

# *Ain't Misbehavin'*

## *Summary*



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## OVERVIEW

- We're all just trying to meet our needs.
- That's where conflict arises.
- Your child is off trying to meet his or her needs.
- You're off trying to meet your needs.
- Much of the time we are able to travel our paths with little friction or interference.
- Then—BOOM—our needs collide, and there is perceived misbehavior from the adult's point of view.

**Ain't Misbehavin'.** Our children are only trying to meet their needs.

### 1. DEFINING NEEDS

#### Physical Needs

Air, food, water, movement, protection from danger, sleep, gender and sexual expression, shelter, touch, light

#### Spiritual Needs (social/emotion needs)

Activity, movement, exercise, creativity, exploration, orientation, belonging, acceptance, appreciation, becoming, celebration, closeness, community, consideration, contribution, emotional safety, empathy, honesty, love, reassurance, respect, support, trust, understanding, warmth, communication, inspiration, laughter, fun, imagination, to choose dreams, goals and values, create self-worth, create meaning, create an authentic person, create personal integrity, order, beauty, harmony, peace, repetition, precision and exactness.

## **Developmental Needs**

Four planes of development

- Birth to 6: First Plane of Development
- 6 to 12: Second Plane of Development
- 12 to 18: Third Plane of Development
- 18 to 24: Fourth Plane of Development: End of childhood

Developmental needs continue throughout our lives.

## **2. UNDERSTANDING NEEDS: Behavior and emotion are need driven.**

**Four signs of normalization**

- Love of work
- Concentration
- Self-discipline
- Sociability seen in joyful work, mutual aid and cooperation

When development is on-track, we see these four signs of normalization.

When development is off-track one, or more, of these signs is not evident.

When a child or adult lacks a sign of normalization, we have a big clue that development is off-track and that the individual is dealing with unmet needs.

In Montessori terms we call off-track development encountering a deviation. Development has deviated off the normal and natural path.

**Two basic types of deviations: low energy and high energy.**

**The low energy child exhibits:**

- Timidity
- A need to be entertained
- Passivity
- Fantasy
- Laziness
- Lack of focus

### **The high energy exhibits:**

- Capriciousness
- Disorderliness
- Violence
- Rage
- Possessiveness
- Disrespect
- Disobedience

*"The most important discovery is that a child returns to a normal state through work."*

Maria Montessori, *The Secret of Childhood*, page 185

Children, through their behavior, are telling us: *Help me help myself.*

### **We need to be continually asking ourselves:**

By choosing that behavior or expressing that emotion, what is this child needing and requesting as a help to life?

### **3. Communication Tools (to help you with unmet needs)**

- Say what you see.
- Don't just do something. Stand there.
- Allow choices.
- Redirect behavior.
- Talk less. Listen more.
- H.A.L.T.
- Build emotional vocabulary

**We don't have to be perfect to be perfect parents and teachers.**

Understanding the relationship of needs, emotions and behaviors can be a big help in answering the child's request of "Help me help myself."