



Behavior Basics

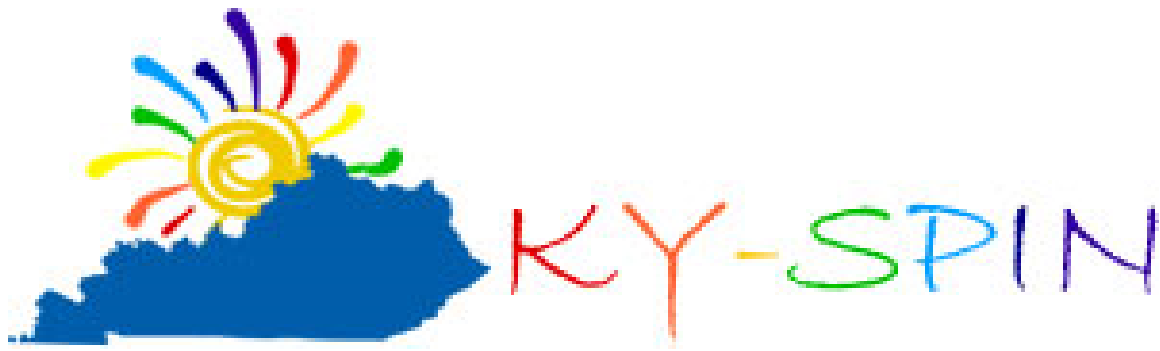
An introduction to behavior management
strategies for parents

KY-SPIN

**(Special Parent Involvement Network)
Parent Training & Information (PTI)**

Center

Funded by the U.S. Dept. of Education under IDEA since 1988 when Kentucky first received a PTI. KY-SPIN Parent Center provides training, information and support for children and youth with all types of disabilities (birth through 26 years old), their parents, families, and professionals.



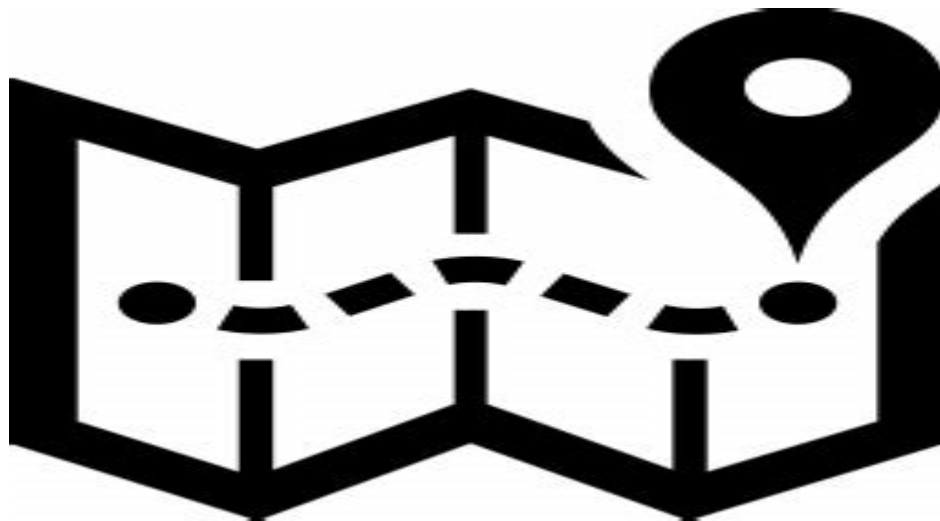
We do NOT:
Act as Attorneys

We DO:



- ♥ Empower Families to Effectively Advocate for their Children
- ♥ Provide peer support to help families access needed information and resources
- ♥ Lend a listening ear

- ▶ One of the biggest challenges we as parents face is managing difficult or defiant behavior in our children. Whether they are refusing to put on their shoes, or throwing full blown tantrums, we often find ourselves at a loss for an effective way to respond.
- ▶ Positive Behavior Therapy techniques can provide a roadmap to calmer, more consistent ways to manage problem behaviors and give children a chance to gain the developmental skills they need to regulate their own behaviors.



What do you
do when
your child
has a
tantrum?

ABC's of Behavior Management

- ▶ A. Antecedents
 - ▶ Triggers or preceding factors that make behavior more or less likely to occur.
 - ▶ Learning and anticipating your child's triggers can be extremely helpful in preventing misbehavior.
- ▶ B. Behaviors
 - ▶ The specific actions that we want to encourage or discourage
 - ▶ Not all behaviors are negative
- ▶ C. Consequences
 - ▶ The results that naturally or logically follow a behavior.
 - ▶ Consequences-negative or positive, affect the likelihood of a behavior reoccurring.
 - ▶ The more immediate the consequence, the more powerful it is.



Defining Behaviors

- ▶ The first step in behavior management is to identify target behaviors.
- ▶ These behaviors should be specific so that everyone is clear on what is expected.
- ▶ Avoid poorly defined behaviors like “being good” or “acting up”

Examples of well defined behaviors: “Jacob will pick up his room, the first time he is asked” “Jessica will not hit others”



Antecedents

- ▶ Antecedents or Triggers come in many forms
- ▶ Some antecedents set up negative behavior
- ▶ Others are helpful tools that can help us manage potentially problematic behaviors before they begin and can promote good behavior.



Antecedents to Avoid

Don't assume expectations are understood.

- ▶ Don't assume that your kids know what is expected of them.
- ▶ Spell it out.
- ▶ Demands change from situation to situation
- ▶ When children are unsure of what they are supposed to be doing , they are more likely to misbehave.



Antecedents to Avoid

Don't call out things from a distance

- ▶ Be sure to tell children important direction face to face.
- ▶ Information yelled out from a distance is less likely to be remembered and understood.



Antecedents to Avoid



Don't transition without warning

- ▶ Transitioning from one activity to another can be hard for kids. Especially those with developmental delays.
- ▶ Transitions are particularly hard when children are in the middle of something they enjoy.
- ▶ Having warning gives children the chance to find a good stopping place for an activity and makes the transition to the next task easier.

Antecedents to Embrace

Be aware of the situation.

- ▶ Consider and manage environmental factors such as hunger, fatigue, anxiety, or distractions.
- ▶ All of these factors make it difficult for children to rein in their behavior.



Antecedents to Embrace



Adjust the environment.

- ▶ When it's homework time, remove distractions like video games, TVs, and toys
- ▶ Provide a snack
- ▶ Establish a clean, organized space for kids to work
- ▶ Schedule breaks, attention is not indefinite.



Antecedents to Embrace

Make expectations Clear

- ▶ You will get better cooperation if both you and your child are clear on what is expected.
- ▶ Sit down with them and present information verbally
- ▶ Even if you feel your child “should” know what is expected, clarifying expectations from the start of a task helps head off misunderstandings down the line.



Antecedents to Embrace

Provide countdowns for transitions.

- ▶ Prepare children whenever possible for a transition or change in routine.
- ▶ For example, give a 10 minute warning and a 2 minute warning before you end a task.
- ▶ Some children may need more frequent reminders that the time to end the task is coming. Don't overwhelm them with verbal reminders. Set a timer or a visual timer for children that do not understand numerical values.
- ▶ Follow through with the transition at the stated time.



Antecedents to Embrace

Let kids have a choice.

- ▶ Giving a structured choice can help children feel empowered.
- ▶ Example: “Do you want to take a shower before dinner or after dinner?”
- ▶ This helps children feel that they have a say in their own scheduling and can encourage them to self-regulate their behaviors.



Consequences



Creating Effective Consequences:

- ▶ Not all consequences are created equal.
- ▶ Some consequences are an excellent way to create structure and help kids understand the difference between acceptable behaviors and unacceptable behaviors.
- ▶ Other consequences have the potential to do more harm than good.
- ▶ Having a strong understanding of how to use consequences intelligently and consistently can make all the difference.



Consequences to Avoid

Don't give negative attention

- ▶ Children value attention from important adults in their life so much that any attention, positive or negative, is better than none.
- ▶ Negative attention such as raising your voice, actually increases unwanted behaviors over time.
- ▶ Responding to behaviors with criticism or yelling adversely affects their self-esteem.



Consequences to Avoid

Don't delay consequences

- ▶ The most effective consequences are immediate.
- ▶ For every moment that passes after a behavior, your child is less likely to link that consequence to their behavior.



here &
Now

Consequences to Avoid

Avoid disproportionate consequences

- ▶ We as parents all get very frustrated and sometimes overreact.
- ▶ A huge consequence can be demoralizing for children and could cause them to give up on trying to behave.
- ▶ If you do have moment and overreact, go back to the child once you have calmed down and explain.
- ▶ It's ok for our children to know that we make mistakes too!



Consequences to Avoid

Avoid positive consequences

- ▶ Example: when a child dawdles putting on their shoes or picking up blocks, and you do it for them out of frustration
- ▶ When you give in and do it for them, it increases the likelihood that they will dawdle again the next time.



Effective Consequences

Consequences that are most effective, start with generous amounts of attention to the behaviors that you want to encourage.



Effective Consequences

Think: Positive Attention for Positive Behaviors

- ▶ Giving your child positive reinforcement for being good helps maintain ongoing good behavior.
- ▶ Positive attention enhances the quality of the relationship, improves self-esteem, and feels good for everyone involved.
- ▶ Positive attention to brave behavior can also alleviate anxiety, and help kids become more receptive to instructions and limit-setting.



Effective Consequences



Ignoring

- ▶ This should ONLY be used with minor behaviors, not aggression or very disruptive behaviors.
- ▶ Deliberately withdraw attention when a child starts to misbehave.
- ▶ As you ignore, wait for positive behavior to resume.
- ▶ Give positive behavior as soon as the desired behavior starts.
- ▶ By withholding your attention until you get a positive behavior, you are teaching your child what behavior gets you to engage.

Effective Consequences



Reward Menus

- ▶ Rewards are a tangible way to give children positive feedback for desired behaviors.
- ▶ A reward is something a child earns, an acknowledgement that they are doing something that is difficult for them.
- ▶ Rewards are most effective as motivators when a child can choose from a variety of things.
- ▶ Examples: extra time on the ipad, a piece of candy, special treat, etc.
- ▶ Offering a variety reduces the possibility of the reward losing its appeal over time and offers the child some sense of control.
- ▶ Rewards should be linked to specific behaviors and always delivered consistently.

Behavior Management Strategies

- ▶ Positive Reinforcement
- ▶ Premack Principle
- ▶ Behavior Specific Praise
- ▶ Choices

choice



Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement includes 2 important pieces

- ▶ It's immediate
- ▶ It increases the positive behavior in the future.



Positive Reinforcement

Positive Reinforcement needs to immediately follow the desired behavior.

- ▶ Waiting for a reward at the end of the day may be too long. It will not be effective.
- ▶ As soon as possible give your child praise or a reward. This will help strengthen the connection between the reinforcer and the behavior.
- ▶ The sooner your child understands exactly what behavior earned a reward, the better.

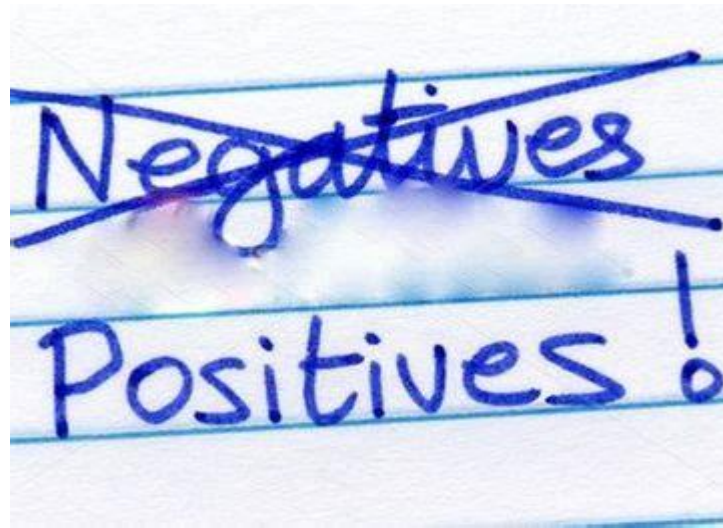


Positive Reinforcement



The desired behavior needs to occur more often in the future.

- ▶ Pay attention to whether or not your child engages in that behavior again and more often.
- ▶ If yes- keep using that reinforcer. If not, it may be time to tweak some things.



Positive Reinforcement

The size of the reinforcer should match the effort needed for the behavior.

- ▶ Did your child do something incredible? Give them a big reward!
- ▶ Did they do something small? A trip to Disney World may not be warranted.
- ▶ If your child finishes everything on their dinner plate, should they get 2 hours of screen time or a cookie? How much effort did finishing dinner require? That's up to you as a parent.



Positive Reinforcement

- ▶ Make the Reward fit the behavior.
- ▶ It's the opposite of “make the punishment fit the crime.”
- ▶ Give a reinforcer that works and stick with it.
- ▶ Pay attention and use reinforcers that actually increase the occurrences of the desired behavior.



Positive Reinforcement

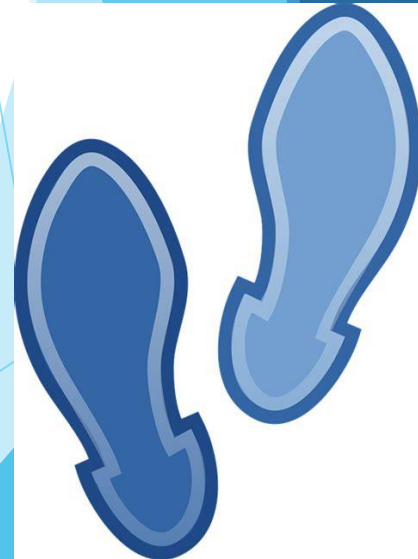
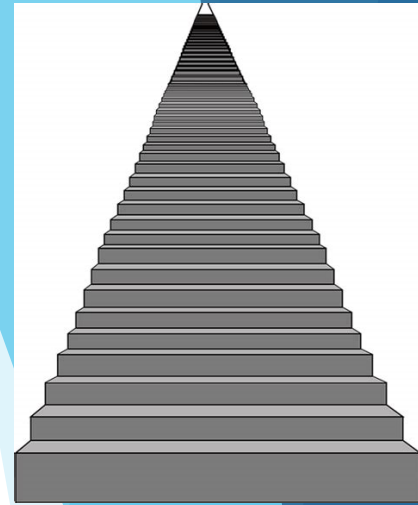
- ▶ Free reinforcers can be more effective than candy or toys.
- ▶ Think about things like high fives, singing a silly song together, doing a happy dance, one-on-one time with a parent, getting to choose what to do or what to eat, speaking in silly voices. The possibilities are endless.



The Premack Principle

The Premack Principle is also known as “Grandma’s Rule.”

- ▶ First you eat your vegetables and then you can have a treat.
- ▶ First do your homework and then you can have screen time.
- ▶ First_____, Then_____.
- ▶ Using consistent” First_____, Then_____” wording helps children understand what is going on and helps them preform the desired behavior.
- ▶ Reminding them of the good thing that is coming can make it easier to do the necessary un-fun thing.
- ▶ The “Then” part is the positive reinforcement.



Premack Principle

Don't just tell them what's coming next in the routine.

- ▶ Example: First put on your socks, then your shoes.
- ▶ Where is the positive reinforcement? Why should I put on my socks?

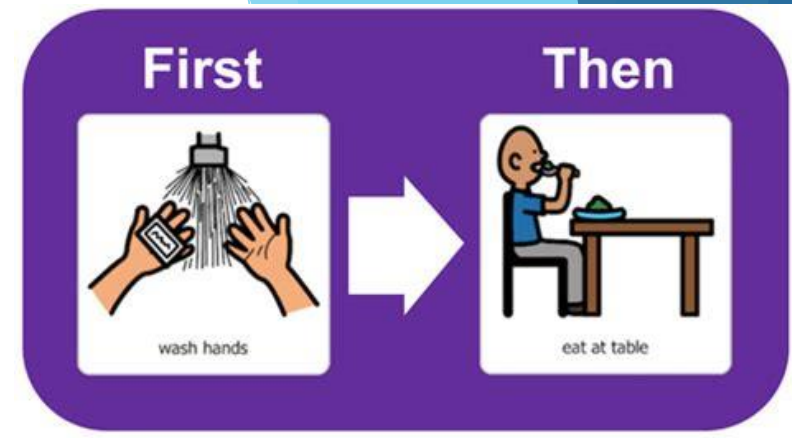


Premack Principle

The “Then” doesn’t have to be something big.

Examples:

- ▶ First eat your green beans, then high five!
- ▶ First fold the take out the trash, then we can play legos together!
- ▶ First wash your hands, then pick out a snack.
- ▶ First change clothes, then we can do the hot dog dance!



Premack Principle

- ▶ Use whatever “then” works to get the job done.
- ▶ Be consistent with your wording
- ▶ Be direct. Get to the point. “First_____,
Then_____.”
 - ▶ You don’t have to have a whole conversation on why the desired behavior needs to occur. Use as few words as possible so your directions are clear.



Behavior Specific Praise

- ▶ Be Specific! When you give your child verbal praise, make sure they know exactly they are receiving the praise for.
- ▶ When you praise your child, you want to see a specific behavior increase in the future.
- ▶ Instead of saying “Good Job!” Try:
 - Great job waiting your turn!
 - Awesome job putting your shoes on by yourself!
 - I like how you got in the car the first time I asked.
 - I am so happy you put your pants on.



Behavior Specific Praise

- ▶ Don't leave your child guessing what they did right. Make it clear and make your praise genuine.
- ▶ What are you truly thankful for them doing? Tell them.
- ▶ Get in the habit of telling your child exactly what they did well, and enjoy seeing more of that behavior in the future!



Offering Choices

- ▶ We all spend so much time telling our kids what NOT to do. Do they even know what they CAN do in each situation? Do they remember?
- ▶ Offering Choices is an easy way to prevent problem behaviors.
- ▶ Instead of constantly saying “no” or “Stop” Tell your child what to do instead by giving choices between appropriate responses or activities.
- ▶ Examples:
 - There is no hitting. You can walk away or ask nicely for turn.
 - You have to ride in the grocery cart. Would you like to play with this toy or eat this snack I brought for you?
 - Would you like to walk or skip to the car as you hold my hand?



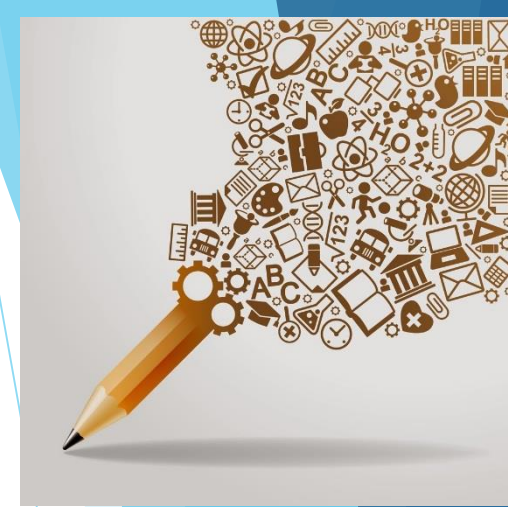
Offering Choices

- ▶ Give choices that are acceptable at that exact time. That way your child can choose for the response for themselves.
- ▶ Your child will learn over time to choose one of these things without you even prompting them.
- ▶ The idea is to try to prevent the problem behavior by giving your child what they need (a little guidance on what is acceptable to do in that moment) and then give them the freedom to choose one of the acceptable actions.



Sources

- ▶ Child Mind Institute <https://childmind.org/article/managing-problem-behavior-at-home/>
- ▶ Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>
- ▶ Center for Autism and Related Disorders <https://www.centerforautism.com/>
- ▶ Kickboard <https://www.kickboardforschools.com/blog/post/9-examples-of-positive-behavior-support-interventions>
- ▶ Positive Discipline <https://www.positivediscipline.com/parents>



If you still have
questions...



(800) 525-7746
(502) 937-6894
spininc@kyspin.com
www.kyspin.com

Please complete our evaluation