

If children are receiving poor or mediocre child care, the assumption is that the impact on development is going to be negative. Being aware of the impact on development will help child care providers reduce the negative impacts and increase the positive impacts. Little research has been done to determine how to improve the quality of child care, how to increase the positive impact on development, or how to decrease the negative impact on development.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine what can be done to improve the quality of child care, what can be done to decrease the negative impact on development, and what can be done to increase the positive impact on development. Little research has been done to determine what components of child care centers contribute to the negative impact on development. This study provides important and applicable information on how to improve the negative impacts on child development. This study also presents child care providers information on how to improve and connect with children in positive ways.

**Literature Review**

**Impact on Development**

Child care providers have a critical impact on a child’s early development, second only to immediate family, and have the potential to impact the child positively or negatively (Davis, Priest, Davies, Sims, Harrison, Herrman, Waters, Strazdins, Marshall, & Cook, 2010). During the early childhood years, children are forming a sense of identity, learning to trust others, and acquiring a sense of their own competence. If early childhood experiences affect a child’s future success, it is critical to ensure that these experiences are positive and nurturing. If the experiences in early childhood are positive, children are more likely to succeed in school and in
life (Dodge, 1995). “Because the majority of children enrolled in such centers spend over 30 hours per week in attendance, a responsibility falls upon the centers to provide for children’s social, emotional, and cognitive development” (Schindler, Moely, & Frank, 1987, p. 255).

Toddlers develop a sense of identity by observing and imitating the important adults in their lives, such as child care providers, and by incorporating the values and beliefs of these individuals into their own sense of self (Dodge, 1995). Child care providers are modeling behaviors, values, and beliefs for children. Dodge (1995) stated the following:

The child care provider’s role is to help children develop socially (by building positive relationships and teaching social skills), emotionally (by nurturing pride, self-esteem, and self-control), and cognitively (by allowing children to try out their own ideas, observe what happens, raise more questions, express their feelings and understandings). (p. 1185)

Child care providers need to be aware of the part they play in a child’s development.

Ages and Stages

The first four years of a child’s development are very important because children are trying to determine who they are and how they fit in. Children go through different stages of cognitive, social, and emotional development and learn by observing and imitating others. They are learning how to solve problems, as well as learning how to regulate their behavior and mood (Greenspan, 2003). During the stages of early development, children are forming opinions about what is seen and heard. They decide how to interpret what they have experienced and will choose their own perceptions (Bettner, 2006). “All children are creative human beings who will do their own translation of what they see, hear, and experience” (Bettner, 2006, p. 1). By the time a child is three, he/she will become aware of two types of people, male or female. Children will determine which gender they are and will observe the gender that is most like them to see
what they can expect to become (Bettner, 2006).

Jean Piaget believed that children go through a stage of cognitive development from ages two to seven called the pre-operational or pre-conceptual stage. During this stage, children typically talk or think about themselves and tend to act selfishly. Children are unable to see a situation from another person’s point of view and they assume that other people see, hear, and feel exactly as they do. During this stage, children believe that inanimate objects, such as their toys or stuffed animals, have feelings (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2009; Bettner, 2006; McLeod, 2010).

If child care providers are aware of these stages and what changes a child is experiencing, they are better able to assist and guide children through this process. Child care providers can also be more aware of how their words and actions are impacting the children in their care. Children are looking to the adults in their life to help them figure out how they should act and how life is.

Social

According to child care providers interviewed by The National Association of State Boards, the key factors to early school success include: self-confidence, ability to cooperate with peers and adults, strong self-esteem, curiosity, and eagerness to ask and answer questions (as cited in Dodge, 1995). It is important to note that teachers did not mention what children had learned academically. These findings confirm the importance of learning social competence in early childhood education (Dodge, 1995). Social competence can be defined as: “a child’s everyday effectiveness in dealing with his or her environment and later responsibilities in school and in life. This includes the ability to initiate and maintain satisfying relationships with peers as well as with adults” (Dodge, 1995, p. 1174).
Almost everything that occurs in a child’s life involves social interactions with others. Children learn through social interactions, so it is important for a child to observe positive interactions. Quality child care programs promote children’s social competence and help children develop a positive sense of identity and to learn to trust others (Dodge, 1995).

One NICHD study found that the quality of interaction with a child is associated with favorable social development (Greenspan, 2003). Other studies found that children who experience group child care have more positive social interactions with peers. Children who spent more time in non-parental child care showed higher social participation scores than those who had spent less time in non-parental care. More time in child care generally showed more socially mature behaviors and greater social participation (Schindler et al., 1987). Children with working mothers showed more prosocial behaviors than children with stay-at-home mothers (Nomaguchi, 2006).

In contrast to the positive impacts of non-parental child care, some studies found that more hours spent in nonrelative care are related to poorer social adjustment in adolescents (Vandell, Belsky, Burchinal, Steinberg, & Vandergrift, 2010). Nomaguchi (2006) found that children in non-parental child care settings showed fewer positive interactions with their mothers.

The quality of a child’s social competence in kindergarten is a good predictor of academic and social competence in later years. Programs that promote children’s social development are also advancing their cognitive development and future academic success (Dodge, 1995). Research found that children who fail to achieve social competence are at risk of social maladaptations later in life. As a result, children who have not developed social competence are in particular need of a quality child care program (Dodge, 1995).
Non-parental child care has both positive and negative impacts on social development. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the quality of care children are receiving. Child care providers are responsible for modeling positive social interactions and encouraging positive social interactions between children.

**Emotional**

Children perceive how people act at various times and in various situations, how people act toward each other, and how emotions are expressed by watching the important adults in their lives, such as a child care provider. Children often incorporate these perceptions into the self they become (Dodge, 1995). Child care providers intentionally and unintentionally model emotional expression and regulation by teaching children to label, express, and regulate their emotions (Ahn, 2005a; Ashiabi, 2000). Teachers in child care centers influence children’s socialization of emotion by discussing emotions as part of their everyday interactions with children. A great deal of children’s understanding of emotion is obtained in the informal curriculum provided by teachers. Teachers explain the causes of emotions and help children to understand the regulation of emotion (Ahn, 2005b).

Children need help learning to identify their emotions, determine the cause of their emotions, and to verbalize, manage, and express them appropriately. Teachers can enhance a child’s emotional development by responding to a child’s negative emotions using appropriate behavioral and emotional responses. Teachers increase children’s understanding of emotions by modeling or explaining the meaning of their feelings (Ahn, 2005b; Ashiabi, 2000).

One study found that discussions of emotions help children identify emotion-related words, understand the causes of emotions, and deal with their emotions positively. Child care providers use emotion talks and books to teach emotion-related words. Talking about emotions
helps children understand their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. By hearing teachers use feeling-related words repeatedly, children with a limited vocabulary learn how to express their emotions verbally. Emotion talks can help children determine the causes of different emotions (Ahn, 2005b).

Melhuish (1987) determined that non-parental child care is not associated with detrimental effects in emotional development of young children. Research found that children in center based care showed better emotional adjustment. Children aged two to three in non-parental child care showed better emotional adjustment and less anxiety than children with stay-at-home mothers (Nomaguchi, 2006).

Schindler et al. (1987) found greater emotional maladjustment with increased time in child care centers with low child-caretaker verbal interaction. They also found that children who received early non-parental child care showed anxious attachment, negative affect, and less compliance. Past research suggests that the intellectually stimulating environment in day care centers may be less beneficial for children’s emotional adjustments (Nomaguchi, 2006). Research also found that a negative or unsupportive response to a child’s emotions is associated with negative social and emotional outcomes (Ahn, 2005a).

Child care providers and teachers need to be aware of the role they play in a child’s emotional development. Being aware of the impact providers have on a child’s emotional development could help increase the positive impacts.

Cognitive and Academic

Age-appropriate, intellectually stimulating environments and activities help develop children’s cognitive development. Research suggests that the intellectually stimulating environment in child care centers may be beneficial for children’s cognitive development (Li,
Non-parental child care did not produce detrimental effects on cognitive development (Melhuish, 1987). Non-parental child care during preschool years did not have a negative impact on a child’s development except when it began in the first year of a child’s life (Nomaguchi, 2006).

Non-parental child care that began after a child’s first year shows positive effects on cognitive development (Nomaguchi, 2006). Several studies show greater gains in cognitive development of economically disadvantaged children who attended high-quality child care programs (Ceglowski & Davis, 2004; Vandell et al., 2010). Nomaguchi (2006) found that non-parental child care and center-based care relates to higher vocabulary. High-quality child care had positive effects on a child’s language, math, thinking, and attention skills (Belsky, Burchinal, McCartney, Vandell, Clarke-Stewart, & Owen, 2007; Ceglowski & Davis, 2004; Li et al., 2013; Vandell et al., 2010).

Vandell et al. (2010) found that time spent in center-based care relates to positive academic outcomes and better cognitive development. Vandell et al. (2010) found that children of low-income families showed more cognitive and academic benefits when they spent more hours in non-parental child care.

Nomaguchi (2006) found that 4-year-old children in non-parental child care were more likely to have lower vocabulary skills than children with stay-at-home mothers. Vandell et al. (2010) found that children of middle-income families who spent more hours in non-parental child care functioned more poorly than children of low-income families.

As shown in other areas of child development, non-parental child care can have both positive and negative impacts on cognitive and academic development. Providing children with intellectually stimulating environments will help to increase a child’s cognitive and academic
development. Child care providers need to be aware of providing activities and toys to help children develop cognitively.

**Behavioral**

Child care providers reported not having consistent strategies for handling children’s behavior and reported wanting more training in that area (Davis et al., 2010). If child care providers are not trained in handling children’s problem behaviors, they may end up doing more harm than good when working with children. If a child care provider responds to a child’s behavior harshly, a child tends to use more extreme emotional outbursts and related aggressive actions (Greenspan, 2003).

Children in non-parental child care showed better socioemotional adjustments, such as less physical aggression, less hyperactivity, and more prosocial behavior than children with stay-at-home mothers (Nomaguchi, 2006). The positive impacts of group child care include a greater ability to get along with peers and greater problem-solving ability (Schindler, Moely & Frank, 1987).

More time spent in non-parental child care relates to more physical aggression and more hyperactivity (Nomaguchi, 2006). One study suggests that time spent in non-parental child care during early childhood increases aggressive and defiant behaviors (Greenspan, 2003). Children in non-parental child care show more verbal and physical aggression, less cooperation with adults, and less compliance and obedience to rules (Schindler et al., 1987).

Studies found that more hours in non-parental child care predicts problem behavior at various times during preschool years and adolescence (Belsky et al., 2007; Vandell et al., 2010). Adolescents who spent more time in non-parental care during their first 4 years showed more risk taking behaviors and greater impulsivity later in life (Vandell et al., 2010).
There are positives and negatives to non-parental child care for all areas of development. It is important for child care providers to understand how their responses and actions can impact a child’s behavior and development.

**Necessary Components of a Successful Adlerian Child Care Program**

The amount and content of adult-child interaction, the emotional climate of the environment, the ways in which children are grouped, and the types of activities available determine the quality of non-parental child care (Ceglowski & Davis, 2004). Research shows that parents often consider other criteria when selecting a child care center. Parents consider curriculum, reputation of the center, cost, hours of operation, convenience of location, staff training, child/staff ratio, and staff to parent communication (Leslie, Ettenson & Cumsille, 2000).

Studies showed that the most important factor of non-parental child care impacting development is the quality and content of adult interaction that a child receives. Child care centers should have a program philosophy that focuses on positive interactions among adults and children. One could conclude that a program philosophy based on Adlerian Psychology would increase positive interactions and reduce negative impacts of non-parental child care on development.

Adlerian Psychology, also known as Individual Psychology, “is a holistic approach to understanding the individual” (Walton-McCawley, 1997, p. 3). The basic principles of Adlerian Psychology include: individuals are motivated to belong, feel safe, and feel significant; individuals strive for superiority or perfection; behavior is purposeful or goal directed; and all individuals have the potential for socially interested behavior (Walton-McCawley, 1997). Children must have their basic needs of safety, significance, and belonging met in order to be interested in learning and exploring (Dodge, 1995).
Parenting techniques that consist of reasoning, encouragement, empathic limit setting, and including children in decisions and problem-solving relate to children feeling capable and competent. Parenting techniques that include obedience, punishment, and the controlling use of rewards relate to children feeling less capable and competent (Vieno, Perkins, Smith & Santinello, 2005). One can assume that incorporating these techniques in child care centers will result in similar impacts on children. Implementing Adlerian components into non-parental child care centers will also ensure that the basic human needs are met and the negative impacts are being reduced.

Quality Child Care Programs

A major factor of program quality is having developmentally appropriate curriculum in place to help guide staff. Without having a proper curriculum in place, staff might implement practices that are inappropriate or harmful to children. Curriculum should include clear and realistic goals and objectives that address all areas of development and addresses what children can be expected to accomplish. The focus of the curriculum should be on creating a social and physical environment that nurtures the growth and development of each child (Dodge, 1995).

A quality curriculum framework should include child development principles that address how children learn and how they develop physically (feeling confident about what his or her body can do), socially (feeling part of a group), emotionally (developing independence, self-confidence, and self-control), and cognitively (ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe feelings). Curriculum should include an idea of what the child care provider’s role is and how the provider should respond to children. Curriculum should also include an approach for building a relationship with parents and families (Dodge, 1995). Implementing a curriculum based on Adlerian theory addresses all of these elements.
Adlerian Program Philosophy

Child care providers reported that a consistent philosophical approach promotes a cohesive team and positive interactions. Inconsistent use of strategies, particularly regarding children’s behavior, is a challenge to promoting children’s social and emotional wellbeing (Davis et al., 2010). Implementing an Adlerian program philosophy and training all staff on this philosophy will provide staff with techniques for working with children in an encouraging and supportive way. Staff trained in Adlerian theory can provide children with an environment that encourages cooperation, responsibility, and mutual respect for fellow human beings (Walton-McCawley, 1997).

One study found that mental health consultation in child care centers improved staff’s self-efficacy regarding mental health issues, increased staff competence in dealing with difficult behaviors, and improved the overall quality of child care (Alkon, Ramler, & MacLennan, 2003). After receiving mental health consultation, child care providers reported greater empathy and curiosity about the meaning of children’s behavior, an improved understanding of different behaviors, and a recognition that all behavior has meaning. Mental health consultation improved the staff’s ability to identify children at risk for emotional and social problems and provide early intervention for at-risk children and families (Alkon et al., 2003).

Training staff in a mental health philosophy, such as Adlerian theory, can produce the same results. Incorporating a mental health perspective can help providers implement appropriate interventions and prevent behavioral and emotional problems in the future (Alkon et al., 2003).

Encouragement

One concept of Adlerian Psychology that needs to be implemented in all child care
centers is encouragement. Encouragement is the belief that people are capable and have the potential for growth (Milliren, 2011). Encouragement also includes helping people see their strengths and believe in themselves (Lew & Bettner, 2010). “An educator’s most important task is to see to it that no child is discouraged at school and that a child who enters school already discouraged regains self-confidence through his/her school and his/her teacher (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956, p. 399-400).

Children need opportunities to show that they are capable. Allowing children time to try, rather than rescuing them, is part of the learning process. The more confident and secure a child feels, the less likely he/she will be to act out (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2009; Bergmark, 2008; Lew & Bettner, 2010).

“Courage is not the absence of fear; courage is the willingness to go forward and do what needs to be done in spite of the fear” (Lew & Bettner, 2010, p. 15). Children without courage feel inferior, defeated, and hopeless. Children without courage focus on what they can’t do and often give up. Children without courage try to avoid their feelings of fear and failure by getting others to give up on them. Children with courage develop resiliency, feel hopeful, are willing to take reasonable risks, and try things even after failure (Lew & Bettner, 2010). Encouraging children will help them develop the confidence and resiliency to be successful later in life.

**Social Interest**

Dodge (1995) stated that a key factor of school success is the ability to cooperate. Social interest is a person’s ability to cooperate with others. People are born with social interest, but it must be nurtured and developed as children (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Pryor & Tollerud, 1999). Vandell et al. (2010) found that children without social interest have poorer social adjustment.
Social interest is learned in an environment that teaches the concepts of sharing, caring, helping, and donating (Carlo, McGinley, Hayes, Batenhorst, & Wilkinson, 2007; Vieno, Perkins, Smith, Santinello, 2005). Studies show that service learning experiences, or community service activities, increase sympathy for others, increase social interest, and increase pro-social behaviors (Carlo, McGinley, Hayes, Batenhorst, & Wilkinson, 2007; Edwards & Mullis, 2001). Service learning should be a component of child care centers to teach children the importance of contributing in meaningful ways.

Children learn that their contributions impact the rest of the group when they are in an encouraging environment that promotes cooperation, group interactions, and teaches responsibility (Walton-McCawley, 1997). Part of promoting social interest is helping children understand how they influence the feelings of others. Discussing the consequences of their behaviors and asking a child to think about what somebody is feeling teaches children that others have feelings (Ahn, 2005b). It is important for child care providers to promote social interest because it increases a child’s confidence, cooperation, and self-esteem and decreases social maladaptations later in life.

**Four Mistaken Goals/Purpose of Behavior**

As stated earlier in this paper, children in non-parental child care show more physical aggression, more defiant behaviors, less cooperation, and less compliance (Greenspan, 2003; Nomaguchi, 2006; Schindler, Moely & Frank, 1987). Research suggests that early interventions with pre-school-age children can reduce behavior problems later in childhood (Alkon, Ramler & MacLennan, 2003). Training child care providers in Adlerian interventions will help providers manage and address negative behaviors. The manner in which a child care provider responds to a child’s behavior can evoke a positive or negative response from the child. A less sensitive
response to children may lead to more negative behaviors (Nomaguchi, 2006).

One concept of Adlerian Psychology is that all behavior is purposeful and goal-directed. In order to understand behavior, the provider needs to look for the underlying purpose of the behavior. Behavior reveals the basic need that is not getting met such as: being connected to others, feeling capable, being valued by others, and having courage. These needs must be met in order to successfully meet life’s challenges. Children become discouraged when these needs are not met (Lew & Bettner, 2008). “A misbehaving child is a discouraged child” (Walton & Powers, 1974, p. 5). Children will look for negative ways to connect or feel significant if they are unable to do so in constructive ways (Edwards & Mullis, 2001; Lew & Bettner, 2010; Walton & Powers, 1974). Child care providers can help the child by addressing the child’s motivation rather than the child’s behavior (Pryor & Tollerud, 1999; Lew & Bettner, 2008).

Dreikurs & Soltz (1964) formulated four goals of children’s misbehavior to help recognize, understand, and correct difficult behaviors. The four goals of misbehavior include: attention, power, revenge, and inadequacy. Children choose one of these goals of misbehavior in order to get their needs met.

The first goal of misbehavior is attention seeking. Children who feel insignificant or don’t feel connected might try to prove they belong by seeking attention (Lew & Bettner, 2008). A child inappropriately seeking attention might try to show off, act silly, and often disrupt activities by crying, talking, yelling, or acting out in a way that gets the attention of others. The child often seems like a nuisance. Child care providers can identify each goal of misbehavior by the way they feel in response to the behavior. When a child is inappropriately seeking attention, the provider often feels annoyed, irritated or guilty (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). An appropriate response from the child care provider for this behavior would be to withhold paying attention to
the child since the child is demanding it. The child care provider should avoid or ignore the misbehaving child and pay attention to the child when he or she is no longer misbehaving (Pryor & Tollerud, 1999). Children continue the behaviors that get a response from others and eventually stop the behaviors that do not get a response (Lew & Bettner, 2008).

The second goal of misbehavior is power. Children who feel powerless or feel others are trying to control them might try to gain control by acting aggressive, stubborn, and bossy, or by trying to be more powerful than others. The purpose of the child’s behavior is to demonstrate power (Walton-McCawley, 1997). When the goal of the misbehavior is power, the provider often feels angry, challenged, provoked, or defeated. Children respond to adult attempts to stop the behavior by intensifying the same behavior. The child care provider’s response to the goal of power is to refuse to fight with the child and refuse to give in to the child’s demands (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964; Lew & Bettner, 2010). Asking a child to help rather than demand something of them takes the power out of the request. Children who feel a sense of power or control feel more capable (Edwards & Mullis, 2001).

The third goal of misbehavior is revenge. When children feel that others are hurtful, the child seeks revenge by trying to hurt others back. A child who seeks revenge is violent, aggressive, and verbally abusive (Walton-McCawley, 1997). A child who is motivated by revenge believes that the only way to count is by hurting others as he or she has felt hurt. Children who have been neglected or abused often seek revenge. Revenge is also a response of pampered children. Pampered children believe they have the right to special attention and believe that when they don’t get it, they have the right to punish others (Lew & Bettner, 2010; Walton-McCawley, 1997). When the goal of misbehavior is revenge, the provider often feels hurt, disappointed, or disbelieving. Children respond to adult attempts to stop the behavior by
escalating the same behavior or retaliating. An appropriate response from the child care provider to the goal of revenge is to encourage the child, and to avoid punishment or retaliation, which will only escalate the behavior (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964; Lew & Bettner, 2010).

The fourth goal of misbehavior is inadequacy. Children without courage often feel inferior and inadequate. Children who feel inadequate often appear passive, quiet, shy, and withdrawn. They may try to complete a task, but give up easily if they aren’t successful (Walton-McCawley, 1974). When a child is displaying the goal of inadequacy, the provider will also feel hopeless, powerless and inadequate. Children respond to adult attempts to stop the behavior by retreating further. Children displaying inadequacy need a lot of encouragement and support from others (Pryor & Tollerud, 1999).

Understanding the purpose of children’s behavior is very important for child care providers. Knowing how to respond to the four goals of misbehavior will help prevent behaviors from escalating.

Logical and Natural Consequences

Buck & Ambrosino (2004) found that approximately 46% of child care centers surveyed do not have procedures for working with problem behaviors. Almost all of the child care centers surveyed reported the need of information on interventions for working with problem behaviors (Buck & Ambrosino, 2004). Child care centers that follow a consistent model that uses positive behavior support reduces behavior problems for 80 - 90% of children (Buck & Ambrosino, 2004). Adlerian trained staff can provide positive behavior support by using natural and logical consequences versus rewards or punishment.

“Children enjoy discipline, and may even crave it when it is lacking, but reward and punishment do not provide it” (Walton & Powers, 1974, p. 18). Rewards imply that a child is
only acceptable if the child behaves in a certain way and if the child does not behave that way, he or she is unacceptable. Using rewards teaches children to do things for rewards rather than doing things to be helpful. Children may start expecting rewards and refuse to contribute or cooperate without them (Walton & Powers, 1974). Prior research found that social rewards, such as feeling capable, connected, or encouraged, are linked to higher levels of prosocial behavior than material rewards (Carlo, McGinley, Hayes, Batenhorst, & Wilkinson, 2007). Rewarding children does not promote social interest.

Punishment is a consequence based on the assumption that children learn best by suffering the consequences of their behavior (Lew & Bettner, 2008). Adults use punishment when they are angry or want to retaliate. Punishment puts the adult in a power role and doesn’t give the child a choice. Punishment is discouraging and implies that something is wrong with the child. Punishment can result in fear or anger and creates a desire for the child to retaliate (Pryor & Tollerud, 1999; Walton & Powers, 1974).

Logical and natural consequences give children the opportunity to discover the consequences of their actions and allow children to learn from their mistakes in a respectful way (Lew & Bettner, 2008; Walton & Powers, 1974). A logical or natural consequence must be respectful, reasonable, and related to the misbehavior. The consequence should also be clear to the child, fair, and consistent. A consequence that is not respectful may be perceived as punishment and the child may want to retaliate or continue the misbehavior (Pryor & Tollerud, 1999).

Logical consequences are established through rules and policies, which must be discussed and agreed upon in advance. Logical consequences teach social order in life (Griffith & Powers, 2007; Pryor & Tollerud, 1999). An example of a logical consequence would be if a child keeps
leaving the playground, he or she is not allowed to go outside until he or she stays on the playground. Natural consequences are unplanned outcomes as a result of a child’s behavior and do not involve parent or child care provider interaction. An example of a natural consequence would be if a child does not wear mittens, he or she will be uncomfortable (Griffith & Powers, 2007; Pryor & Tollerud, 1999).

Using natural and logical consequences help children learn that they can choose how they behave (Walton & Powers, 1974). Children also learn to take responsibility for their actions and learn to seek the positive feeling that comes with good behavior when consequences follow these guidelines (Pryor & Tollerud, 1999). Using natural and logical consequences in child care centers will help reduce conflict and reduce problem behaviors.

**Parent Involvement**

Quality child care programs include an approach for building positive and supportive relationships with parents and families. Studies found that communication with parents is lacking, which results in parents not being aware of important aspects of their child’s care such as program procedures regarding punishment or daily activities (Dodge, 1995; Shpancer, Bowden, Ferrell, Pavlik, Robinson, Schwind, Volpe, Williams, & Young, 2002). Reedy & McGrath (2010) found that communication was essential in maintaining a positive relationship and maintaining trust with parents.

Child care providers should take the time to acknowledge parent concerns and encourage parents about what their child is accomplishing (Dodge, 1995). Connecting with parents on a daily basis establishes a rapport between parents and staff that allows for informal conversations about concerns in a non-threatening manner (Reedy & McGrath, 2010). A program policy that includes open communication with parents gives parents the opportunity to get help or advice
from staff. This can create a sense of belonging and community for parents (Davis, et al., 2010).

**Adlerian Child Care Provider Training Guide**

Child care providers reported needing a consistent philosophical approach, especially regarding dealing with behavior. Child care providers also reported a lack of parent communication and involvement in child care centers. Based on the research in this paper, a training guide was developed to teach child care providers, directors of child care programs, and child care center staff Adlerian techniques to create a positive and encouraging program for working with children and families. The training guide describes the necessary components of a successful Adlerian child care program, which include Adlerian based strategies for working with difficult behaviors, encouragement, social interest, identifying the purpose of behavior, the use of logical and natural consequences versus punishment, and approaches for creating positive relationships with families.

**Conclusion**

Research found that quality of non-parental child care is lacking, which results in negative impacts on child development. Research has not determined which factors of non-parental child care contribute to the negative impacts of development. I believe the child care provider’s behavior is the factor that contributes most to the negative impacts of development. Child care providers model social interactions, behavior, and emotions. If a child care provider responds to behavior negatively, uses harsh tone of voice, uses discouraging statements, or uses harmful punishment techniques, it will impact the child negatively.

Research found that child care programs that focus on positive adult-child interactions, positive adult role models, and a supportive and encouraging environment will reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts on development. A child care program that includes
components of Adlerian philosophy promotes positive adult-child interactions and provides a supportive and encouraging environment. Therefore, a child care program based on Adlerian philosophy will reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts on development. Using an Adlerian child care provider training guide, as described above, can help child care centers move in the right direction towards providing more quality care.
References


