

*Managing The 5 Most Challenging Childhood Behavioral Health Conditions Of Our Day: A New Look at Old Challenges for the Modern Parent, and How to Keep Them at Bay, by Dr. John Carosso, is a book dedicated to helping parents feel comfortable and confident in managing their child's emotional, behavioral, and learning issues.*

# **Managing The 5 Most Challenging Childhood Behavioral Health Conditions Of Our Day:**

**A New Look at Old Challenges for the Modern Parent,  
and How to Keep Them at Bay**

By Dr. John Carosso

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# MANAGING

*The 5 Most Challenging*

# CHILDHOOD BEHAVIORAL

*Health Conditions of Our Day*



A New Look at Old Challenges for the Modern Parent,  
and How to Keep Them at Bay



DR. JOHN CAROSSO

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***Introduction***  
***New Challenges from Old Disorders***

Hardly a day passes without parents hearing that the challenges they face are more daunting than what was faced by our grandparents. Clearly, there is some truth to that sentiment. Our grandparents did not have to protect us from technology and the potential predators who lurk for kids on the internet, nor all the dangers of social media, cyber-bullying, texting and sexting, video-game addiction, pornography and all the adult oriented material on the internet to which kids often have ready-access. It seems the sexual predation in any local neighborhood is on-the-rise, school shootings on the news, and on and on it goes. However, if that weren't bad enough, we also have to manage problems that have always been an issue, but now are becoming increasingly problematic in our modern day-and-age. In that respect, there are any number of maladies and disorders that have been around for decades and since we were young but, looking back on it, seemed less of a problem, less impactful, and more readily managed than today. Examples that come to mind include how we parents, today, are told to enhance a child's self-esteem; understand, diagnose, and manage symptoms of ADHD; helping our child with reading issues (dyslexia); the broad, confusing, and growing autism spectrum, and addressing our child's anxiety and fears. However,

there are countless other challenges we face, as parents, that decades ago were not even on the radar. This would include trying to decipher and accurately interpret the loads of information that is thrown our way through media. How do we know what to believe? Are the headlines true and accurate? Not to mention dealing with behavioral issues: should be spanks, hug, remove the play-station, run and hide, yell, or do all the above? What about time-out; does it really work and, if so, how? Should I be putting my child on the couch for time-out, in the corner, or locking them in their room – yikes!! I could go on and on, and I will in this book and the following series. My goal is to ensure that you're well-informed and feeling comfortable and confident in dealing with any child-related behavioral health issue or concern. In the meantime, it's interesting to note that each of these disorders, issues, and concerns has been around for a long time but, today, take-on different tones, severities, seem to surface in different ways than when we were kids, and have a different impact. The purpose of this book is to take a look at each of these 'old' conditions, but note how they impact our children today, and help you to effectively manage the conditions in these modern times. In this first book of this series, I'll target the issues of self-esteem, ADHD, dyslexia, autism, and anxiety/worry. The next series will tackle a host of other challenges that have been around for a long time but also currently surface in different ways, including the aforementioned behavioral disorders, information over-load, as well as underachievement. I trust you'll find these series to be illuminating and, most importantly,

empowering as you learn to manage these conditions in a capable and confident manner, free from worry or sleepless nights. So, here we go...



Tell them how you feel, don't show them (control your emotional response)

### **9. ROLE MODEL APPROPRIATE PROBLEM-SOLVING**

'What you do speaks so loudly, I can't hear what you say'

Words and emotion are your enemy (brief, no emotion)

Role model effective problem-solving

### **10.PICK YOUR BATTLES**

Be flexible

Check-in later

#### **Some more bonus tips and suggestions:**

- **I love you just the way you are!**

Remind yourself to love your child the way he or she is. Accept that your child is more active and easily distracted than most, and subsequently needs more attention, guidance, support, and love. Nevertheless, there are some specific things you can do to help.

- **Softer and closer approach**

Children with ADHD tend to not respond well to high emotional, reactivity, and a loud and demanding tone. In fact, I've found that, just the opposite, the 'softer and closer approach', works wonderfully.

## ***The Softer and Closer Approach Explained***

### **How it all began**

Many years ago, starting out as a Psychologist, I came across a Principal who established a ritual with his teachers. At the conclusion of every morning meeting, he would huddle the teachers together and lead a chant “softer and closer” repeated four to five times, before sending the teachers off to their students.

### **Repeat after me...**

I am hard pressed to contemplate a more significant or relevant mantra for teachers or parents. I have espoused the “softer and closer” approach since that time, and can think of no better way to connect with a child. Getting on the child’s level, moving-in close, and speaking in a soft tone, if not a whisper, is remarkably powerful, comforting, and bonding for a child in any situation, but especially when the child is experiencing a difficulty and needs supportive guidance.

### **Go get softer and closer**

Try it with your own child; rather than standing across the room and yelling, get close, soft, and comforting in tone, and see the difference.

## **Time-In?**

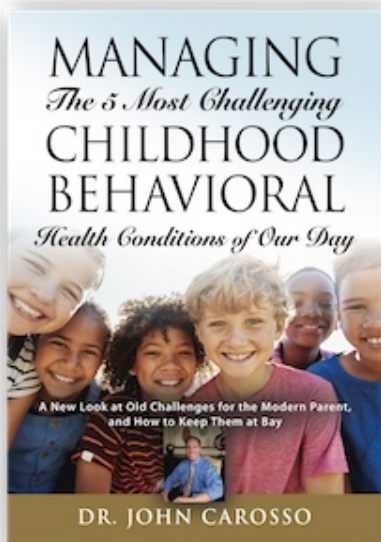
I've also espoused time-in rather than time-out. Of course, the latter is necessary at times, but far too often we neglect trying the former.

The 'softer and closer' approach is vital. Hyperactive kids need individual attention, close proximity with eye contact, speaking firmly but softly, and to be taken by the hand and walked-through through their responsibilities including chores. Don't expect your child to go upstairs, brush his teeth, put on his pj's, clean-up after himself, and come downstairs without you repeating step-by-step directions and providing ample oversight. Your individualized attention is invaluable and vital. Enjoy this time of bonding. Don't become frustrated but, rather, enjoy the opportunities to spend extra time with your child, helping him to complete daily tasks and to make good decisions. Keep in mind that there will be a day when he'll be out of the home and, believe it or not, you'll miss this time.

## ***Daily Schedule and Routine***

keep the daily schedule and expectations as routine and consistent as possible. Your child will carry-out tasks easier if the responsibilities are completed at the same time, done the same way, and in the same manner on a daily basis; no guesswork.

Use schedules, both written and visual; such cues are invaluable as reminders of 'what to do next' and can include, for example, to 'turn



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