Sample Book Review

Your Name, Psychology 2301, Section/Synonym #

Bibliography


Information about the author

Lynn Clark, Ph.D. is a graduate of the Counseling Psychology Program at The University of Kansas. He is a licensed clinical psychologist and Professor of Psychology at Western Kentucky University. He has been an adjunct professor at Boston University and a visiting professor at schools in Germany and Italy. For a decade, he served as a consultant to the Barren River Comprehensive Care Center in Bowling Green, KY. He is married and has two sons.

Main points (thesis) of the book

*SOS! Help for Parents* is touted as a practical guide for handling common everyday behavior problems. The author discusses why children behave and misbehave and generally takes a behavior modification approach to correcting behavior problems. The book is perhaps a monument to the efficient use of time-out to control children's behavior.

Dr. Clark's main points include:

- Good behavior should be rewarded. To be effective rewards must immediately follow the child’s desirable behavior. Don’t accidentally reward bad behavior.
- Clear communication promotes effective parenting. Parents must agree about which behaviors are desirable and undesirable.
- Plan ahead to be an effective parent. Anticipate your child’s needs before his bad behavior forces you to meet his needs. Help your child practice behavior you want him to learn.
- Natural consequences should be allowed to occur for certain misbehavior. A parent should create logical consequences for unacceptable behavior.
- Time-out may be the most effective way to control a child's behavior. Time-out means time-out from reinforcement, rewards, attention, and freedom to play.
- Time out is effective in correcting persistent misbehaviors, which are impulsive, aggressive, emotional, or hostile.
- Time-out lasts one minute for each year of age. A time-out place needs to be dull, boring, easily accessible, and safe. Place your child in time-out quickly -- using no more than 10 words and 10 seconds. The child should be talked with after being placed in time-out.
- Points, tokens, and behavior contracts can be very useful in controlling children's behavior.
- Time-out procedures can be used with more than one child at a time. In this situation, they should be sent to separate time-out places. Objects (i.e., toys) that cause a behavior problem can be placed in time-out instead of a child.

Evaluation (how the author supports the thesis)

The book is filled with cute cartoons illustrating each main point. The author lists 78 specific professional references that *SOS! Help for Parents* incorporates in its philosophy. The references include an impressive list of nationally recognized leaders in psychology and psychiatry including individuals with behavior modification and child-centered approaches to parenting (i.e., Bandura, Dinkmeyer, Drekurs, Hobbs, Schaefer, Skinner). Dr. Clark has effectively assimilated into his book most of the key concepts promoted in child psychology over the past 30 years. He augments each point with case examples of various child behavior situations he has experienced during his life as a parent and career as a psychologist. Virtually any question a parent would ask regarding help in dealing with child behavior problems is addressed (i.e., What if my child refuses to go to time-out?). The book contains checklists and charts regarding efficient use of time-out procedures and other popular approaches to behavior modification such as home token economies and behavior contracts. It is the most comprehensive, concise, entertaining, relevant, and practical treatise on the subject I have read.