

Handouts Part One

The Incredible Years

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These handouts are also available on our website, www.incredibleyears.com (in *Group Leader Resources* section).



NOTE: Handouts are divided for session one and session two.

Home Activities for the Week

Child-Directed Narrated Play Promotes Positive Relationships



To Do:

- **PLAY** for 10 minutes twice each day with your child. Get in your child's attention spotlight and be child directed; express your joy to your child when playing.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the "Parent Child-Directed Play" record sheet and bring to the next session.
- **USE** visual prompts and choice activity board for children with limited language.

To Read:



Chapter 1, "Getting to Know Your Child" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*

AND

Chapter 2, "Getting in Your Child's Spotlight with Child-Directed Narrated Play" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child's attention spotlight while playing together!



Handout

RECORD SHEET

Parent Child-Directed Narrated Play

Date: _____

Instructions: Record two times you played with your child, what you did, and any reaction or response you noticed in your child.



**Parent Play Behaviors
I want to do more of:**

Example: Spend more time doing what my child wants, imitating his sounds, and following his lead.

1.

2.



**Parent-Child Activities
Sample Script:**

Example: We played with farm animals. "I will do the same as you. The cow is going 'moo, moo!'"

1.

2.

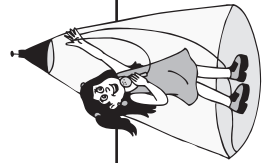


Child's Response:

Example: Robbie imitated my animal sounds and we went back and forth imitating each other.

1.

2.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



Getting in Your Child's Attention Spotlight During Play

- Position your play carefully so you can have face-to-face contact with your child without too much distance.
- Reduce distractions by turning off the TV, computer, phones and limit other people present.
- Be child-directed and play with your child's favorite activity.
- Follow your child's focus of attention or theme during play.
- Observe and respond to your child's nonverbal initiations; avoid instructions, corrections, and questions—curb your desire to give too much help.
- Describe and narrate what your child is doing with simple words or short phrases and joy (like a sportscaster).
- Model and imitate your child's actions, words and sounds with enthusiasm and entertainment; offer to help.
- When your child stops interacting with you, seems disinterested, or is engaged in repetitive and obsessive actions, offer another favorite joint activity or change the action slightly with a new idea, song, funny gesture or sound effects and sensory routine.
- Encourage your child to look at you by putting a desired object next to your face and wait for a response. E.g., "What do you want me to do now?"
- Reinforce your child for looking at you with smiles, praise, laughter and by giving him or her the desired object. Be an "enthusiastic audience."

Remember: Your child is not deliberately trying to exclude you. She/he just doesn't know how to interact yet.



"Shine a light" on your child during play time!

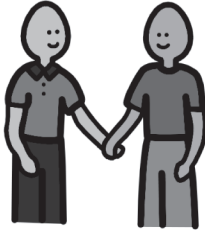

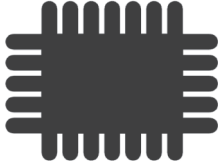

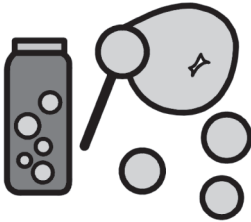

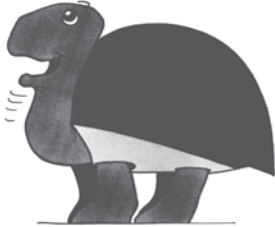




Spotlighting

Sample Choice Activity Cue Cards

If parents have access to the program BoardMaker™ or a similar symbol generating program, they can use this to create their own activity boards customized to their child's particular interests.

Example choice activity cards:

<p>Friend</p> 	<p>Train</p> 	<p>Bristle Blocks</p> 
<p>Ball</p> 	<p>Bubbles</p> 	<p>Book</p> 
<p>Take a Deep Breath</p> 	<p>Sing Songs</p> 	<p>Crafts</p> 



Child Communication Checklist (With Parent)

	Doesn't understand/ ignores/blank stare	Looks at parent	Protests/ Refuses/ Tantrums	Pulls parent arm/ gestures	Points/ Reacts/ Nods	Uses visual pictures	Shares/ Offers things	Makes sounds	Immediate Echoes/ copies	Delayed echoes*	Uses 1-3 words/ signs	Whole sentence/ signs
Wants something from parents (food, toy, help, play etc.)												
Wants to continue playing/reading/singing with parent												
Not getting what s/he wants												
Wants to stop activity												
Response to parent one-step direction												
Response to parent multi-step direction												
Response to parent offering choices												
Response to parent greeting (hello, bye-bye)												
Feelings expression												

Reason Child Communicates

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

*"Delayed Echoes" defined as copies from TV shows, common expressions



Child Communication Checklist (With Peer/Sibling)

Reason Child Communicates	Doesn't understand/ ignores/blank stare	Looks at child	Protests/ Refuses/ Tantrums	Pulls child's arm/ gestures	Points/ Reacts/ Nods	Uses visual pictures	Shares/ Offers things	Makes sounds	Immediate Echoes/ copies	Delayed echoes*	Uses 1-3 words/ signs	Whole sentence/ signs
Wants something from peers (food, toy, help, play etc.)												
Wants to continue playing/reading/singing with peer												
Not getting what s/he wants												
Wants to stop activity												
Response to peer request												
Response to peer initiation												
Response to peer greeting												
Feelings expression												

Reason Child Communicates

*"Delayed Echoes" defined as copies from TV shows, common expressions

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

Parents Thinking Like Scientists



Goals

Child Problems



Child Strengths



How I am Incredible!



My support people:

My Language Level (*e.g., no spoken language, visual language, 1-2 words, echolalic, good language*):

My Play Level (*e.g., play alone, anxious or withdrawn, want to initiate play with others but don't know how, initiate but inappropriate*):

My Sensory Likes (*e.g., trucks, swinging, music, water play, bananas*):

My Sensory Dislikes (*e.g., loud noises, certain smells*):

My Parent's Goals for Me: (*e.g., make a friend, more words, follow directions*):

Home Activities for the Week

Child-Directed Narrated Play Promotes Language Development



To Do:

- **PLAY** for 10 minutes twice each day with your child. Be attentive, child directed and follow your child's lead.
- **NARRATE** your child's play; imitate your child's words and sustain back and forth interactions during daily routines (e.g., dressing, eating).
- **RECORD** your experiences on the "Parent Child-Directed Play" record sheet and bring to the next session.

To Read:



Chapter 2, "Getting in Your Child's Spotlight with Child-Directed Narrated Play" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child's attention spotlight while playing together!



Handout

RECORD SHEET

Parent Child-Directed Narrated Play

Date: _____

Instructions: Record two times you played with your child, what you did, and any reaction or response you noticed in your child.



**Parent Play Behaviors
I want to do more of:**

Example: Spend more time describing my child's actions and engaging in joint attention interactions.

- 1.
- 2.



**Parent-Child Activities
Sample Script:**

Example: We played with puzzles. "You are finding the place for the airplane puzzle piece. You are looking carefully."

- 1.
- 2.



Child's Response:

Example: Robbie seemed to enjoy my describing his actions and occasionally looked up at me to copy what I said.

- 1.
- 2.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



Narrated Child-Directed Play

The key aspects for promoting language expression in children who have little sound or language production is the following:

- Try to get face-to-face contact and gain your child's attention before talking.
- Use simple, short sentences to describe and narrate what your child is doing, seeing and experiencing; label their actions and objects. Limit instructions and questions. Follow your child's lead.
- Wait and pause for your child's turn to respond with a gesture, or look, or word before speaking and narrating again.
- Imitate and repeat your child's sounds, gestures, behaviors, and words (sound effects such as animal or engine noises help promote sound production).
- Try to sustain back-in-forth verbal interchange as long as your child is interested by reinforcing verbal and nonverbal responses.
- If your child is just speaking with one word, start by adding a second word. Keep it simple, slow down, and build repetition.
- Combine your words with gestures and songs and imitate your child's words and actions.
- Narrate your child's activities during play times as well as daily routines such as mealtimes, bedtime, dressing, teeth brushing, diapering and while in the car or bus.

Note: You don't need to focus on describing numbers, letters and colors for children who are just beginning to talk. These can be described once your child can name some basic objects and actions.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!



“Descriptive Commenting” Checklist

Descriptive Commenting is a powerful way to strengthen a child’s language skills. The following provides some examples of actions, objects, prepositions or sounds you can comment upon when interacting with a child on the Autism Spectrum. Modulate the number of words and complexity of your language according to the “one up” rule. Combine physical gestures with animated language. Remember to keep your language simple, slow down, and build repetition. Write down the the verbal and nonverbal communication approaches you will use to achieve your goals.

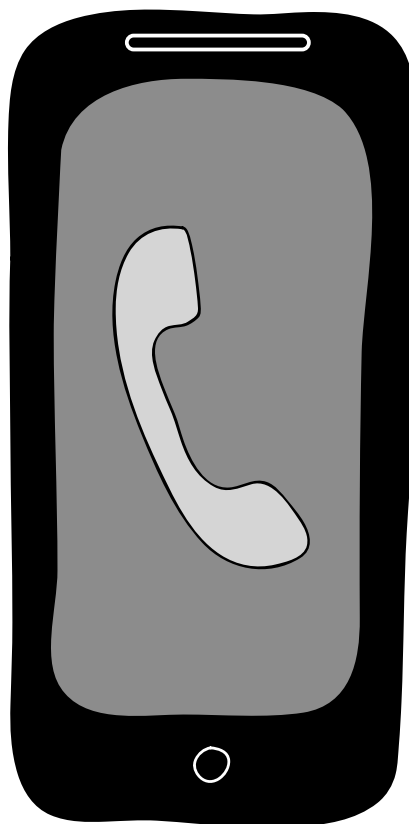
Actions	Goals
<input type="checkbox"/> walk <input type="checkbox"/> wash hands <input type="checkbox"/> run <input type="checkbox"/> bye <input type="checkbox"/> finished <input type="checkbox"/> hi <input type="checkbox"/> sit <input type="checkbox"/> break <input type="checkbox"/> stop <input type="checkbox"/> quiet <input type="checkbox"/> stand <input type="checkbox"/> shoes off/on <input type="checkbox"/> wait <input type="checkbox"/> your turn	
Objects	
<input type="checkbox"/> books <input type="checkbox"/> clothing items <input type="checkbox"/> animals, puppets, or stuffed animals <input type="checkbox"/> transport toys (tricycle, truck, boat) <input type="checkbox"/> art supplies (crayons, play dough) <input type="checkbox"/> foods & drinks, food utensils <input type="checkbox"/> body parts (ear, nose, arm)	
Prepositions	
<input type="checkbox"/> up <input type="checkbox"/> behind <input type="checkbox"/> down <input type="checkbox"/> in front <input type="checkbox"/> inside <input type="checkbox"/> next to <input type="checkbox"/> on top <input type="checkbox"/> below	
Sounds	
<input type="checkbox"/> loud <input type="checkbox"/> crash <input type="checkbox"/> quiet <input type="checkbox"/> zip zip <input type="checkbox"/> funny <input type="checkbox"/> choo choo <input type="checkbox"/> whee <input type="checkbox"/> animal sounds <input type="checkbox"/> zoom <input type="checkbox"/> letters	

Calling Your Buddy

From now until the final week of the Parenting Course you will be asked to call a person from your group. You will have the same “buddy” for several weeks. The purpose of these calls is to share ideas and “hot tips” about the home activities, such as how one of your play times went, how you set up your rewards system, what rewards you used, or consequences you found effective when handling a particular problem behavior.

These calls need last no more than 5-10 minutes and can be scheduled at your own and your buddy’s convenience.

Parents sharing with each other can not only provide a rich bank of creative solutions but also be supportive on one another!



Promoting Your Toddler's Optimal Emotion, Social, Cognitive and Language Brain Development

Predictable Responses for Separation and Reunions

Familiar rhythmic motion

Calm, Patient and Consistent Responses

Emotion Coaching

Providing Healthy Food

Managing Tantrums with Ignoring, Redirection, Distractions and Patience

Modeling and Prompting Self-Regulation Skills

Predictable Responses for Bedtimes and Mealtimes

Daily Physical Play and Exercise

Puppet Play

Modeling and Prompting Words

Safe & Child-Proofed Environment

Pretend Play

Tender Touch

Describing objects, actions and positions

Daily Reading Time

Surprise Rewards

Positive Attention and Love

Singing Songs and Rhymes

Developmentally Appropriate Requests and Rules

Child-directed Play Time

Mirroring and Imitating Toddler's Actions and Sounds

Positive Tone of Voice and Praise

Social Coaching

Limited Screen Time

Emotional Development

Social Development

Language/Cognitive Development

Physical Development

LEGEND

Handouts *Part Two*

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Home Activities for the Week

Pre-Academic & Persistence Coaching Promote Children's Language Development & School Readiness



To Do:

- **PLAY** with your child twice a day, being child-directed and using descriptive commenting, pre-academic and persistence coaching, stay in your child's attention spotlight using gestures, repetition, visual and physical prompts as needed.
- **READ** with your child using face-to-face interactive reading skills.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the "Pre-Academic & Persistence Coaching" Record Sheet and bring to next session.

To Read:



Chapter 3, "Descriptive Commenting and Coaching Promotes Language Development" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



***Shine a light on your child's language
development and school readiness!***



Handout

RECORD SHEET

Pre-Academic & Persistence Coaching

Date: _____

Instructions: Record two examples of pre-academic or persistence coaching statements you made and your child's response.



Parent Play Language I want to do more of:

Example: Describing my child's actions, what he is playing with, and be responsive to his interests so we have joint attention.

1.

2.



Parent-Child Activities Sample Scripts:

Example, Parent: "You are working hard and are really focused on the long red duplos. Here is a square red one I found."

1.

2.

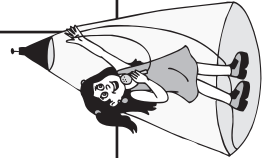


Child's Response:

Example: Robbie imitated color names.

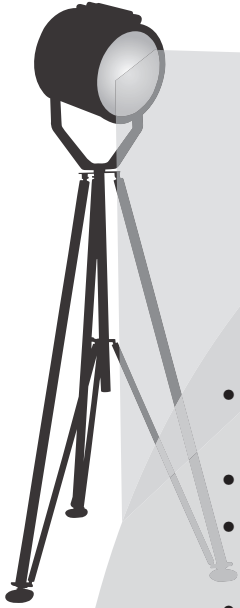
1.

2.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



Coaching Children's Reading Readiness

- Read at a quiet time when you are relaxed and comfortable—with TV and music turned off (this prevents over stimulation).
- Read for a few minutes each day when your child seems calm and alert.
- Place your child in front of you during reading so you have face-to-face contact when possible.
- Adapt reading to your child's stage of communication.
- Use physical hand signals, pointing gestures, sign language, and animal sounds when looking at pictures.
- Respond immediately to your child's verbalization or gestures.
- Prompt and imitate your child's word use.
- Re-read books your child likes many times. Read slowly. Be animated.
- Praise and give positive feedback (that's right!).
- Slide your finger under the words or letters on the page and show left to right movement. Draw attention by guiding child's finger under words you read.
- Encourage your child to turn the pages and choose a book he/she is interested in. Let child fill in blanks.
- Choose interactive books with flaps, buttons to push and textures - simple plots and daily routines.
- Create books for your child with photos and magazine pictures.
- End reading with repetitive "all done" signal.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!



SPOTLIGHTING



Building Blocks for Reading With Extra CARE for Young Children with Autism and Language Delays



Extra care reading involves providing children with autism and language delays with added opportunities for language development, joint attention and social interaction. To start with take extra care to choose a book with your child that is on a topic s/he is emotionally interested in, perhaps something from your child's "like list".

For example, if your child likes planes, trains, cooking, or a particular animal, pick a book on this topic. This will help you to enter your child's interest spotlight. Choose books with pictures, very few words and sensory activities, if possible, with flaps and hidden objects that allow the child to open and close flaps, to touch different textures and provide different smells.



Comment strategically according to your child's language level.

The amount of commenting you do will depend on the extra-care you take in first understanding your child's receptive and expression language ability.

For a child with no language, start by making the appropriate sound effects that match the book pictures of the animals, trains, or birds and imitate your child's attempts to copy these sounds or gestures s/he makes. Name the object when you make the sounds and, when possible, also include the actual object that matches the picture in the book. For example, have a toy train, animal, or bird puppet while you are reading the related book. Pace slowly and repeat 1-2 words with hand signals, pointing gestures, funny noises, and enthusiastic tone. Read the book so that your child can see your face and emotions.

For a child with a few more words, you can increase your word content using the "one-up rule", that is, if your child uses two to three word sentences, you can add another word. For example, if your child says: "polar bear growls," describe the animal by saying, "a huge, polar bear who growls like..." accompanied by the gesture for huge. Start with naming words of objects, feelings and actions before progressing to pre-academic words of colors, shapes, numbers and letters. Continue using gestures, sound effects, and songs or rhymes to stay in your child's attention spotlight.

Children will lose interest if your verbal language is too advanced or hurried. Remember this is all about encouraging joint attention and showing you are attentive to your child's interests and are keeping the communication interaction going. Try using partial prompts by giving your child part of a sentence or word you have modeled often to see if s/he can fill in the missing word. For example, "it is a huge, polar...." and see if your child can complete the word bear.

For a child with more language and sentences and who understands word objects and actions, add descriptions of colors, shapes, positions, numbers, letters and run your finger under the lines of the words as you read them. Start with modeling a full sentence and then after your child copies, try partial prompts by giving 2-3 words, and let your child complete the sentence. Bring in a puppet or special sensory character your child likes, and have the puppet describe the picture using modeling and prompts to enhance the child's responses.



Avoid open-ended questions, pace your commenting, and repeat often.

For children with receptive and expressive language delays, asking questions when reading can be intimidating and cause withdrawal, anxiety and confusion because the child doesn't understand and may think you don't understand him. Instead strategically decide what words you want to encourage, allow time for your child's response (verbally or nonverbally) and then imitate their response. This will show your child you are interested in him. If your child repeats your sound effects, or gesture, or word, imitate that again so your child sees how his response is affecting your response. Be sure to smile and have eye contact when you do this.



Respond and listen with interest. Wait and pause before talking again so your child has time to respond. When your child responds with a smile, or gesture, or sound effect, or words, enthusiastically respond to these responses verbally and nonverbally whether or not your child seems to be making sense. Always act as if you understand what your child is saying! Imitate your child's gestures, sounds and words. The goal here is to not only encourage your child's interest in books and to get into his or her spotlight, but also to engage in joint attention and positive interactions.

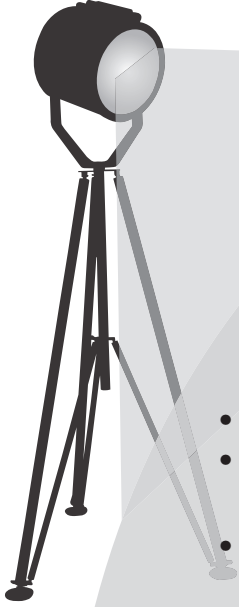


Expand on what your child says. For a child with no language you can use hand signals to model the action, or use the actual object as you name it, or use one of your child's likes (song, touch or favorite object) to add more excitement to the joint reading interaction. For children with some words use the "one-up rule" and add an additional word. To combine social interactions with reading, read to two children at the same time and prompt language in both children. Occasionally surprise children by doing something unexpected or a variation on the story such as a different and humorous word, or naming the object or feeling incorrectly, and then correct yourself. "Oops my mistake!" Make games out of a book by covering up a picture with sticky notes and guessing what is under there, or what comes on the next page. Sing a song using the word you are encouraging. End the reading with the routine of an "all done" and hand signal.

REMEMBER EXTRA-CARE READING WITH YOUR CHILD MEANS:

- **Keeping the reading fun and simple using the “one up” principle** to decide how much language to use when reading.
- **Showing kindness and avoiding commands and criticism** when reading with your child.
- **Allowing your child to reread stories as often as s/he wishes.** This is a pre-reading skill and leads to mastery and confidence. Once your child has learned the story you can add partial prompts to see if s/he will fill in the blank.
- **Slowing down** and building repetition with an enthusiastic tone.
- **Reading** so your child can see your face and expressions.
- **Singing** at times during reading.
- **Using hand signals, gestures, sound effects, and objects** to enhance reading understanding.
- **Making sure there is a back and forth quality** to the reading and you are not simply reading without requiring some response or connection with your child before continuing to read.

SPOTLIGHTING



Pre-Academic Coaching Promotes Children's Language Skills

- Notice what your child is giving attention to and talk about it.
- Describe the objects, shapes, numbers, letters and colors of things your child plays with; avoid questions.
- Listen to your child and imitate or mirror, your child's sounds and/or words.
- Talk about positions of objects (e.g., inside, under, beside, next to, behind).
- Describe your child's actions, body parts, and clothing.
- Prompt your child to communicate by modeling words for him/her to copy.
- Use new and more complex words to expand your child's vocabulary even if you know (s)he won't understand at first.
- Chant, sing rhymes and teach your child body movements that go with the words.
- Describe your own actions to your child (e.g., "I'm folding three shirts and two pairs of red socks now).
- Describe your child's actions during everyday activities such as dressing, eating, or getting ready for bed.
- Match real objects with words and pictures.



"The blue block is next to the yellow square, and the purple triangle is on top of the long red rectangle."

"You are putting on your blue sweater on top of your white t-shirt. It will keep your body warm."



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!

SPOTLIGHTING



Persistence Coaching Promotes Children's School Readiness Skills

- Coach with comments when your child is working hard, concentrating, being calm, or staying patient when doing an activity.
- Describe your child's persistence with a frustrating activity by trying again, sticking with it, thinking of a new way to do it, staying focused.
- Listen carefully and try to understand what your child is telling you about his/her thoughts, ideas and discoveries.
- Comment and praise your child for listening to you or a peer or sibling.
- Encourage your child to discover, explore, experiment and provide support when mistakes are made.
- Try not to give too much help; encourage your child's verbal and/or non-verbal responses to other children or adults.



"You are working so hard on that puzzle and thinking about where each piece will go. You are concentrating!"

"You are so patient and just keep trying to use your spoon."

"You have figured out how to put on your shoes all by yourself."

"You are staying calm and trying to ask him for the truck again."



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!



“Pre-Academic & Persistence Coaching” Checklist

Pre-academic and persistence coaching are powerful ways to strengthen a child’s school readiness skills. The following is a list of academic concepts and behaviors that can be commented upon when playing with a child. Modulate the number of words and complexity of your language according to the child’s language development. Combine physical gestures with animated language. Remember to keep your language simple, slow down, and build repetition. Write down the the verbal and nonverbal communication approaches you will use to achieve your goals.

<i>Academic Concepts</i>	<i>Goals</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> colors <input type="checkbox"/> number counting <input type="checkbox"/> shapes <input type="checkbox"/> letters <input type="checkbox"/> sizes (long, short, tall, smaller than, bigger than, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> positions (up, down, beside, next to, on top, behind, etc.)	
<i>Persistence Skills (Preschoolers)</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> working hard <input type="checkbox"/> concentrating, focusing <input type="checkbox"/> persistence, patience <input type="checkbox"/> following teacher’s directions <input type="checkbox"/> problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> trying again <input type="checkbox"/> reading <input type="checkbox"/> thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> listening <input type="checkbox"/> working hard/best work <input type="checkbox"/> independence	

Handouts Part Three

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NOTE: Handouts are divided for session five and session six.

Home Activities for the Week

Social Coaching Promotes Friendship Skills



To Do:

- **PLAY** with your child using social coaching and persistence coaching.
- **USE** social coaching in other settings such as the grocery store, at a playground, at mealtimes, or bath time.
- **USE** song choice cards, games, puppets, pretend play, and books to encourage social interactions.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the “Social Coaching” Record Sheet and bring it to the next session.

To Read:



Chapter 4, Turing Up the Spotlight on Your Child’s Social Skills”
in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child’s attention spotlight while playing together!






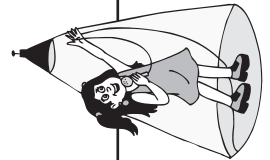
Handout
RECORD SHEET
Social Coaching



Date: _____

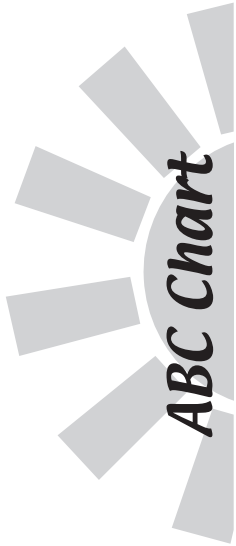
Instructions: Record two times you played with your child, what social coaching you did, and any response you noticed in your child.

 Child social behaviors I want to describe:	 Parent-child activity and social script:	 Child's response:
Example: Looking at adult or peer when child communicates or shares something. 1.	Example: "You are looking at me and that is so friendly." 1.	Example: Robbie smiled. 1.
2.	2.	2.



Spotlight your child's successes

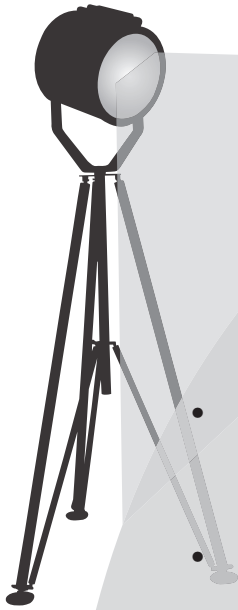
Child's Name: _____
 Date: _____



Write two examples of setting up an ABC learning opportunity for your child to practice a target behavior.

Setting/Activity	Antecedent (A) What happened first?	Behavior (B) Child's behavior	Consequence (C) How did you respond?
<p><i>Example:</i> Play time before dinner</p>	<p>Father: Shows son the balloon and holds next to his face for eye contact. Prompts: You can say, "Please balloon."</p>	<p>Child: "Please balloon." (teaching verbal asking behavior)</p>	<p>Father: That's friendly to say "please can I have the balloon" and gives boy the balloon.</p>

SPOTLIGHTING



One-on-One Parent-Child Social Coaching

- During play, model social skills for your child such as offering to share, waiting, taking turns, asking for help, pointing or gesturing, smiling, eye contact, and praising.
- Prompt your child to ask for help, take a turn, share something, or respond to a friend's request and then praise him/her if it occurs. Let it go if your child does not respond to your prompt.
- Enthusiastically praise your child any time s/he offers (verbally or nonverbally) to share, help, responds to a request, or gives eye contact.
- Participate in pretend and make-believe play with your child by using a doll, action figure, or puppet to model skills such as asking to play, offering to help, taking a turn, giving a compliment, calming down with a deep breath and waiting.
- Model and prompt by suggesting to your child the appropriate words to say. For example, "You can say, 'I want the truck, please.'"

Parent Prompt Examples:

"I will be your friend and share this with you."

"Can you help me find a blue one?"

"You are a good friend for helping me."



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!

SPOTLIGHTING



Using Fun Sensory Physical Routines to Motivate Social Interactions

Face-to-face sensory physical routines can motivate your children to interact and laugh and have fun interacting with you for longer periods of time. This means you will have optimized your child's energy level and increased learning opportunities for more durable social learning. Here are some tips for increasing your fun factor with your child.

When your child seems withdrawn, uninterested, unresponsive or bored increase his energy and motivation as follows:

- Exaggerate your fun responses and gestures with big smiles, laughter, silly faces, tickles, funny noises and bigger voices with more emotion: draw attention to your face.
- Play games such as peek-a-boo and name the hidden object, or pattycake, finger play, or build a fort in your living room.
- Determine your child's favorite rhythmic song or physical game such as Ring around the Rosy, When You're Happy and You Know It, the Chase Me Game or rough housing. Use song choice cards to help child make choice of song.
- Surprise your child occasionally with a variation of routine such as new sound effects, new verse, or new steps.
- Pause or freeze sensory routine often to prompt your child to signal you for what he or she wants next.
- Once you get the signal (verbal or nonverbal), continue the game and then pause again, waiting for another signal.
- Make sure there is back and forth communication throughout movements and you are not simply entertaining your child without requiring your child to stay connected with you by responding.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!

SPOTLIGHTING



Using Fun Sensory Physical Routines to Motivate Social Interactions

Avoid getting your child overaroused as follows:

- Pay attention to your child's arousal level.
- Make the play softer, gentler, quieter as soon as you notice your child getting overly aroused.
- Sing calmer songs that calm your child down.
- Freeze the play for taking deep breaths or positive imagery.
- Redirect the play before your child shuts down or dysregulates.
- Once your child has calmed down, don't be afraid to increase your enthusiasm and optimize your child's energy level again.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!

SPOTLIGHTING



Connect with your Child through Music

Many children on the Autism Spectrum are more responsive to music, even if they don't react to the sound of your regular voice. Songs can be the first place your child begins to pay attention to you, use words, and join in activities with you. Here are some tips to using music and songs to teach your child about communication.

- Sing songs slowly and repeat often.
- Pair your song words with gestures, large motor movements, and other sensory stimulation such as rocking, jumping, or clapping.
- Choose short songs with a small number of familiar words repeated over and over. For example, sing "row, row, row your boat" and mimic a rowing action.
- Sing face-to-face.
- Adjust song's number of words and actions to child's communication level.
- Pause songs and offer your child turns with words and actions.
- Make up songs using your child's name and other family member's names in your songs.
- Use song picture cards so your child can choose the song to sing.
- Use instruments and props such as a toy drum, tambourine, or harmonica when singing.
- Introduce pretend play into songs. (Example: Use puppets to sing.)
- Remember to say "all done" when the singing is over.
- Remember these old stand by songs: *The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round*, *If You're Happy and You Know It*, *Ring Around the Rosy*, *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*, *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*, and *Humpty Dumpty*.




Getting in your child's attention spotlight!

Spotlighting Sample Song Choice Cards





If parents have access to the program BoardMaker™ or a similar symbol generating program, they can use this to create their own song choice cards customized to their child's favorite songs.

Example front and back of song cards:





**Twinkle Twinkle
Little Star**






**Twinkle, twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky**

Row Your Boat



(Sitting face to face on floor hold
your child's hands and rock back and forth.)


**Row, row, row your boat
Gently down the stream
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream.**



**We're Going
On a Bear Hunt**



**We're going on a bear hunt!
We're going on a bear hunt!
We're going to catch a big one!
We're going to catch a big one!
I'm not afraid! I'm not afraid!
Are you? Are you?
Not me! Not me!**



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“Social Skills Coaching”



Describing, modeling, prompting, and praising children’s friendly behaviors is a powerful way to strengthen children’s social skills. Social skills are the first steps to making close friendships. The following is a list of social skills that you can both model and comment on when playing with your child or when your child is playing with a friend. Combine picture prompts with physical gestures when social coaching and reduce the number of words according to child’s communication level. Use this checklist to target the skills you want to focus on and write down the verbal and nonverbal communication you will use.

Social/Friendship Skills	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ helping ___ sharing ___ teamwork ___ using a friendly voice (quiet, polite) ___ eye contact ___ listening to what a friend says ___ taking turns ___ asking ___ trading ___ waiting ___ responding to a friend’s suggestion ___ gesturing (e.g., pointing) ___ smiling at peer ___ using soft, gentle touch ___ asking or gesturing to use something a friend has ___ cooperating ___ including another in play 	

Prompting

- “Your friend is asking for a block. Can you give him that block?” (Praise child if s/he tries to help and/or point to yellow block, or put block in child’s hand and give to other child)
- “Oops. You can say ‘I am sorry’ to your friend.”

Modeling Friendly Behavior

- Parents and teachers can model asking, waiting, taking turns, helping, and complimenting, so children know what these social skills look like. For example, “I’m your friend (pat your chest) and share my block with you.” (give block to child & show Sharing picture cue card.)

Parents Promoting Emotional and Social Competence in Young Children



**Parent-Child Social Coaching:
Child Developmental Level 1**

Parent-Child Play: Parents can use social coaching in one-on-one interactions with their children to help them learn social skills and emotional language before they begin to play with peers. A great deal of your child’s learning will occur by modeling and by descriptive commenting, which will enhance your child’s language skills as well as help them recognize and learn social skills.

Social/Friendship Skills	Examples
<p>Parent Models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sharing ❖ Offering to Help ❖ Waiting ❖ Suggesting ❖ Complimenting ❖ Behavior-to-Feelings 	<p>“I’m going to be your friend and share my car with you.”</p> <p>“If you want, I can help you with that by holding the bottom while you put another on top.”</p> <p>“I can use my waiting muscles and wait until you’re finished using that.”</p> <p>“Could we build something together?”</p> <p>“You are so smart in figuring out how to put that together.”</p> <p>“You shared with me. That is so friendly and makes me feel happy.”</p> <p>“You helped me figure out how to do that. I feel proud that you could show me that.”</p>
<p>Parent Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Self-Talk ❖ Asking for help <p>Parent Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Praise child when s/he shares or helps you ❖ Ignore or model acceptance when child does NOT share or help 	<p>“Hmm, I really wish I could find another piece to fit here.”</p> <p>“Hmm, I’m not sure I know how to put this together.”</p> <p>“Can you help me find another round piece?”</p> <p>“Can you share one of your cars with me?”</p> <p>“That was so helpful and friendly to share with me.”</p> <p>Continue to use descriptive commenting.</p> <p>“I can keep trying to find that round piece.” (model persistence)</p> <p>“I can wait until you’re finished playing with the cars.” (model waiting)</p> <p>“I know it is hard to give up that car, so I will wait to have a turn later.”</p>
<p>Puppet or Action-Figure Models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Entering Play ❖ Being Socially Friendly ❖ Ignoring Aggression 	<p>“Can I play with you?”</p> <p>“That looks like fun. Can I do that with you?”</p> <p>“I’m being friendly. I’d like to play with you.”</p> <p>“I want to play with a friendly person. I think I will find somebody else to play with.”</p>

Parents Promoting Emotional and Social Competence in Young Children



**Parent-Child Social Coaching:
Child Developmental Level 2**

Children in Parallel Play: Young children start out playing with other children by sitting next to them and engaging in parallel play. In the beginning, they do not initiate interactions with other children or seem to notice they are even there. They may not talk to them or offer an idea or interact with them in any way. Parents can help promote peer play by prompting their children to use social skills or to notice their friends’ activities or moods. Providing children with the actual words for interactions, or modeling social behaviors will be important since children may not yet have these skills in their repertoire.

Social/Friendship Skills	Examples
<p>Parent Coaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Asking for What They Want ❖ Asking for Help ❖ Asking a Friend to Wait 	<p>“You can ask your friend for what you want by saying, ‘Please can I have the crayon?’”</p> <p>“You can ask your friend for help by saying ‘Can you help me?’”</p> <p>“You can tell your friend you are not ready to share yet.”</p> <p>If your child responds to your prompt by using his or her words to repeat what you said, praise this polite asking or friendly helping.</p>
<p>Parent Prompting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Noticing Other Child ❖ Initiate Interaction With Other Child ❖ To Give Child a Compliment <p>Parent Praising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Behavior-to-Feelings ❖ Playing Together 	<p>“Wow, look what a big tower your friend is building.”</p> <p>“You are both using green markers.”</p> <p>“Your friend is looking for small green pieces. Can you find some for him?”</p> <p>“Your friend has not cars and you have 8 cars. He looks unhappy. Can you share one of your cars with your friend?”</p> <p>“Wow! You can tell your friend his tower is cool.”</p> <p>If you child does repeat this, you can praise him or her for a friendly compliment.</p> <p>If your child does not respond, continue descriptive commenting.</p> <p>“You shared with your friend, that is so friendly and makes her feel happy.”</p> <p>“You helped your friend figure out how to do that, she looks very pleased with your help.”</p> <p>“Your friend is enjoying playing with these Legos with you. You look like you are having fun with your friend. You are both very friendly.”</p>
<p>Puppet or Action-Figure Models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sharing or Helping 	<p>“Wow! Do you see the tower that Nancy is building?”</p> <p>“Can either of you help me find a red block to make this truck?”</p> <p>“Could I help you build that house?”</p> <p>Do you think we could ask Freddy if he’ll share his train?”</p>

Parents Promoting Emotional and Social Competence in Young Children



**Child-Peer Social Coaching:
Child Developmental Level 3**

Children Who Initiate Play: Young children move from parallel play to play where they are initiating interactions with each other. They are motivated to make friends and interested in other children. Depending on their temperament, impulsivity, attention span and knowledge of social skills their interactions may be cooperative or at times conflictual. Parents can help promote social skills during peer play by prompting and coaching them to use skills or by praising and giving attention to social skills.

Parent-Coached Skills	Examples
<p>Social/Friendship Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Asking in a Friendly Voice (polite, quiet) ❖ Giving Help to Friend ❖ Sharing or Trading ❖ Asking to Enter Play ❖ Giving a Compliment ❖ Agreeing with or giving a Suggestion 	<p>"You asked your friend so politely for what you wanted and s/he gave it to you, you are good friends."</p> <p>"You helped your friend find what s/he was looking for. You are both working together and helping each other like a team."</p> <p>"That's so friendly. You shared your blocks with your friend. Then she traded with you and gave you her car. "</p> <p>"You asked kindly to play and they seemed happy to have you join in?"</p> <p>"You gave a compliment to her, that is very friendly."</p> <p>"You accepted your friend's suggestion. That is so cooperative."</p>
<p>Self-Regulatory Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Listening to What a Peer Says ❖ Waiting Patiently ❖ Taking Turns ❖ Staying Calm ❖ Problem Solving 	<p>"Wow you really listened to your friend's request and followed his suggestion. That is really friendly."</p> <p>"You waited and asked first if you could use that. That shows you have really strong waiting muscles. "</p> <p>"You are taking turns. That's what good friends do for each other"</p> <p>"You were disappointed when s/he would let you play with them but you stayed calm and asked someone else to play. That is really brave."</p> <p>"You both weren't sure how to make that fit together, but you worked together and figured that out—you are both good problem solvers."</p>
<p>Empathy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Behavior-to-Feelings ❖ Apology/Forgiveness 	<p>"You shared with your friend, that is so friendly and makes her feel happy."</p> <p>"You saw that she was frustrated and helped her put that together. That is very thoughtful to think of your friend's feelings"</p> <p>"You were both frustrated with that but you stayed calm and kept trying and finally figured it out. That is real teamwork.</p> <p>"You were afraid to ask her to play with you, but you were brave and asked her and she seemed really pleased that you did."</p> <p>"That was an accident. Do you think you can say you're sorry?" Or, "Your friend seems really sorry he did that. Can you forgive him?"</p>

Home Activities for the Week

Attentive Social Coaching Promotes Friendship Skills



To Do:

- **PLAY** with your child and another child using peer social coaching (set up a play date).
- **USE** social coaching in other settings such as at a playground or in the classroom.
- **CONTINUE** using pretend play, songs, games, and books to encourage social interactions.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the “Peer Social Coaching” Record Sheet and bring it to the next session.

To Read:



Chapter 4, “Tuning Up the Spotlight on Your Child’s Social Skills” in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*

AND

Chapter 10, “Promoting Children’s Joint Play with Peers” in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



**Get your child’s attention spotlight on
other children!**



Handout

RECORD SHEET Peer Social Coaching

Date: _____

Instructions: Record two times you played with your child and another child, what social coaching you did, and your child's response.



Child behaviors I want to describe:

Example: Noticing another child or playing with or sitting next to them.

1.

2.



Parent-child activity and social script:

Example: "You noticed your friend wanted to play with you. He looks happy you let him sit next to you."

1.

2.

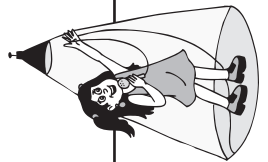


Child's response:

Example: Robbie spent less time playing alone.

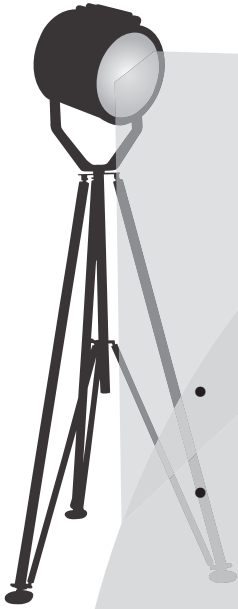
1.

2.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



Peer Social Coaching

- Prompt your child to notice what another child is doing or to help a peer or sibling.
- Help your child understand that when she/he shared or helped, the other child felt happy so she/he can see the connection between his/her behavior and another's feelings.
- Encourage play dates with a friend.
- Praise your child when she/he initiates interactions or notices what a peer is doing.
- Use social coaching instead of asking questions.
- Prompt, coach, and praise your child's friendly behaviors whenever you see them (e.g., sharing, helping, taking turns, being polite, apologizing, compliments).



"Your friend is looking for a red block, can you help him?" (prompt)

"That's so friendly. You are sharing your cars and waiting your turn. Your friend looks happy." (connect behavior to feeling)

"You are both helping each other like a team."

"You waited and asked first if you could use that. Your friend listened to you and shared." (connect behaviors to positive outcome)

"You both worked together to put those blocks together. That was great cooperation." (enthusiastic response)

"You could give your friend a compliment and say, 'I like your picture'." (prompt and model words)



Getting your child's attention spotlight on other children!

Handouts

Part Four

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Home Activities for the Week

Emotion Coaching Strengthens Children's Emotional Literacy & Empathy



To Do:

- **CONTINUE** playing with your child one-on-one combining emotion coaching with social coaching.
- **PLAY** with your child and a sibling or friend using peer social coaching.
- **USE** visual prompts of feeling faces along with feeling words to teach feelings communication
- **RECORD** your experiences on the "Emotion Coaching" Record Sheet and bring to next session.

To Read:



Chapter 5, "Emotion Coaching Promotes Emotional Literacy—Spotlight Your Child's Feelings" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get your child's attention spotlight on his/her feelings and others' feelings



Handout

RECORD SHEET Emotion Coaching

Date: _____

Instructions: Record two times you played with your child and another child, what emotion coaching you did, and your child's response.



Child emotions I want to describe:

Example: *Happy smiles, being proud, and noticing another child's feelings*

1.

2.



Parent-child activity and emotion script:

Example: *"See your friend is happy that you shared with him. You look happy and proud because you are smiling."*

1.

2.



Child's response:

Example: *Robbie told me one day he felt happy.*

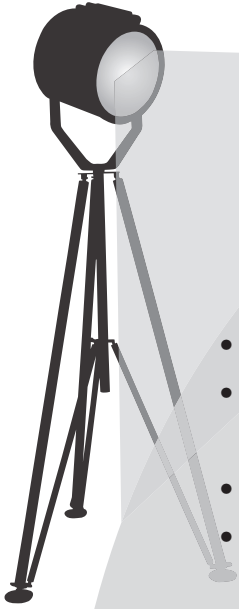
1.

2.



Spotlight your child's feelings

SPOTLIGHTING



Emotion Coaching

- Try to think about what your child might be feeling and wanting.
- Describe your child's feelings (don't ask her what she is feeling because she is unlikely to have the words to tell you).
- Label your child's positive feelings more often than his negative feelings.
- When naming uncomfortable feelings such as frustration or anger, point out and praise the coping strategy your child is using: "You look frustrated, but you are staying calm and trying again."
- Cuddle and soothe your child when she is hurt or frightened. Stay calm yourself to provide extra reassurance.
- For children who are non verbal, use visual pictures of feeling faces to teach feelings and for child to show you how he feels.



"You look proud of that drawing."

"You seem confident when reading that story."

"You are so patient. Even though it fell down twice, you just keep trying to see how you can make it taller. You must feel pleased with yourself for being so calm and trying hard."

"You are forgiving of your friend because you know it was a mistake."

"I am having fun with you and am excited about your discoveries."



Spotlight your child's feelings!

Teachers and Parents "Emotion Coaching"



Describing children’s feelings is a powerful way to strengthen their emotion literacy. Once children have emotion language, they can better regulate their own emotions because they can tell you how they feel. From the following list of emotions choose a few that you could comment on when interacting with a child. Combine the verbal emotion words with your facial expressions and use of picture emotions. Slowly add more feeling words and be sure to have a balance of more positive than uncomfortable feeling words. When using uncomfortable emotions combine with a coping emotion word.

Feelings/Emotion Literacy	Goals
<input type="checkbox"/> happy <input type="checkbox"/> brave <input type="checkbox"/> frustrated <input type="checkbox"/> disappointed <input type="checkbox"/> calm <input type="checkbox"/> fearful <input type="checkbox"/> proud <input type="checkbox"/> loving <input type="checkbox"/> excited <input type="checkbox"/> tired <input type="checkbox"/> pleased <input type="checkbox"/> energetic <input type="checkbox"/> sad <input type="checkbox"/> helpful <input type="checkbox"/> worried <input type="checkbox"/> confident <input type="checkbox"/> patient <input type="checkbox"/> having fun <input type="checkbox"/> jealous <input type="checkbox"/> forgiving <input type="checkbox"/> caring <input type="checkbox"/> proud <input type="checkbox"/> curious <input type="checkbox"/> angry <input type="checkbox"/> mad <input type="checkbox"/> interested <input type="checkbox"/> embarrassed	

Modeling Feeling Talk and Sharing Feelings

- "I am proud of you for solving that problem." (Show Proud picture.)
- "I am really having fun playing with you." (Show Happy picture.)
- "I was nervous it would fall down, but you were patient, and your plan worked." (Show Nervous picture.)
- "Your friend is so happy that you shared with her."

Handouts Part Five

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NOTE: There is a color version of the handout “Tips for Using Puppets with Children” available on our website, here: <https://incredibleyears.com/parents-teachers/articles-for-parents/>

Home Activities for the Week

Pretend Play Promotes Empathy and Social Skills



To Do:

- **CONTINUE** to play with your child using coaching methods.
- **MODEL** being empathic and showing social skills in play interactions.
- **SET UP** pretend play practices using puppets, dolls, or action figures with your child to model feelings and social skills and promote empathy (i.e., feelings of characters).
- **RECORD** your experiences on the Record Sheet and bring to next session.

To Read:



Chapter 6, "Using Pretend Play to Spotlight Empathy and Social Skills" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child's attention spotlight using pretend play!



Handout

RECORD SHEET

Using Puppets and Pretend Play

Date: _____



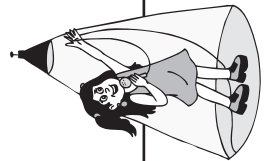
Record how your scenario went and your child's response:

Use the scenarios listed, or make up your own, to promote social skills/empathy with your child:

1. Puppet: "Hi, I'm Oscar Ostrich. Would you play with me? Do you like airplanes?"

2. Puppet: "Hi! I'm Tiny Turtle. Would you help me put this together? I'm frustrated it is not working."

3.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING

Tips for Using Puppets with Children



Preschool children are working to accomplish the important developmental milestones of learning friendship skills including beginning to share, help others, initiate social conversations, listen, and cooperate with others.

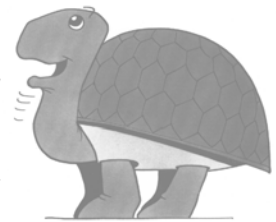
One of the ways to promote your child's language, social and emotional skills is through the use of puppet play. Puppet play is effective because it encourages imaginary pretend play and helps children experience the feelings of other characters (early empathy development) as well as practice important conversation skills.

With puppets, dolls, or action figures you can act out stories, make up fantasies, and explore solutions to pretend problems. You may be nervous at first using puppets, but try it out and before long you will experience the joy of entering into your child's thoughts and imagination, one of the most intimate places you can be with your child at this age.

Here are a few things to have your puppet do when playing with your child:

Puppet Scenarios

- **Puppet models greeting your child.** For example, "Hi I am Tiny Turtle. What is your name?" When your child tells your puppet his name, puppet thanks him for being so friendly. (Modeling friendly social greetings.)
- **Puppet models interest in your child.** For example, "What do you like to do?" When your child tells your puppet his interests, puppet shares his interests (learning how to get to know someone). You can also prompt your child to ask the puppet what s/he likes to do? (Learning how to show interest in someone else.)
- **Puppet asks for help.** For example, "I can't get this block to go together, can you help me?" When your child helps your puppet, your puppet compliments his helping behavior. (Learning to ask for help as well as how to help a friend.)
- **Puppet shares his emotion.** For example, "I am embarrassed because I can't ride my bike. Do you know how to ride a bike?" Ask your child what the puppet is feeling. Encourage your child to say something to make the puppet feel better. (Learning to express emotions and think about another person's emotions.)
- **Puppet shares something with your child.** For example, "I see you looking for green blocks, would you like my green block." (Modeling sharing.) If child takes your puppet's block, say "I'm happy to help you." (Connecting sharing action with emotion.)
- **Puppet waits for his turn.** For example, "I am going to wait until you finish that game, then can I have a turn?" If child gives your puppet a turn, puppet thanks him and tells him it makes him feel happy to have such a friend.



continues on back

SPOTLIGHTING

Tips for Using Puppets with Children, Cont'd

Note: If your child does not have the language skills to respond verbally to the puppet, it is still good for the puppet to model the words involved in the social interaction. You can also structure interactions that involve nonverbal responses from your child. *“Would you share that with me?” “Would you like to shake the puppet’s hand?” “Can you help me build this tower?”* This way, the focus is on your child’s friendly behavioral response to the puppet. You and the puppet can provide the verbal structure. This will support your child’s eventual language development in these social situations.

Parent Praise: Parents can use a silly/different voice for the puppet character and then go out of role as parent to praise the child for his or her social skills. Look for opportunities to comment and praise your child when she waits, takes turns, helps, offers a friendly suggestion or gesture, asks for help, shows interest or empathy, gives you eye contact, responds to your puppet, or listens well to your puppet.



Parent Prompts: In these puppet plays parents can prompt their children’s appropriate social responses by whispering in their ear some ideas for what to say to the puppet.

For example, *“You can tell the turtle puppet you like to play with trucks.”* Or, *“You can say please can I have that book?”* Don’t worry if your child doesn’t use your suggestion, just move on to something else as this is not a command. Sometimes your child will copy your suggestion or words and then you can praise him or her for such nice asking or sharing.

Remember: Keep it simple, have fun, and do not have your puppet model negative behaviors.

Handouts Part Six

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NOTE: There is a color version of the handout “Scenarios for Teaching Children Emotional Self-Regulation Skills” available on our website, here:

<http://incredibleyears.com/parents-teachers/articles-for-parents/>

Home Activities for the Week

Promoting Children's Self-Regulation



To Do:

- **CONTINUE** to play with your child using coaching methods.
- **MODEL** positive self-regulation and calm down strategies.
- **SET UP** calm down practices for your child using Calm Down Thermometer and/or tiny turtle.
- **USE** visual prompts to cue child to take deep breaths or take a break before the child is too dysregulated.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the "Emotional Self Regulation" Record Sheet and bring to the next session.

To Read:



Chapter 7, "Spotlighting Your Children's Emotion Self-Regulation Skills" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



***Get in your child's attention spotlight to
promote their self-regulation!***



Handout

RECORD SHEET

Teaching Emotional Self-Regulation

Date: _____



Use the scenarios in handout or make up your own to teach your child calm down skills:

1. Turtle puppet: "I am sometimes afraid, so I think of my happy place, which is watching my fish. What is your happy place?"

2.

3.

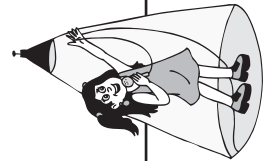


Record your teaching scenario and how your child responded:

1.

2.

3.



Spotlight your child's successes

Calm Down Thermometer

I can do it. I can calm down.



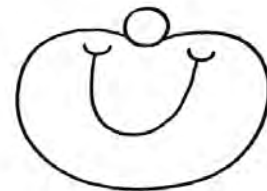
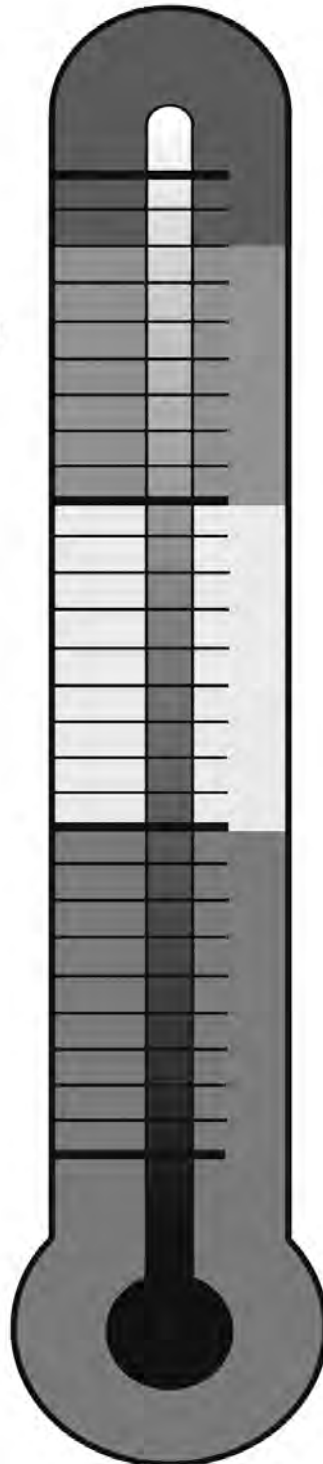
Think "Stop"



Take 3 deep breaths



Stay cool



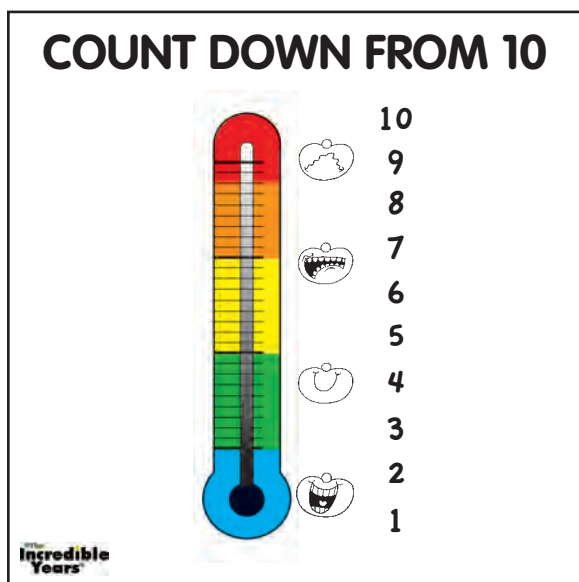
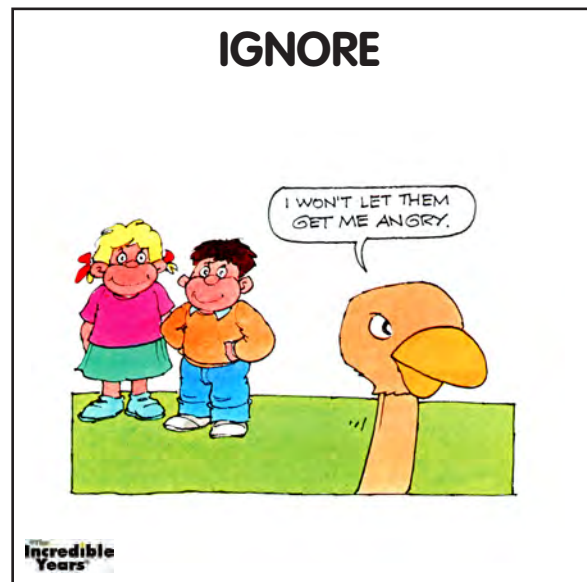


Spotlighting

Sample Self-Regulation Cue Cards

If parents have access to the program BoardMaker™ or a similar symbol generating program, they can use this to create their own self-regulation cards.

Example self-regulation cards:



SPOTLIGHTING

Scenarios for Teaching Children Emotional Self-Regulation Skills

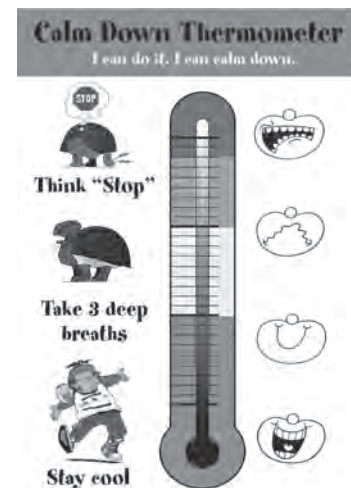
Emotion coaching helps build children's emotional literacy so they can begin to articulate their feelings to others. This is a foundational step to being able to eventually regulate their own emotions. Once children are starting to recognize and express their feelings, parents can begin to teach them some self-calming strategies. Because children are visual thinkers and love imaginary play, it is effective to use stories, puppets, pictures and practice role plays to help them practice calming thoughts, positive visual images, deep breathing, coping self-talk and using words or gestures to express their feelings and needs.

Here are a few things you can do with your child using the Calm Down Thermometer handout and Tiny Turtle puppet. Each of these scenarios would be done in one 5-minute setting and at different times when your child seems relaxed and interested in some puppet play. Try to keep these scenarios simple, fun and imaginative and follow your child's lead.

Puppet Scenarios

Tiny Turtle Explains the Calm Down Thermometer

- Tiny Turtle puppet introduces the Calm Down Thermometer and explains how it works. For example, *"Hi I am Tiny Turtle. I want to tell you about this amazing feeling thermometer which can measure your feelings."* Your turtle puppet can tell your child he is feeling sad, mad, worried or frustrated. Or on the other hand, happy, calm, relaxed, or proud. While Tiny is telling his feelings, point to the place on the thermometer that shows Tiny's feeling. (Red or hot for angry versus green for cool or calm.) You can also ask your child to point to the color on the thermometer or move the arrow to the place that represents Tiny's particular feeling. When your child points to the place on the thermometer you can add to the fun by asking him or her to show you that feeling face.



Tiny Turtle explains How the Thermometer Works

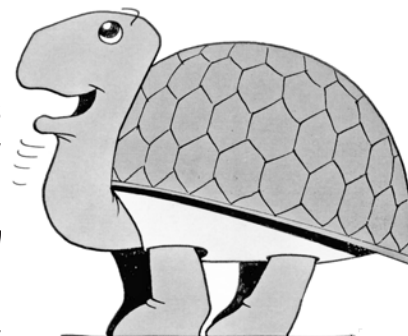
- Tiny Turtle tells your child a story about a time he was stepped on or made fun of and felt hurt or mad. He explains how he took three deep breaths to get back into green. For example, *"One time someone made fun of me because I am so slow and I was up here in red feeling mad. I took three deep breaths and practiced smelling a flower and blowing out a candle. Then I came down into blue."*
- Ask your child to practice taking deep breaths with Tiny Turtle and let him or her move the thermometer arrow down from red to green.
- Tiny Turtle asks your child to tell a time he or she felt angry or sad or excited or safe. (Use a variety of comfortable and uncomfortable feeling words.) For example, Tiny asks, *"Have you ever had someone make fun of you? How did that feel?"* When your child shares a situation, help him/her move the arrow to how he/she was feeling and then move the arrow down as deep breathing is practiced.

continued next page

SPOTLIGHTING

Scenarios for Teaching Children Emotional Self-Regulation Skills (continued)

- Using the Calm Down Thermometer, Tiny Turtle asks your child what feelings the faces on the thermometer represent. For example, *"See these feeling faces on this thermometer, what feelings do you think they are?"* When your child names a feeling praise their understanding and ask them to show you that feeling face.
- *"I took three deep breaths and practiced smelling a flower and blowing out a candle. Then I came down into blue."*
- Ask your child to practice taking deep breaths with Tiny Turtle and let him or her move the thermometer arrow down from red to green.
- Tiny Turtle asks your child to tell a time he or she felt angry or sad or excited or safe. (Use a variety of comfortable and uncomfortable feeling words.) For example, Tiny asks, *"Have you ever had someone make fun of you? How did that feel?"* When your child shares a situation, help him/her move the arrow to how he/she was feeling and then move the arrow down as deep breathing is practiced.
- Using the Calm Down Thermometer, Tiny Turtle asks your child what feelings the faces on the thermometer represent. For example, *"See these feeling faces on this thermometer, what feelings do you think they are?"* When your child names a feeling praise their understanding and ask then to show you that feeling face.



Take a slow breath

Tiny Turtle Explains How to Calm Down

- Tiny Turtle explains how he recognizes an uncomfortable feeling and says "stop" and goes into his turtle shell to take deep breaths. For example, *"One time someone stepped on my foot, and I was mad, but I said "stop" and went in my turtle shell and took deep breaths like this. Then I felt better."* Ask your child to practice this with Tiny Turtle and either imagine he has a magic turtle shell or put her head under her shirt.
- Tiny Turtle explains how he uses his happy place visualizations when he is in his shell to help him calm down. For example, *"When I am nervous I think about a time I learned to ride my bike and felt really proud. Or, when I am afraid or sad I think of my teddy bear and that helps me feel safe."* After Tiny has explained his happy or safe places then he can ask your child where his/her happy place is and how your child can use this when in his/her turtle shell. This exercise can help your child develop some positive imagery of things to think about when in his/her shell.



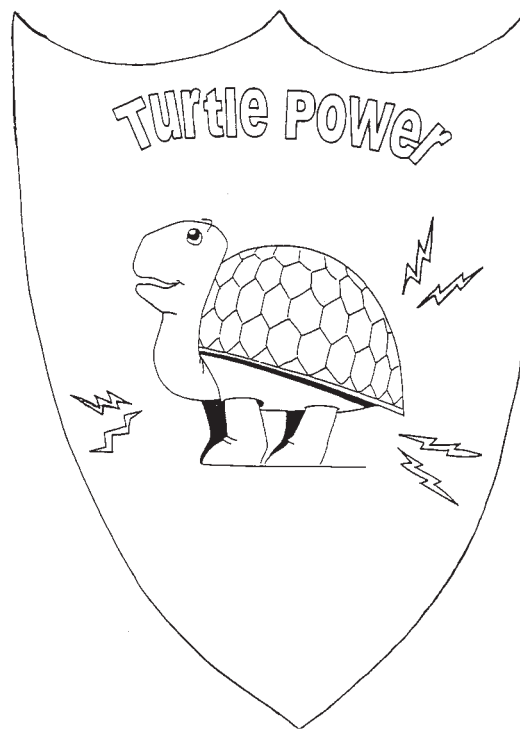
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SPOTLIGHTING

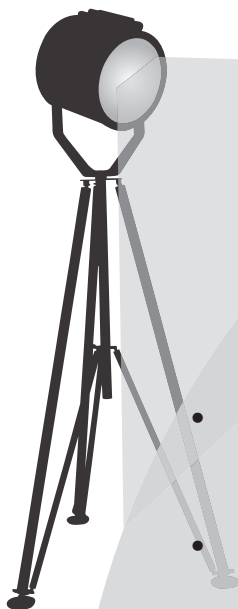
Scenarios for Teaching Children Emotional Self-Regulation Skills (continued)

- Tiny Turtle explains what he says to himself when he is in his shell. For example, *“When I am in my shell I say to myself, I can do it, I can calm down and try again.”* Ask your child to repeat these words with Tiny and do it together.
- Tiny Turtle asks your child when she/he could use their Turtle Power. Then Tiny asks your child to show you how he/she uses Turtle Power. For example, *“What makes you angry? So you are up here in red on the thermometer, how can you get yourself down here in green?”* Praise your child for showing you or Tiny how to take deep breaths, think of their happy place, or use positive self-talk.

NOTE: Remember when using Tiny Turtle to follow your child’s lead and ideas and praise his or her willingness to practice taking deep breaths, using happy place memories and positive self-talk. Make these play scenarios fun, imaginative and interactive.



SPOTLIGHTING



Building Children's Self-Regulation Skills

- Coach and praise your child's self-regulation skills such as staying calm, being patient, trying again when frustrated, waiting a turn, and using words or gestures when frustrated.
- Support your child when (s)he is frustrated, but recognize when (s)he is too upset to listen and just needs space and time to calm down.
- Encourage your child's practice of calm down steps with puppets, books, and games.
- Model and prompt your child to use words, feeling pictures, or puppets to express his/her needs and feelings (e.g., "Show me the card with the face of how you are feeling.").
- Help your child learn ways to self-regulate such as using a special stuffed animal or blanket, taking deep breaths, telling himself/herself (s)he can calm down, waiting, solving a problem.
- Use picture prompts to cue child to wait, take deep breaths or take a break.
- Model self-regulation skills yourself, such as taking deep breaths, positive self-talk, or taking a break.



"You can think of your happy place."

"Can you pretend to use Tiny's secret shell to take deep breaths & calm down?"

"You did a good job using your words to talk about your problem. That's what friends do."

"That is so strong to use your waiting muscles."

"Let's check the Calm Down Thermometer and get into the blue zone."



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Sensory Likes

Write down your child's sensory likes in each of the sensory categories listed below.



Auditory

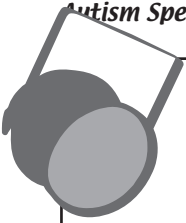
Visual

Tactile

Smell

Taste/oral (chewing/sucking)

**Proprioception (body space/balance/
need for movement/stillness)**



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Sensory Dislikes

Write down your child's sensory dislikes in each of the sensory categories listed below.



Auditory

Visual

Tactile

Smell

Taste/oral (chewing/sucking)

**Proprioception (body space/balance/
need for movement/stillness)**

Handouts Part Seven

The Incredible Years

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Home Activities for the Week

Using Praise and Rewards to Motivate Children



To Do:

- **CONTINUE** to play with your child using coaching methods and pretend play.
- **PRACTICE** praising your child's target behaviors often.
- **PRAISE AND REWARD** yourself for your parenting efforts and others for their support (partner, child's teacher, grandparent, friend, etc.).
- **TRY** giving your child a small tangible reward and/or sensory activity for difficult behaviors you would like to encourage.
- **RECORD** your praises on the "Behavior Plan" Record Sheet and bring to next session.

To Read:



Chapter 8, "Using Praise and Rewards to Motivate Children" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child's attention spotlight using praise and rewards!






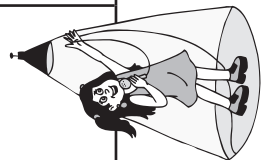
Handout

RECORD SHEET Specific Praise

Date: _____

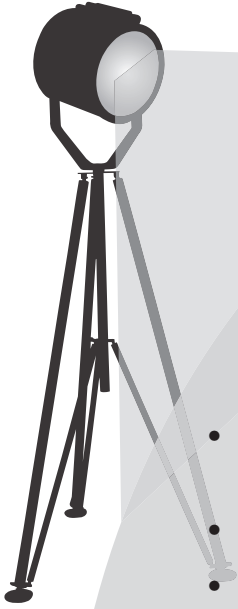
Instructions: Record times you praised your child, what you said, and any reaction or response you noticed in your child.

 Types of Child Behaviors Praised:	 Praise Statements:	 Child's response:
Example: Eye contact, responding verbally or nonverbally 1.	Example: "You looked at me, that made me smile." 1.	Example: Robbie seems to look at me more often, especially if I prompt him. 1.
2.	2.	2.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



Praising Your Child & Tangible Rewards

Praising Your Child

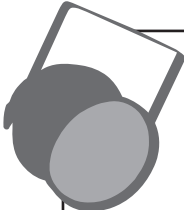
- Prompt your child's attempts to interact with others and praise him/her for gesturing, talking, sharing, making eye contact, and working together.
- Give labeled and specific praise for target behaviors immediately & consistently.
- Praise with smiles, eye contact, enthusiasm, and gestures.
- Give pats, hugs, and kisses along with praise.
- Praise your child in front of other people.
- Combine praise with social and emotion coaching methods.
- Be sure to get in your child's "attention spotlight" by facing them directly and then praise with lots of smiles.
- Combine praise with a tangible reward for targeted behavior (e.g., hand stamp, sticker, physical activity, crackers).

Tangible Rewards

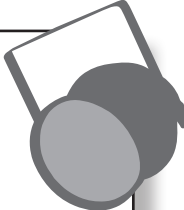
- Keep reward program simple.
- Break down behavior into small steps—be realistic.
- Use spontaneous, inexpensive spontaneous rewards (stickers, crackers, hand stamp, extra story before bed).
- Get appropriate behavior first, then give reward immediately.
- Gradually replace tangible rewards with social approval.



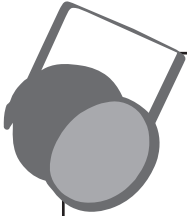
Getting in your child's attention spotlight!



HANDOUT
“Positive Opposites”
Behavior Record



<p>Behaviors I want to see less of: e.g., playing alone</p>	<p>For each negative behavior, write down its Positive Opposite Behavior e.g., initiating interactions with siblings/peers (gesturing, asking to play, taking a turn)</p>



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Reward Yourself!



Think about rewarding yourself. Have you ever used an incentive system to reward yourself for accomplishing difficult tasks or goals, like completing a difficult project, or working hard as a parent? Think about ways you could reward yourself for your hard work as a parent, and list below.



Good Incentives for Me:

Examples:

A walk in the park

Tea or coffee with a friend

Warm bubble bath

Do yoga

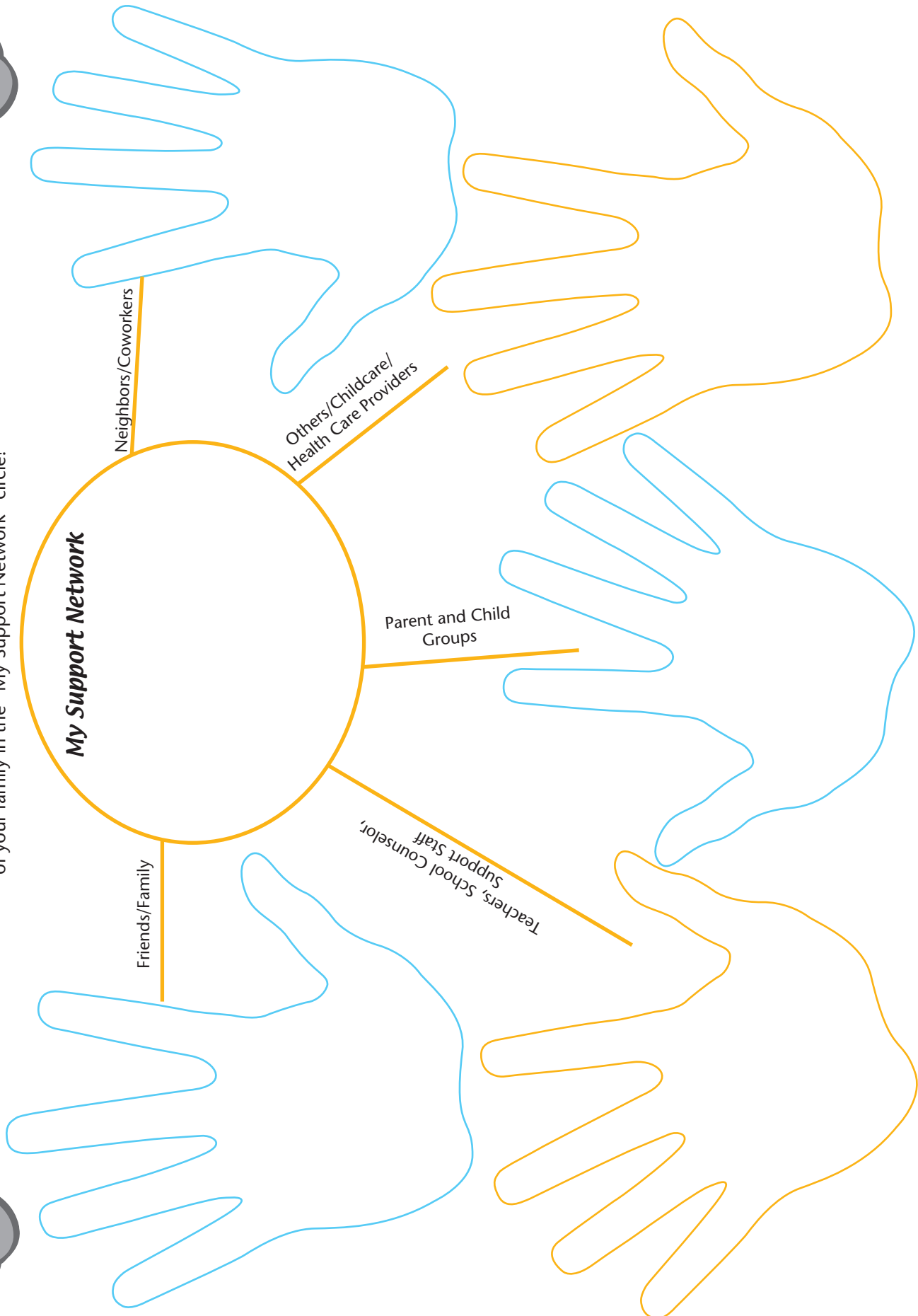
Goal:

I will commit to doing something positive for myself this week. This will include:

Spotlighting Parent Support Network

Who can lend a helping hand?

Think about people in your support network. Each hand represents a different group of people. Write in each hand specific people from that network who can help provide support to you and your child! You can draw or paste of picture of your family in the "My Support Network" circle!



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Labeled Praise

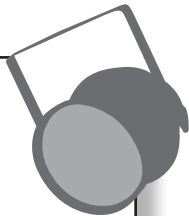
Brainstorm words you will use to praise your child to increase target behaviors you want to see more of. Write them below.



Behaviors I want to see more of:	Praise words to use:
	<p><i>I like it when you...</i> <i>Good for you!</i> <i>Wow! What a wonderful job you have done!</i></p> <div data-bbox="1036 1312 1388 1633" data-label="Image"> </div>

Goal:

I will commit to increasing the number of praises I give my child to _____ per hour. The behaviors I will praise include: (e.g., sharing) _____



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Positive Self-Praise

Brainstorm possible self-praise you can use to encourage yourself as a parent. Write these statements on your notepad.



I can do it
I am working hard a a parent
I can stay calm



Goal:

I will commit to thinking about what I am doing well as a parent each day and using two of the above examples.

Handouts Part Eight

The Incredible Years

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NOTE: Handouts are divided for session twelve and session thirteen.

Home Activities for the Week

Limit Setting & Redirecting



To Do:

- **CONTINUE** to play with your child using coaching methods, praise, and pretend play scenarios.
- **PRACTICE** using warnings, reminders, and redirections when possible, and keep instructions simple and clear.
- **USE** visual command cards for children who are nonverbal.
- **IGNORE** one negative behavior you would like to decrease.
- **PRAISE** the “positive opposite” behavior to replace the negative behavior you wish to decrease.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the Record Sheet and bring to next session.

To Read:



Chapter 9, “Spotlighting Your Limit Setting and Managing Misbehavior” in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child’s attention spotlight!

SPOTLIGHTING



Teaching Children to Understand and Follow Instructions

The key strategies for promoting children's understanding of words when giving them instructions:

- Before speaking, get your child's attention with eye contact.
- When possible give a transition warning about an upcoming behavior change.
- Give simple instruction (e.g., all done with the timer, give me the phone please) and wait briefly for expected response.
- If no response, quickly follow through and help scaffold the child's response with a gesture (point to phone) or prompt child's compliance by whispering a response (say, okay, while taking the phone away).
- When your child complies to instruction, give a powerful reward and redirect to another activity ("Thank you, let's go find your favorite book to read").
- Continue child-directed narrated commenting.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight!



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Benefits & Barriers to Limit Setting

1. What are the possible benefits for your children having clear limits in your home?
2. What gets in the way of setting limits?

Write down the benefits of having clear limits and your difficulties in doing it. See if you can find any solutions to your barriers to setting clear limits.



Benefits of Setting Limits	Difficulties in Doing This

Goal:

I will commit to reducing the number of commands or requests to those that are most important. Instead, I will focus on giving choices when possible, using distractions and when-then commands.






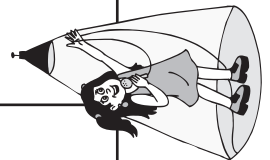
Handout

RECORD SHEET Limit Setting

Date: _____

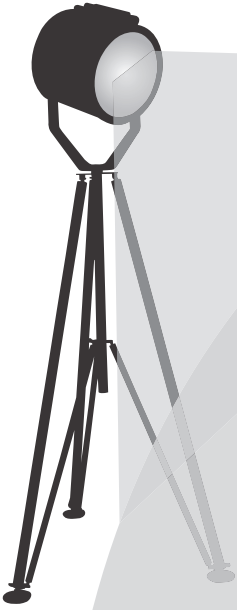
Instructions: Record commands or limits set and any reaction/response you noticed in your child, as well as your response.

 Example of Command given or limits set:	# of commands	 Child's Response:	 Parent's response:
1. Example: "Put the toys away."	IIII	1. Child puts toys away.	Example: "Wow - you are a big helper, thank you for putting the toys away."
2.	2.	2.	2.



Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



Limit Setting

- Keep limit setting simple and avoid unnecessary commands or complex instructions.
- Set one limit at a time.
- Be realistic in your expectations and be developmentally appropriate.
- Use “do” commands or positive and polite instructions.
- Limit use of “stop” or “no” commands.
- Use visual command cards for children who are nonverbal (e.g., wait, stop sign, sit, toilet, brush teeth, etc.).
- Give children ample time to respond.
- Give warnings and transition time when possible.
- Give children choices whenever possible.
- Strive for simple, predictable routines and use visual prompts as needed.
- Praise and reward compliance to instructions.
- Use distractions and redirection when possible.
- Strike a balance between parent and child control.
- Ignore child’s oppositional behavior.



Getting in your child’s attention spotlight!

SPOTLIGHTING

Household Rules

Some Examples:

1. Bedtime is at 7:30 p.m.
2. No hitting allowed.
3. Must sit in back of car in car seat.

Your List of Household Rules:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.




*Every home needs a limited number of “house rules.”
If the list gets too long, no one will remember the rules.*

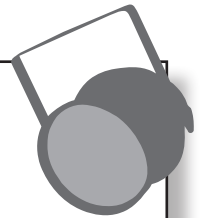
BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Rewriting Commands

Rewrite the following ineffective commands into positive, simple, respectful words using gestures and visual prompts for nonverbal children



Ineffective Commands	Rewrite & Indicate gestures/command card
<i>e.g., Shut up.</i>	<i>e.g., quiet mouth</i> 
Quit shouting.	
Stop running.	
Watch it.	
Why don't we go to bed?	
Let's clean up the living room.	
Cut it out.	
What is your coat doing there?	
Why are your shoes in the living room?	
Don't shove salad in your mouth like a pig.	
Why is your bike still in the driveway?	



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Rewriting Commands, Continued

Rewrite the following ineffective commands into positive, simple, respectful words using gestures and visual prompts for nonverbal children.



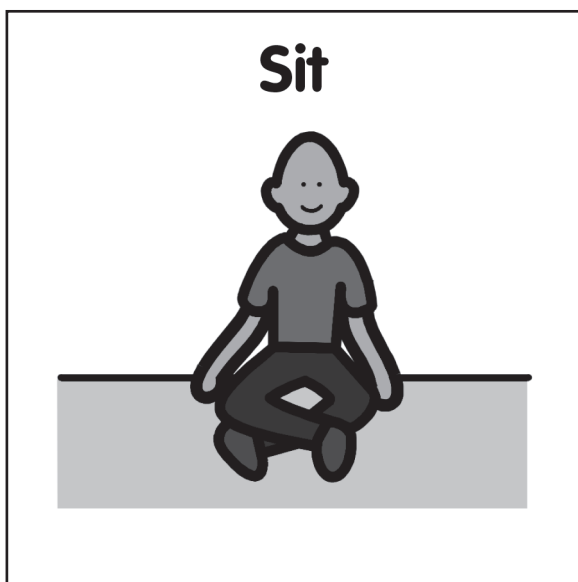
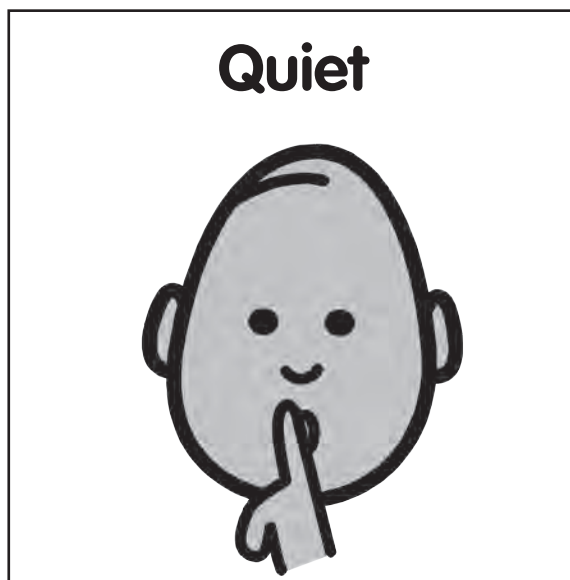
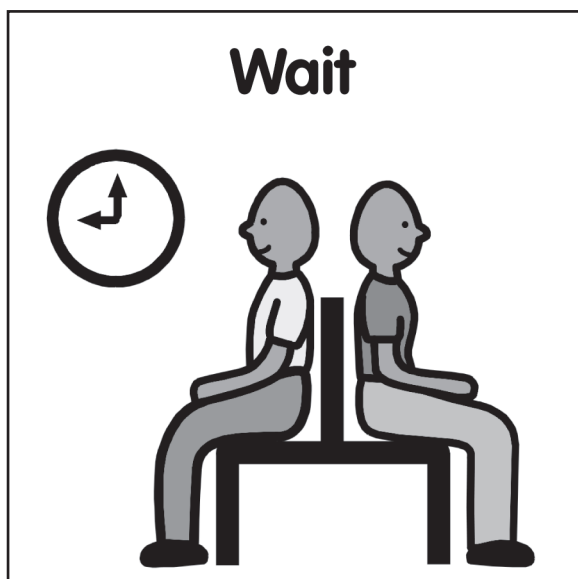
Ineffective Commands	Rewrite & Indicate gestures/command card
You look like a mess.	
Stop bugging your sister.	
You are never ready.	
Your clothes are filthy.	
This room is a mess.	
Don't whine.	
You are impossible.	
Stop dawdling.	
Hurry up.	
Be quiet.	
Why are you riding on the road when you have been told not to?	
I'll hit you if you do that again.	



Spotlighting Sample Command Cue Cards

If parents have access to the program BoardMaker™ or a similar symbol generating program, they can use this to create their own command cards.

Example command cards:



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Home Activities for the Week

Managing Misbehavior & Staying Calm

To Do:

- **CONTINUE** to play with your child using modeling, coaching methods, praise, pretend play scenarios and sensory preferences.
- **PRACTICE** using warnings, visual prompts, gestures, and physical redirects when possible, and keeping instructions simple and clear.
- **IGNORE** targeted negative behavior and praise positive opposite behavior.
- **PRACTICE** a calm down strategy and reward yourself for successful parenting.
- **RECORD** your experiences on the Record Sheet and bring to the next session.



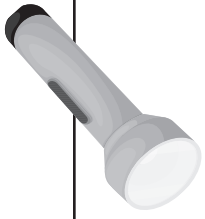
To Read:



Chapter 9, "Spotlighting Your Limit Setting and Managing Misbehavior" in book *Helping Preschool Children with Autism*



Get in your child's attention spotlight!



Handout

RECORD SHEET

Ignore, Redirect, Praise & Coach

Date: _____

Instructions: Record behaviors you have ignored or redirected & how you coached, praised, & rewarded your child, as well as your child's response.



Behaviors ignored and/or redirected:

Example: yelling

1.

2.

3.



Behaviors coached, praised and rewarded:

Example: Talking nicely

1.

2.

3.

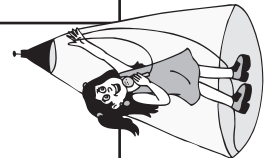


Child's response:

1.

2.

3.



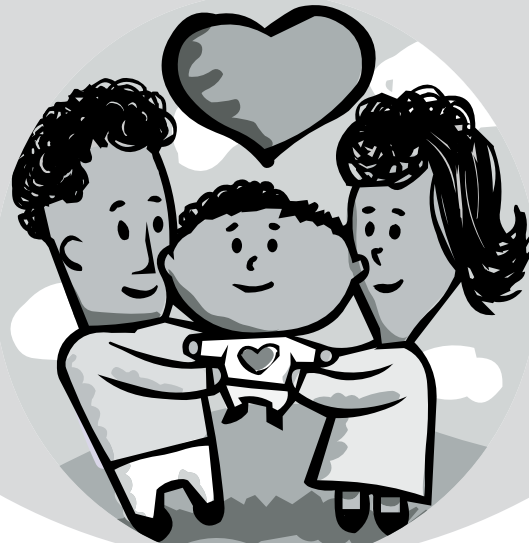
Spotlight your child's successes

SPOTLIGHTING



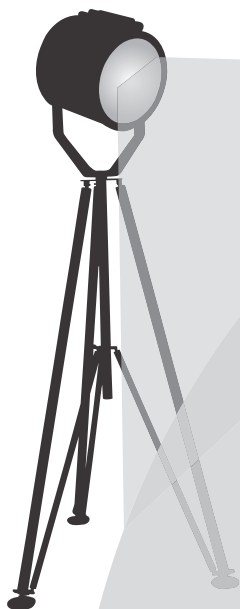
Promoting Your Child's Optimal Social, Emotional & Language Development

- Play frequently and provide social and emotional coaching.
- Label and reflect your child's feelings.
- Structure your child's day with a predictable routine for mornings, naps, meals and bedtime.
- Set clear limits when needed to keep your child safe.
- Help your child prepare for transitions or changes in routine.
- Have a predictable routine for leaving your child and reuniting.
- Give your child choices when possible.
- Share your love and praise frequently.
- Spotlight your child's positive behavior with enthusiastic praise.
- Redirect your child's negative behavior when possible.
- Ignore tantrums and give back attention as soon as tantrum stops.
- Take care of yourself by getting support from others and doing things for yourself.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight with positive discipline to help them feel loved, safe and secure!

SPOTLIGHTING



Positive Discipline Helps My Child Feel Loved and Secure (Summary)

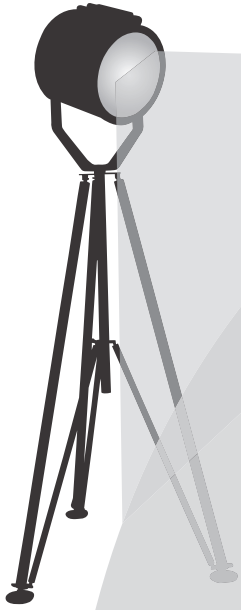
- Schedule times daily to engage in interactive child-directed play using prompts and modeling to get your child's attention and spotlight the social behaviors and language you want to encourage; remember you can maximize your child's learning by using these strategies during meals, bedtime routines and your other caregiving routines.
- Use descriptive commenting narrations, pre-academic, persistence, social and emotion coaching strategies during child-directed play times.
- Use physical sensory routines, praise and salient rewards to motivate your child's interest in using targeted social skills.
- Teach your child self-regulation skills using puppets, books, and imaginary play.
- Teach your child how to follow instructions and use reminders, redirections, distractions and choices to pre-empt misbehavior.
- Withdraw your attention and ignore misbehaviors that are not hurtful to others or to themselves; return your attention just as soon as a positive behavior is used.
- Pace yourself one step at a time.

Remember every time a negative behavior is not reinforced but instead the positive opposite behavior is rewarded with your attention and coaching, a productive learning opportunity has occurred. In fact, every interaction with your child is a potential learning opportunity.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight with positive discipline to help them feel loved, safe and secure!

SPOTLIGHTING



Ignoring

- Avoid eye contact and discussion while ignoring.
- Physically move away from your child but stay in the room.
- Be prepared for testing.
- Be consistent.
- Return your attention as soon as misbehavior stops.
- Combine distractions and redirections with ignoring.
- Choose specific child behaviors to ignore and make sure they are ones you can ignore.
- Limit the number of behaviors to systematically ignore.
- Give more attention to the positive opposite behaviors you want to encourage.



Getting in your child's attention spotlight with positive discipline to help them feel loved, safe and secure!



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Stay Calm While Ignoring

When you first start ignoring misbehavior, the behavior will get worse before it gets better. It is important to be prepared to wait out this screaming period. If you give in to the tantrum, this behavior will be reinforced and your child will learn that by crying and screaming loudly, he or she can get his/her own way.

It is important to stay calm while ignoring. Try to think ahead and brainstorm ways to remain calm when ignoring misbehavior.



Ways to stay calm while ignoring:

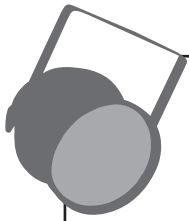
- Take deep breaths
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Think positive thoughts
- Walk away
- Turn on some music



Remember, it is normal for young children to cry, bite and hit to get what they want. This is not personal but a reflection of their lack of verbal skills and inability to use social skills to get what they want.

Goal: I will commit to tell myself the following _____

when my child misbehaves.



BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Differential Attention



Using Differential Attention: Sometimes, children will show positive and negative behaviors during the same activity. For example, a child might follow directions (positive behavior) while whining or fussing (negative behavior). *Differential attention* is the technique where a parent praises the positive behavior while ignoring the negative behavior. For example, a parent might praise the child for following directions, and pay no attention to the whining or fussing behavior. This way, the child learns that she will receive positive attention for some behaviors, but will not receive attention for other behavior (e.g., whining).



When Would Differential Attention be Effective?

Think about some situations where this kind of differential attention could be effective.

For example: When my child is following directions but not looking at me, I will praise his/her cooperation and ignore the lack of verbal response.

Goal: I will commit to praising _____
behavior while ignoring _____
behavior.

BRAINSTORM/BUZZ

Behaviors to Ignore

Behaviors such as throwing tantrums, whining, pouting, ignoring you, and screaming are good candidates for ignoring. These behaviors are annoying, but they never really seem to hurt anyone, and the behaviors will disappear if they are systematically ignored. The ignoring technique should not be used, however, with behaviors that could lead to physical injury or property damage, or intolerable disruption of an ongoing activity.

Parents often have trouble controlling their anger when dealing with misbehavior or a child who ignores their requests. This emotional reaction can make it difficult to ignore misbehavior or to praise compliance when it finally does occur. However, ignoring is one of the most effective strategies you can use, as long as it is used in combination with your attention and praise for the child's positive opposite behaviors.



Child Behaviors I will Ignore

Example: whining

Goal: I will commit to ignoring _____
behavior whenever it occurs. I will praise _____
behavior, the positive opposite of the behavior I am ignoring.



SPOTLIGHTING *Learning Self-Control*

Many family members find that in stressful situations they cannot maintain their self-control. Others report they suffer from chronic anger, anxiety, or depression, and they are easily set off by the slightest event. However, when parents allow themselves to become so overwhelmed that they overreact, the consequences can be unfortunate. Parents may say or do something they will regret. After they calm down, they may feel guilty and avoid dealing with the child for fear of repeating another episode. It is frightening and anxiety-provoking for a child to see a parent lose control. Also, the child learns to imitate these aggressive behaviors in other situations. These cycles of parental overreaction and avoidance make it difficult to deal with the child in a consistent manner. The best approach is to achieve a middle ground—for parents to not be so overwhelmed that they can't respond or so upset that they overreact.

Upsetting Thoughts

"My child is tuning me out. This is getting ridiculous. He'll never listen."

"I can't handle it when she tantrums."

Calming Thoughts

"My child is more engaged with the object than with my words. My job is to stay calm and get in his attention spotlight. I can provide a learning opportunity."

"I need to help organize his toys and only bring out 1 or 2 toys at a time. I can help him learn to pick up."

"I can handle this. I am in control. She has just learned some powerful ways to get control. I will teach her more appropriate ways to behave."

Thought Control

Researchers have demonstrated that there is a relationship between how we think and how we behave. For example, if you view the child in hostile terms ("She is misbehaving because she hates me." or "He likes to get me upset."), you are more likely to become very angry. On the other hand, if your thoughts emphasize your ability to cope ("I'm going to have to help her learn to control herself."), this will help to bring about rational and effective responses. One of the first steps for improving the way you think about your child is to replace upsetting thoughts and negative self-statements with calming thoughts.

Getting in Your Child's Attention Spotlight to Promote Social, Emotional, & Language Development

Limit Setting
Ignore,
Redirect,
& Distract

Prompting &
Imitating Social
Interactions

Verbal
Communication &
Sign Language

Social
& Emotion
& Coaching

Praise &
Celebrations

Engage in
Sensory &
Physical
Activities

Joint Activity
& Focused
Attention

Pre-Academic
&
Persistence
Coaching

Pretend &
Puppet Play

Nonverbal
Gestures



