

# BEHAVIOR

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NEUROBEHAVIOR H.O.M.E. PROGRAM

## REINFORCEMENT- REWARDS

### EFFECTIVE REINFORCEMENT IS . . .

- Immediate:** Reinforcer is given within a second of the desired act.
- Frequent:** Use high amounts of reinforcement.
- Descriptive:** Explain exactly why the person is receiving the reinforcement. Avoid general statements such as "Good job." Always add exactly what they did right, e.g. "Good job putting your shoes away. Thank you."
- Varied:** Use various reinforcers in the environment. Praise is the most powerful but add activity and social reinforcers for variety and fun.

### ***Remember!***

**Praise 7 times more than you criticize.**

*This means your child should hear at least 7 positive messages for every correction/criticism.*

## POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

*Is anything that causes the behavior to increase by adding (+) something.*

### PRIMARY AND SECONDARY REINFORCERS

**Primary Reinforcers** are things you need to survive such as; food, drink, and sensory stimulation. Some commonly used primary reinforcers are raisins, pretzels, M & Ms, candy, juice, soda, crackers, cookies, etc. Primary reinforcers are often paired with secondary reinforcers to start a reinforcement program, but quickly faded. Too many primary reinforcers make people fat. 😊

**Secondary Reinforcers** are learned usually by being paired with a primary reinforcer. An item starts to be viewed as a reinforcer/desireable item over time.

- Tangible** Stickers, toys, pencils, gadgets, bouncy balls, reward cards saying "Good job," or "Thank you," etc.
- Activity** Board or card game, crafts, extra outings such as swimming, library, out-to-eat, arcades, bowling, park, movie night
- Social** Praise, hugs, high fives, pats on the back, hand shakes
- Generalized** Tokens, money, points, things that can be exchanged for a tangible or activity

**Positive reinforcement increases behavior, so pick a behavior you want to increase, decide if you will use primary or secondary reinforcers (or a combination of both) and start having fun with reinforcement.**

### EXAMPLES

Target behavior: **STANDING IN LINE AT THE STORE.**

Reinforcement: primary reinforcer (food).

1. Grandparent says to child, “We need to wait to pay for the groceries.” [States expectation]
2. While waiting in line grandparent plays “I Spy” game with child. [Distraction technique to prevent boredom.]
3. Grandparent compliments child on good behavior and reminds child that there is bubble gum waiting in the car for the child for having good behavior.
4. Grandparent has child help load groceries onto check stand and compliments child for helping.
5. After groceries are placed in the car, grandparent gives child a yummy piece of gum for good behavior in the store. [Immediate delivery of primary reinforcer.]

Target behavior: **PUTTING TOYS AWAY.**

Reinforcement: secondary reinforcer using social praise.

1. Parent says to child, “In two minutes it will be time to put the toys away.” [Prepares child for transition and expectation.]
2. Parent waits one minute then reminds in a happy tone, “In one minute toys will be finished.” [Preparing for transition.]
3. After one minute parent makes eye contact with the child and says, “Hey it’s time to put toys away. What ones should I put away and what ones are you going to put away?” [Helping allows you to model desired behavior.]
4. As the child starts putting toys away the parent enthusiastically says, “I like it when you put your toys away. Good job getting everything back in the toy box.” Then parent gives the child a high five. [Secondary reinforcement: two verbal praises and one high five.]

Target behavior: **HAND WASHING**

Reinforcement: primary reinforcer (food), paired with secondary reinforcer (social praise).

1. After making eye contact dad says, “In one minute it will be time to wash your hands for lunch.” [Prepares child for transition and expectation.]
2. After one minute dad says, “Hey, time to wash our hands.”
3. Dad and child wash hands together while singing their favorite song. [Dad is modeling desired behavior and delivering social reinforcer of singing and having fun while washing.]
4. While child is drying hands dad says, “Here’s a pretzel for washing your hands so well. You are really good at soaping up both sides of your hands, good job, let’s go eat.” [Primary reinforcer, the pretzel, and secondary reinforcer, descriptive praise, was delivered immediately following hand washing.]
5. Dad fades from using pretzel to just the secondary reinforcer of enthusiastic verbal praise after five hand washing successes.

