

**ATTEND | BEHAVIOR**

*Foundations of  
Successful Family  
Guidance*



Effective Family Guidance: From  
Developing and Maintaining Strong  
Professional Relationships with  
Families and Assessment to Planning



## Objectives:

- Understand the importance of strong educator-caregiver relationships
- Understand the skills necessary to develop those foundational relationships
- Understand the skills necessary to maintain effective, professional relationships with caregivers
- What is Family Guidance?
- How should I go about selecting meaningful goals?
- Developing SMART goals
- Writing effective programming
- Effective family guidance session planning

A I B



## Compassionate Care:

- *“Successfully working with families of children with autism requires critical interpersonal skills, as well as technical skills. As practitioners strive to respond efficiently and compassionately to distressed families of children with autism, technical skills must be balanced with fluency in relationship-building skills that strengthen the commitment to treatment.”*

- - Taylor, Leblanc, Nosik (2018)

# Rapport Is An Essential Component In Caregiver Engagement





1. Caregivers are the optimal source of vital information about the student

2. If the behavior doesn't occur in the natural environment, does it really matter?

3. Lasting behavior change can only happen if behavior continues to contact reinforcement.

# Why are strong caregiver relationships essential to successful student outcomes?



Caregivers are the optimal source of vital information about the student

# Why are strong caregiver relationships essential to successful student outcomes?

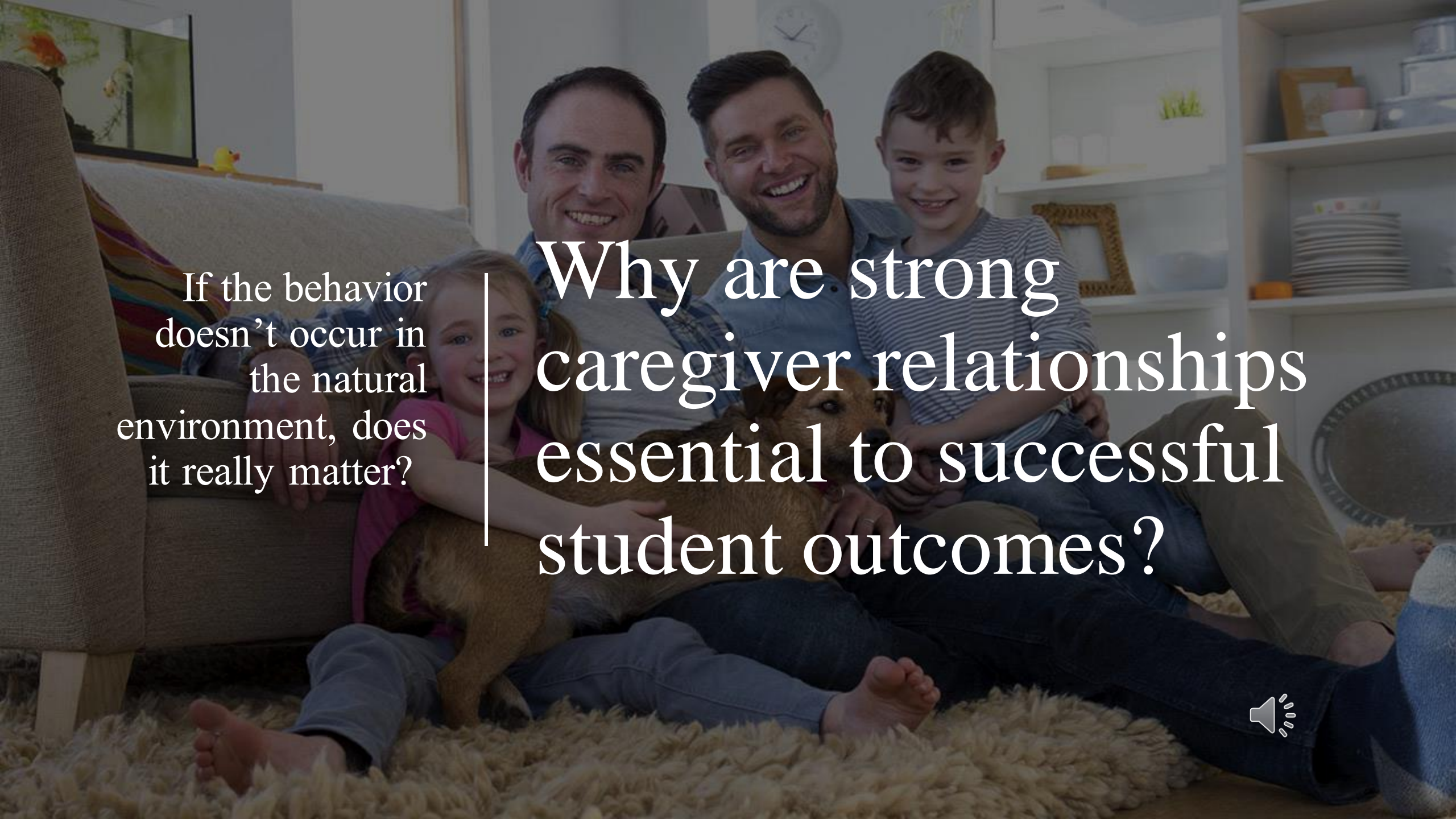




Caregivers are the optimal source of vital information about the student

Why are strong caregiver relationships essential to successful student outcomes?





If the behavior  
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Why are strong  
caregiver relationships  
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student outcomes?



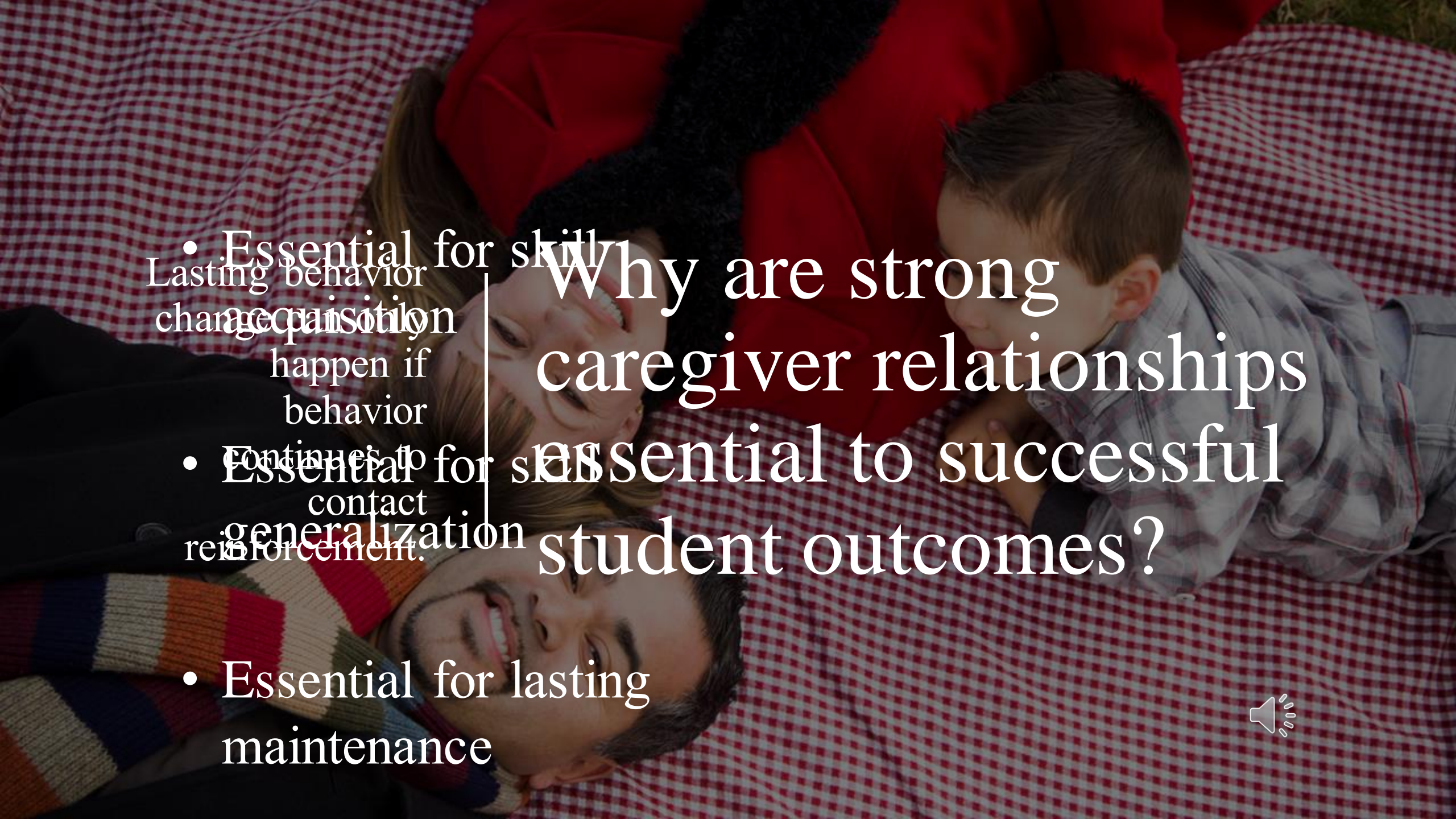


If the behavior doesn't occur reliably in response to natural contingencies, then the time you spent teaching it was wasted.

Why are strong caregiver relationships essential to successful student outcomes?







# Why are strong caregiver relationships essential to successful student outcomes?

- Essential for skill acquisition
- Essential for generalization
- Essential for lasting maintenance

Lasting behavior change happens if behavior

continues to be reinforced.

contact reinforcement.







What skills are essential for effectively building relationships with caregivers?

1. Pairing
2. Active Listening
3. Connecting and Engaging







The entire  
family unit is  
your student



Pairing  
is  
always the  
first step



**A | B**





A family of four is gathered around a table, looking at a smartphone together. The father is on the right, holding the phone, while the mother is on the left. Two young children are in the center, looking at the screen. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an indoor setting at night or in low light. The text "First impressions are essential" is overlaid in white serif font on the left side of the image.

First  
impressions are  
essential



A photograph of a family of four smiling together in a kitchen setting. A woman is hugging a young girl from behind, and a man and another child are visible in the background. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey filter.

The pairing  
process never  
stops







Be fun and  
Engage with the  
student



Become an  
Active  
Listener





- Neutral and nonjudgmental
- Patient (periods of silence are not "filled")
- Feedback to show signs of listening (e.g., smiling, eye contact, leaning in, mirroring)
- Asking questions
  - Summarize

# Be an active listener



- Being stuck in your own head
- Not showing respect for the speaker
- Interrupting
- Rushing the speaker
- Becoming distracted

# The purpose of active listening





# Tips for active listening

~~It is important to hold~~  
~~back your~~ hand while listening.

while the other person speaks. In  
what has been said. Rather, ask  
you will do you should do for you  
than offering unsolicited advice  
to contact about 60% to 70% of the  
advice of commonsense. You are listening  
time while you are listening. The  
might start a conversation by saying  
from toward the other person. The  
in other words, what you are  
and nod your head occasionally.  
saying is... down the  
Avoid folding your arms as this  
conversation. signals that you are not listening



Connecting  
and Engaging

**A | B**





A photograph of two young girls sitting on a bed with colorful, patterned bedding. The girl on the right is smiling and holding up a card (the 7 of spades) to her face. The girl on the left is looking towards the camera with her hand near her mouth. In the foreground, several other playing cards are scattered on the bed. The text "Remember things that are important to the caregiver" is overlaid in white on the right side of the image.

Remember things  
that are  
important to the  
caregiver

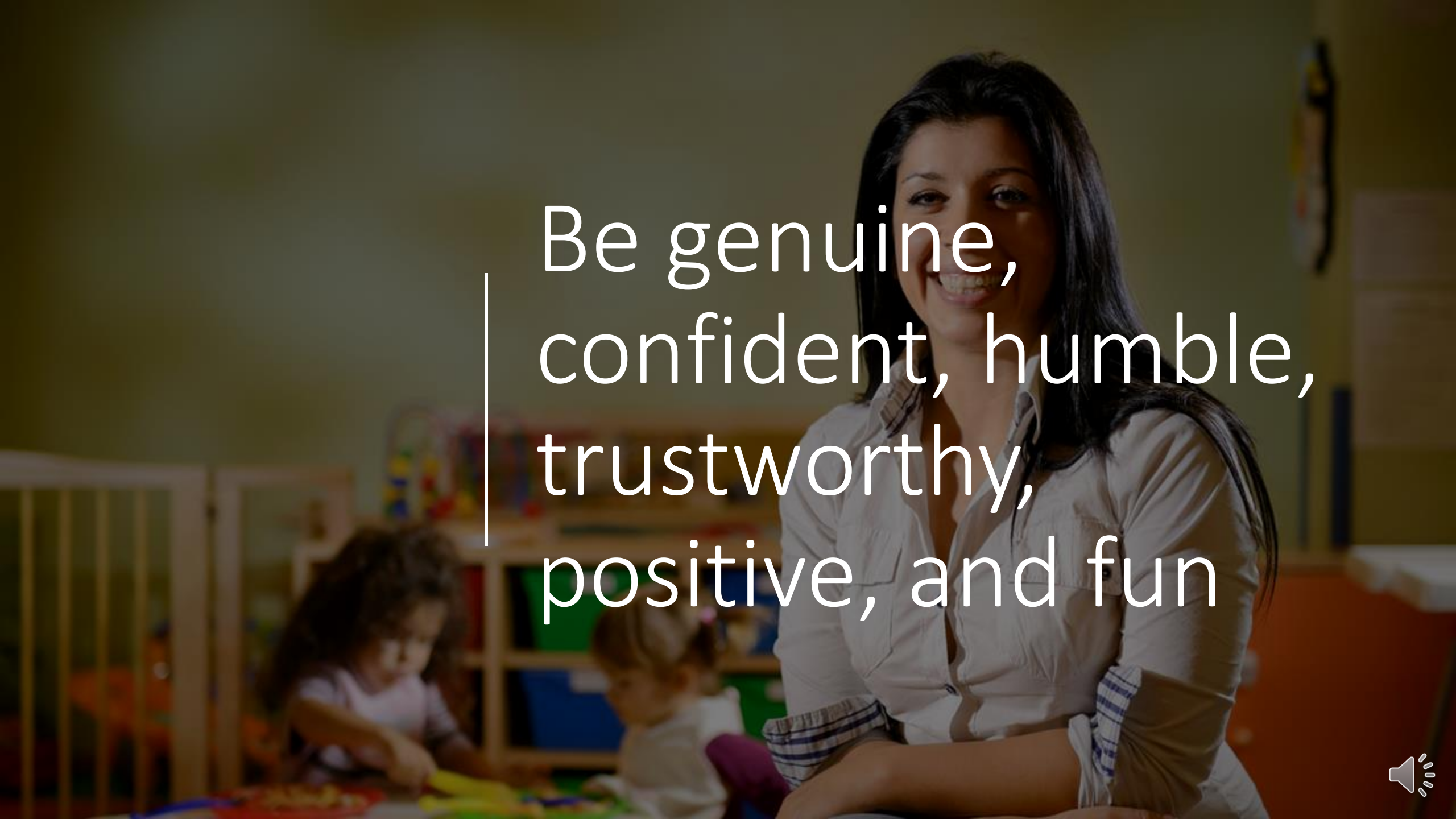


A group of four hikers, two men and two women, are shown from the waist up, wearing backpacks and outdoor gear. They are all smiling and high-fiving each other in a line. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery and a grey sky. The text 'Discover common interests' is overlaid in white, with a vertical line to its left.

Discover  
common  
interests





A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is smiling warmly at the camera. She is sitting in a classroom or playroom. In the background, two young children are visible, one of whom is sitting on a wooden play structure. The room is filled with colorful toys and furniture. The overall atmosphere is bright and positive.

Be genuine,  
confident, humble,  
trustworthy,  
positive, and fun



A photograph of a family of four—a mother, a father, and two children—smiling and laughing joyfully. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey filter. The text "Be consistent, professional, and manage emotions" is written in white, sans-serif font across the center. A vertical white line is positioned to the left of the text, starting from the middle of the word "professional" and extending downwards. A small speaker icon is located in the bottom right corner.

Be consistent,  
professional, and  
manage  
emotions







Let caregivers  
know their  
participation is part  
of the process

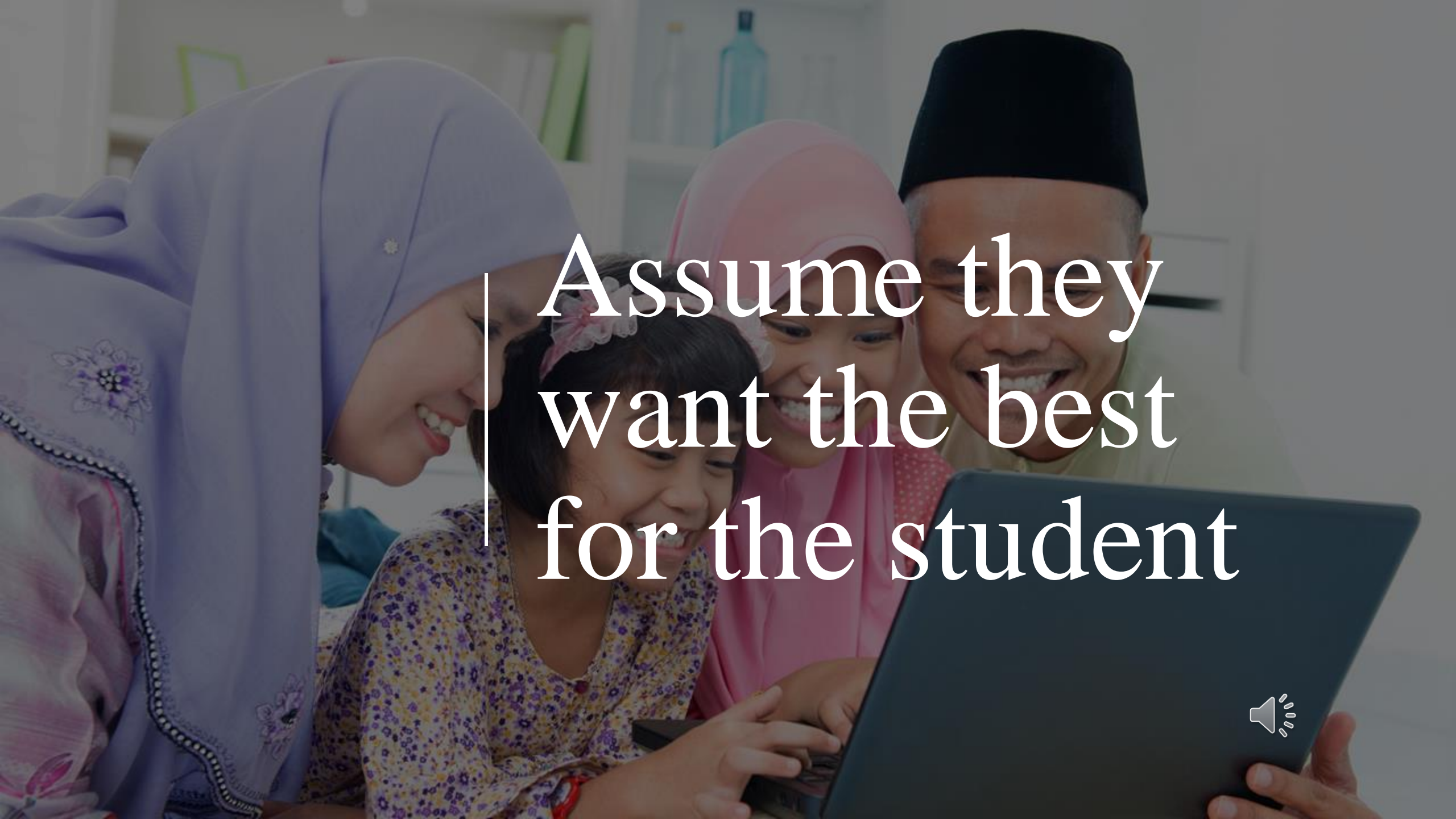


A photograph of three young women with curly hair, smiling and embracing each other outdoors. The woman on the left is wearing a pink shirt and a black headband. The woman in the middle is wearing a white shirt. The woman on the right is wearing a black top. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with greenery.

Set a schedule for  
training from the  
very beginning







Assume they  
want the best  
for the student



- A rigid work schedule
- Confusion about how to implement an intervention
  - A lack of understanding of why you want them to do something
  - A feeling of not enough time to do what you ask
- A sense of hopelessness or overwhelm
- Difficulty changing a routine or habit
  - Their own executive functioning deficits making it hard to remember appointments or commitments
- Lack of childcare
- Insufficient support systems
- Conflicting loyalties or disagreements between parents as to how to do what you ask

# Understand their obstacles







# Show Your Weakness



Compassion  
and  
Consideration








Consider the  
motivation of the  
student and  
caregiver



A photograph of a desert landscape at sunset. Several wind turbines are silhouetted against a bright orange and yellow sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a lens flare effect. The foreground is dark and shows sparse desert vegetation.

Consider the  
family's resources  
and parenting  
style





Consider the  
caregiver's  
changing  
priorities





# Consider the Next Steps









$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

$$\phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma}} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \psi = \hat{H} \psi$$

$$F = E + V = ?$$

# What Is Family Guidance?

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

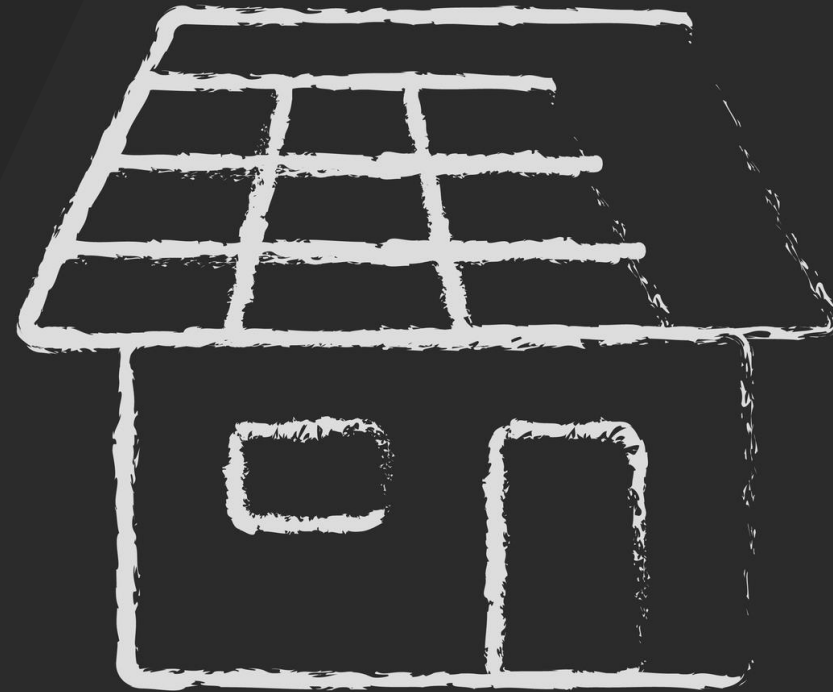
$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$



# Family Guidance – Let's Get Technical!

What is behavioral Family Guidance?

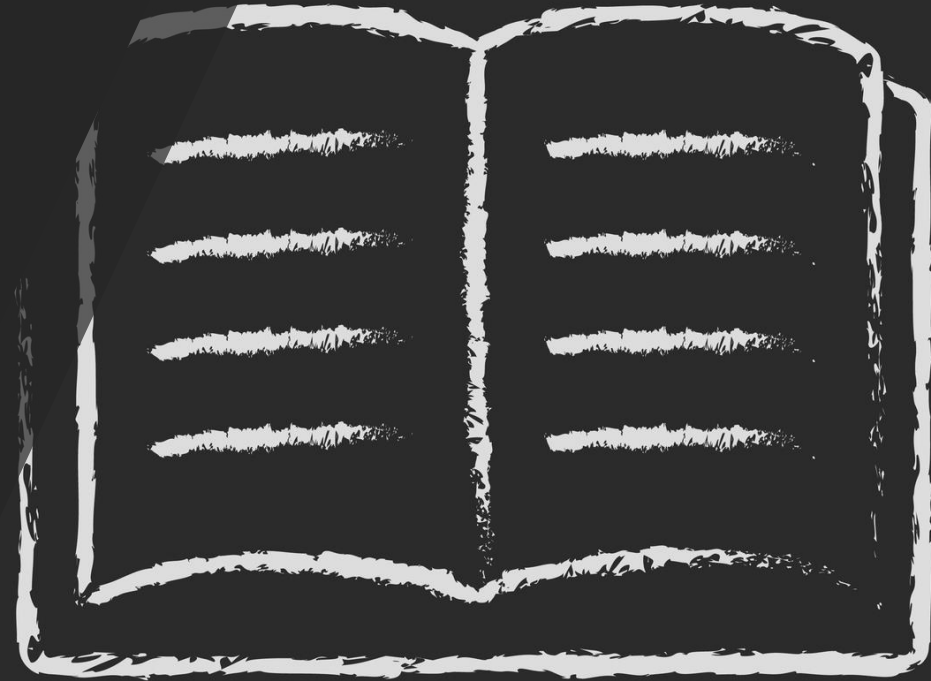
- Performing an individualized assessment of the caregiver's behavioral strengths and areas for growth
- Designing socially valid interventions that allow for socially significant outcomes
- Providing clinical support to the caregivers in order to equip them with skills to generalize treatment effects outside of session times
- Providing guidance to the caregiver as they work with their student to ensure optimal treatment outcomes



# Family Guidance – Let's Get Technical!

What support should we be providing for families?

- Assessments both formal and informal that detect behavioral strengths and areas for growth in relation to the student, and how those relate to parental stress and family functioning
- Quantifiable data reflecting our direct observation and training of caregiver skills
- Individualized caregiver goals that tie back to this information
- Frequent and consistent review of progress
- A focus on goals that address legitimate medical necessity in relation to the student's diagnosis and symptomology

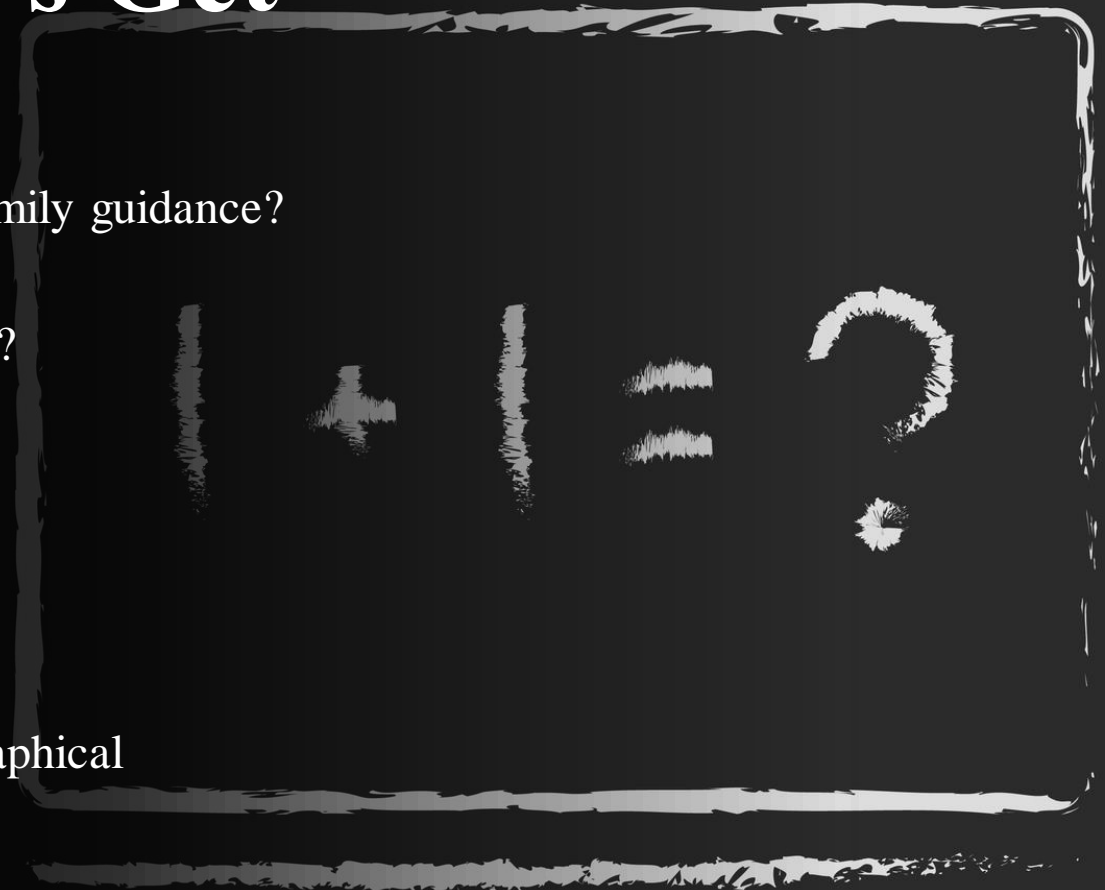




# Family Guidance – Let's Get Technical!

What should we look for and consider before and during family guidance?

- Why did the family reach out for services from you?
- Caregiver- child interactions
- How the assessment methods apply to the family
- The formulation or revision of functional or topographical definitions of behavior
- Methods of Data collection
- Environmental variables and setting events



# Family Guidance – Let's Get Technical!

How can I set myself up for successful Family Guidance sessions?

- Creating an agenda
  - Map out how much time you will be spending doing each activity
  - Consider the amount of time authorized by the payor.  
Do I have an hour a week two hours?  
Should I request more time?
- Informing the parents about everything and involve them in every step
- Identify any materials you need ahead of time to be prepared
- Explain to them the what, why, and how of your assessment and session activities
- Preparing for data collection
  - Develop data sheets electronic or otherwise
  - Define behaviors to measure
- Be ready to be flexible
  - Remember that things don't always go exactly as planned





# Family Guidance – Let's Get Human!

What are the most important things to provide for families?

- Compassionate individualized support that strives to involve and engage the caregiver in the student's treatment
- A focus on collaborative educator-family relationships
- A drive to empower the family to take initiative during the course of the student's care
- Consideration of the family's chosen value
- Consideration of treatment aesthetics from the family's perspective



$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

How do I select family guidance goals?

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$





# Identifying Strengths To Build On, And Areas For Growth


We base your initial goal selections on our assessment activities:

- Family responses on intake forms
- Family answers to structured interview questions
- Reports from parental stress assessments
- Information from values and preference assessments
- Findings from other student skills assessments
- Direct observation and data collection



# Developing individualized goals

## Involve the family in each step of the process:

- Ask them what student issues are most important to them
- What goals would have the most significant outcome on the family's quality of life?
- What does the family value?
- Provide treatment options
- Work with the family on what this looks like in their life
- Ask if they are ready to address certain important skills
- Remember we are addressing parenting behavior  not the child's behavior



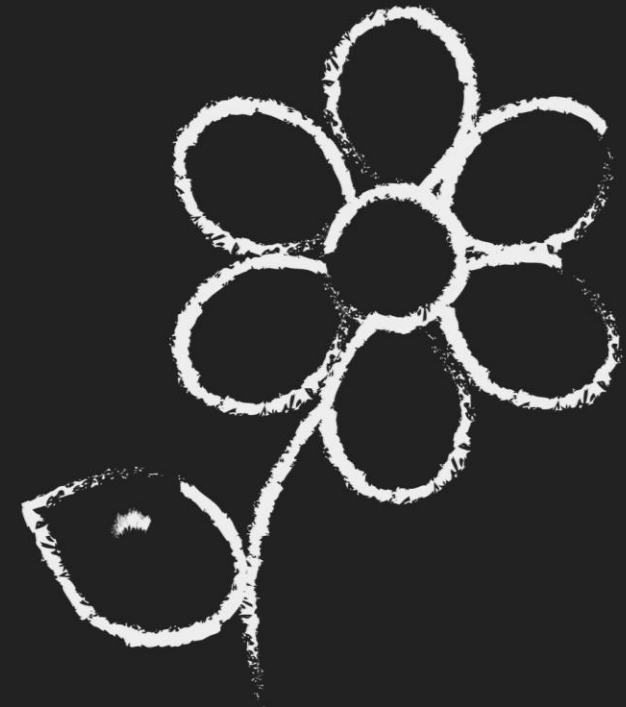
$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

# Developing SMART Family Guidance Goals

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$

# What Are SMART Goals?





S= Specific



M= Measurable

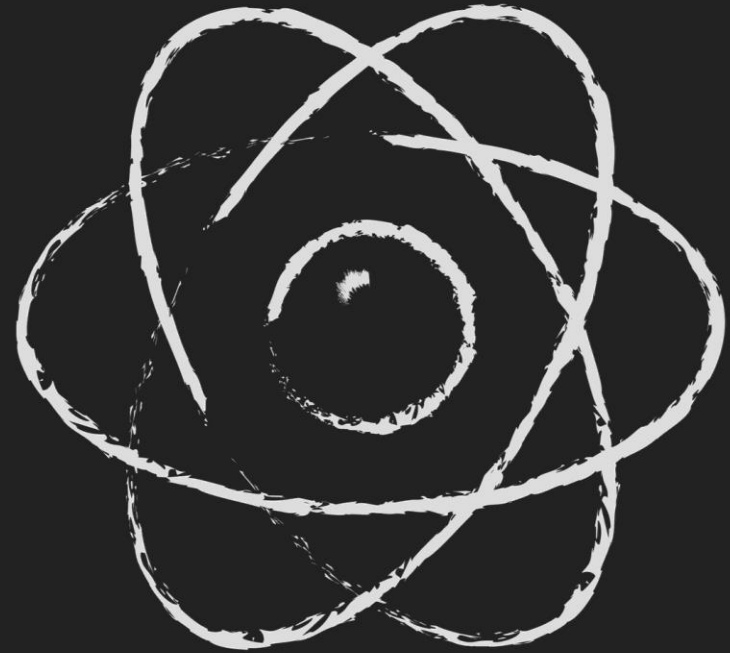




A= Achievable



R= Relevant and  
Realistic





T= Time-bound



$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

$$\phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma}} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \psi = \hat{H} \psi$$

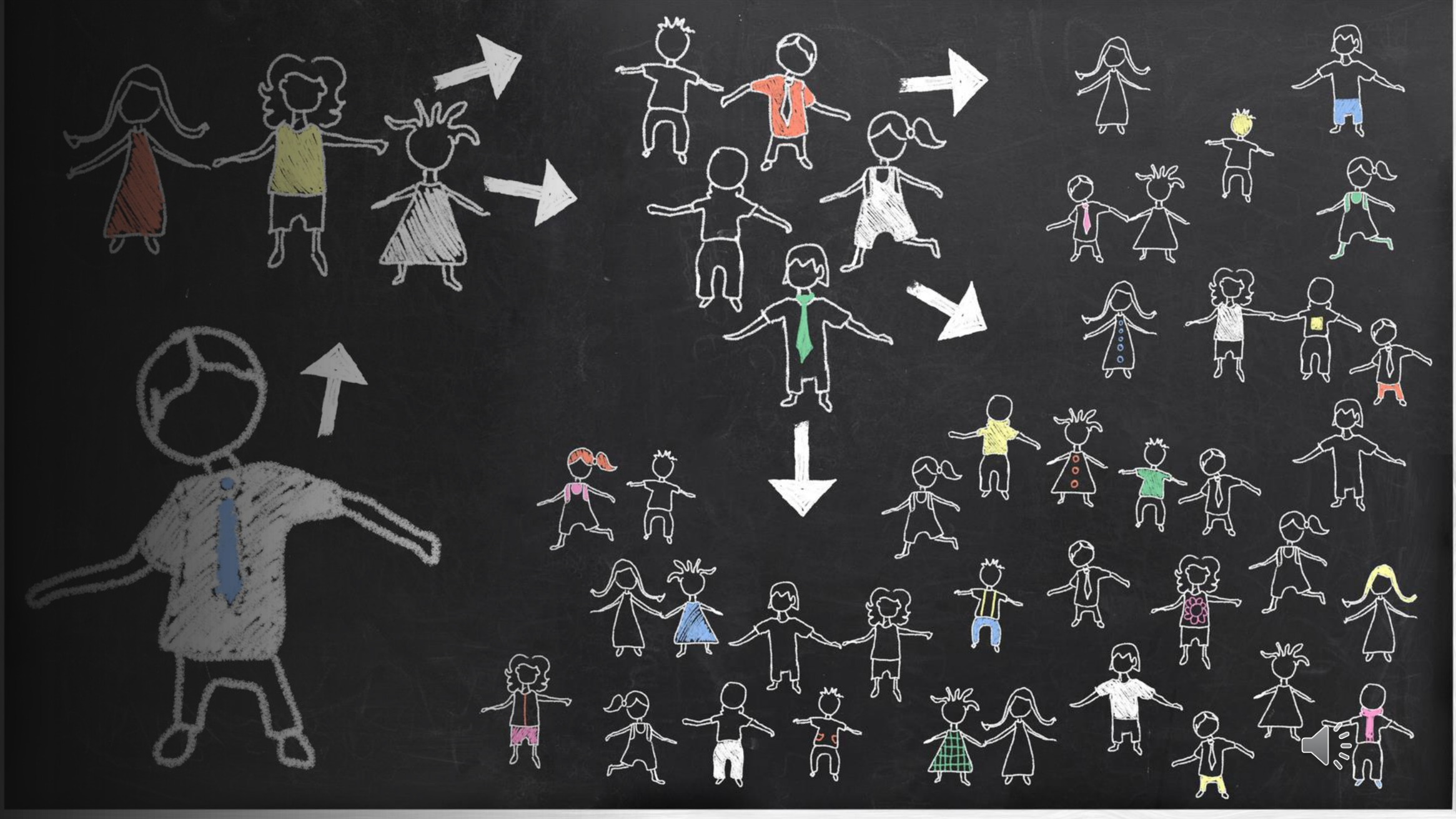
# Writing Effective Programming

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$











Develop clear goals and objectives for the parent, the child, and the trainer.

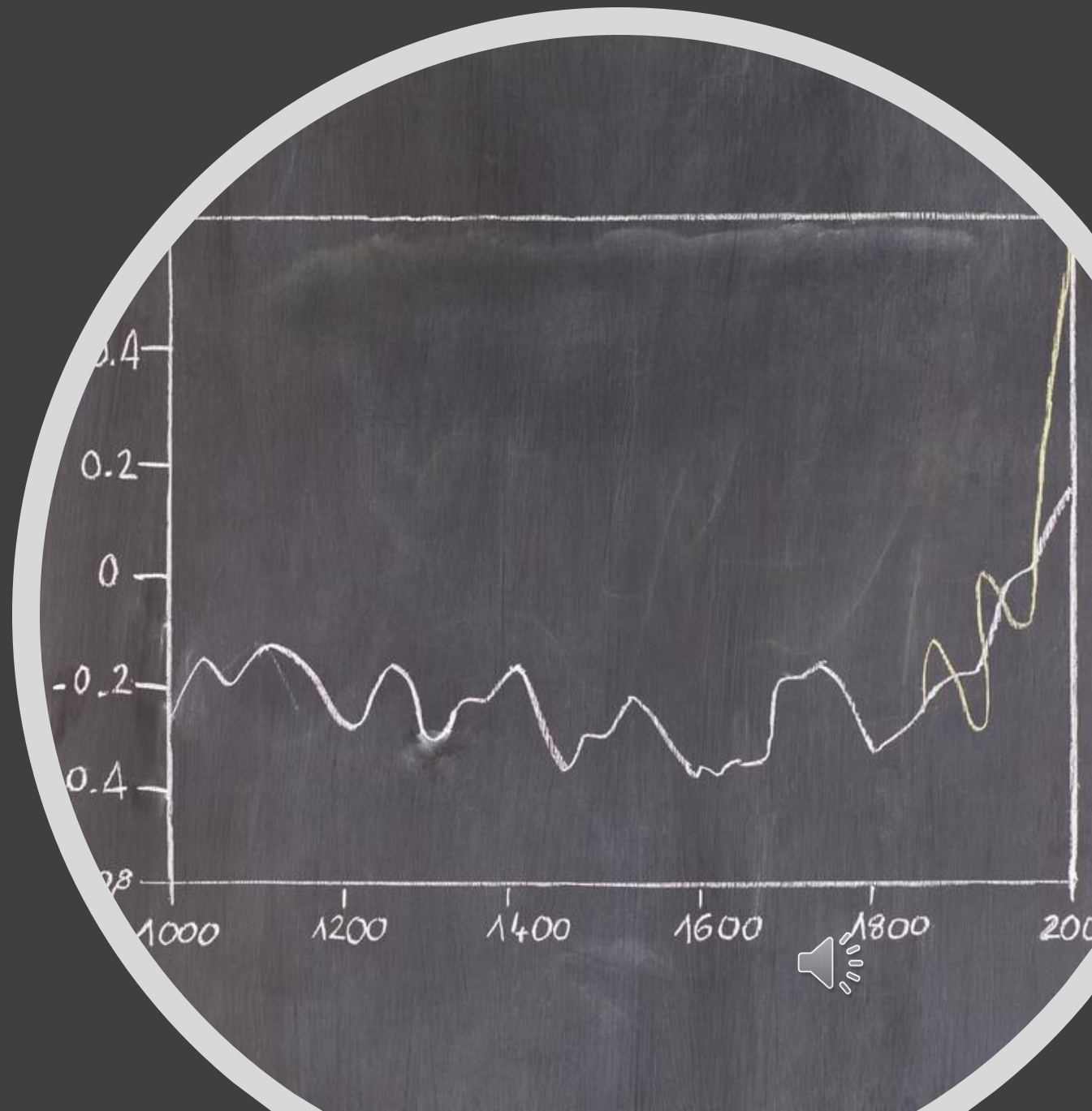




Review your data, goals and objectives after every training session.

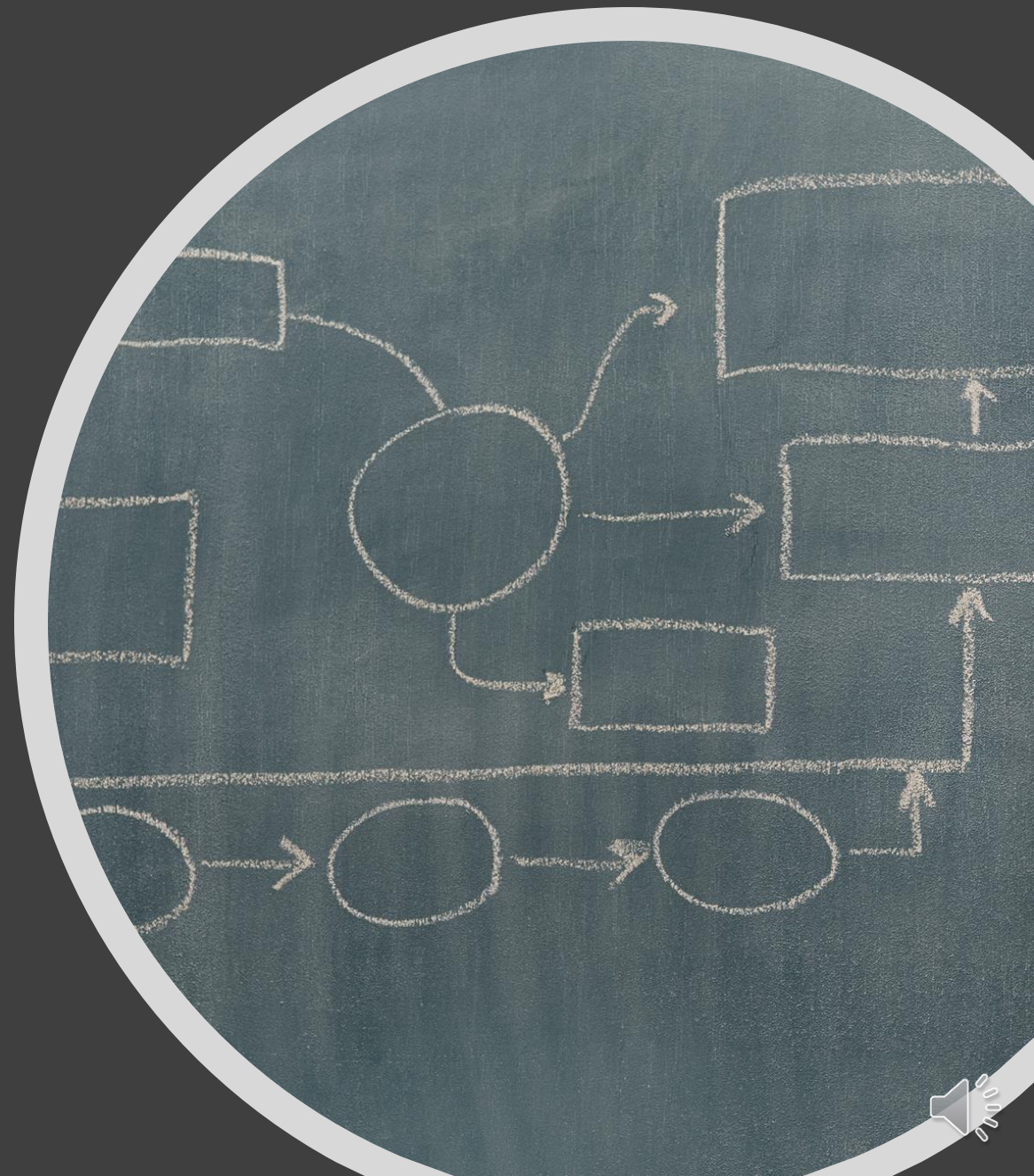


Assign reasonable homework





Work on caregiver skills outside of the training setting



# GOAL

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Work on caregiver skills in contexts that matter to the family





$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

# Effective Family Guidance Session Planning

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$







Make a plan



# Create An Agenda

## Family Guidance Session Agenda

Client Name:	Date:	Time Began:	End:
Family Member(s):	Relation to Client		
Member ID:	BCBA name:		
Health plan:	Next session date:		

Activity	Estimated time	Method	Resources (data sheets, materials, handouts, written instructions, links Etc.)
<b>Check in:</b> How are things going? (pairing)		Be an active listener. Have a brief conversation. Small talk and empathy. This should be less than 5-10% of the session.	
<b>Follow up:</b> What did you cover during the last session?		Getting down to business: turn your active listening to the subject of your last FG session. Follow-Up on Previous family guidance activity, review data, review "homework" or More General Follow-Up on progress, identify barriers. Celebrate successes. What feedback or coaching will/ did you provide? 10-30% of the session	
<b>Learning objectives:</b> What goal or goals will we be working on today: 1. . 2. . 3. .		This should include the Who, what, when, where, and how of the session. This should prepare the family for what you will be doing to address the goals you will be working on. This should take up most of the session 50-80%.	
<b>Recap and review:</b> What did you cover during the session? Were you able to complete the learning objectives that you and the family planned to complete?		Spend a few minutes recapping and reviewing the session. What went well, what did not go as well? How did the family feel the session went? What feedback did you provide? What feedback does the family have for you? What would the family like to focus on next time? 5-10%	
<b>Homework:</b> What should the family do between sessions to practice what you have worked on?		Create 1-3 simple assignment(s) related to the skill(s) addressed during the session. Be specific and collaborative. 5-10% of the session.	





# Send Reminders



# Review and Recap

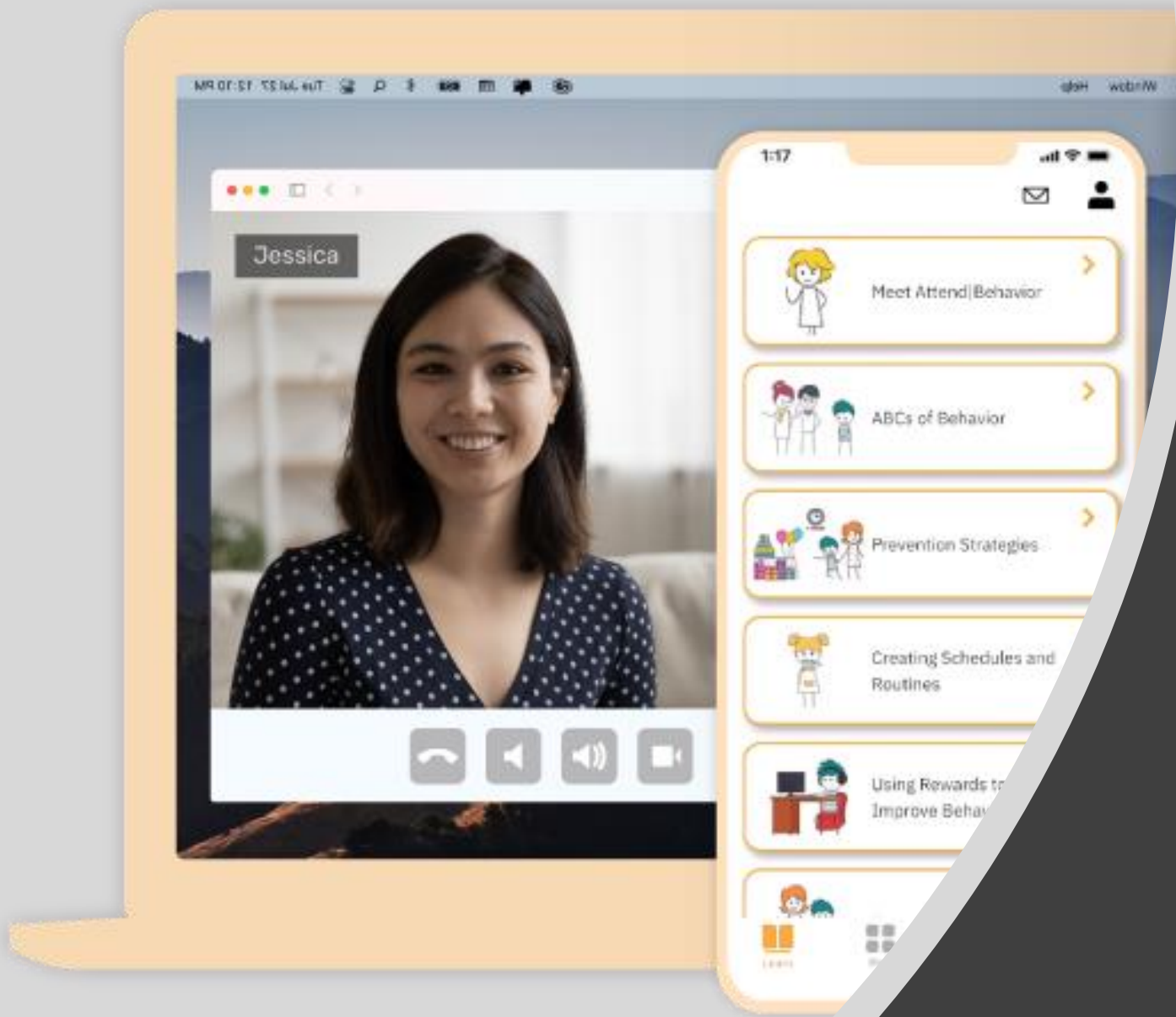




Show Empathy  
And Ask  
Questions







# ATTEND | BEHAVIOR



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