

Butterfly Parent Training

Welcome/Round robin

Review of Homework

- Practising the language

Using Tangible Rewards

- ❖ Why reward
- ❖ What are Rewards
- ❖ What to Reward
- ❖ When to Reward
- ❖ When not to Reward
- ❖ Timing the Giving of Rewards

Ideas for Tangible Rewards

Homework - identify behaviours to encourage using positive reinforcement

Using Tangible Rewards

Why Reward?

Whatever happens at the same time, or just after a person does something influences how that person behaves on future occasions. People are likely to behave in the same way more often if what happens as a result is pleasing or satisfying to them. We say that this particular way of behaving has been **rewarded or reinforced**.

It is rewarding that keeps children doing everything they have learnt, whether it is regarded by others as 'good' or 'bad' behaviour.

What you will be trying to encourage in children is behaviour which will be helpful to their social development, of advantage mainly to them and hopefully pleasing to you and to others. After all if you work, you are rewarded by a pay packet- if you take friends out to dinner you would be rewarded by smiles and "Thanks". You would soon stop these activities if you received no reward. Your children receive rewards hundreds of times each day: you smile when they finish their meal, you admire their drawings, you watch when they show you they can do something new.

Rewarding is a powerful tool when used to increase the number of times desirable, 'good' behaviour occurs. Therefore it is a very important tool to use when teaching children and managing their behaviour. To use it most effectively you need to know **what** is rewarding to children, **which** behaviours you want to teach them and **which** behaviours they already have which you would like them to continue.

Then you must give rewards for the **positive** behaviours you want to continue, not the **negative** ones you feel are

undesirable. You must **always** couple tangible rewards with verbal praise.

Many adults become concerned that the use of rewards could be seen as blackmail or bribery and therefore undesirable. What do these unpleasant words really mean?

In **blackmail** unpleasant events are threatened unless certain actions are carried out. However with rewards that encourage desirable behaviour, there are no threats or unpleasant results and the rewards are to the child's advantage.

The original meaning of the word **bribery** implied that the activities being induced by bribery were illegal, unethical and usually only of advantage to the briber.

What are Rewards?

A reward for a child will be something they like or feel good about. It is not always something you think they should like, and what may seem like a punishment to one person can be a reward to another! If you decide to use tangible rewards or activities make sure that whatever is used can only be obtained when you see the positive behaviour you want. If they are freely available at other times children won't work for them - would you?

Rewards can be:

Primary or Food Rewards :sweets, biscuits, crisps, raisins, fruit, savoury biscuits, fruit juice etc.

Secondary or Token Rewards: money points, stars, stickers, counters, buttons etc.

- ❖ When using token rewards remember to start with tokens which are quick and easy to give.
- ❖ Give lots of tokens and praise to begin with, and gradually give fewer tokens as the positive behaviour increases.
- ❖ Change them often - children get bored with the same thing day after day.
- ❖ Tokens should be given with love and praise so the social rewards become powerful enough on their own to keep the behaviour going after you have stopped using the tokens.

Social Rewards: praise, hugs, smiles, touching, being close, giving attention, gentle tone of voice etc.

- ❖ When using social rewards be enthusiastic, even 'Over the top'!
- ❖ Show your child you are really pleased with what they have done and achieved.
- ❖ Tell them often. Social rewards such as praise or a smile are **always** available, they don't cost anything and they strengthen the relationship between you and your child.
- ❖ Be specific about the behaviour you like - tell them exactly **why** you're pleased. For example "I'm very pleased because you've finished your dinner", not just "you're a good girl".
- ❖ Remember - tell them **what** they did that earned your praise, their reward: "I'm pleased you were listening to me when I asked you to get your shoes" rather than just "good girl".

Activity Rewards: (activities children like to do when given the chance!) playing outside, playing games, playing with special toys, earning extra time with you.

- ❖ When using activity rewards remember to use activities or games which your child does **not** have regular access to - make it a special time or event!
- ❖ Activities that children like to do can be used to reward doing things they don't like doing. This is sometimes known as "Grandma's Rule" e.g. "Eat your vegetables, then you can have some ice cream." "Have your bath, then I'll tell you a story"

Remember: If the positive behaviour you want occurs, the reward **must** be given. If the behaviour you do not want occurs, no reward is given.

What to Reward

Reward behaviour that you want to strengthen and to happen more often i.e. **positive** behaviour, e.g.

- ❖ using the toilet
- ❖ picking up toys
- ❖ sitting at the table
- ❖ eating with a knife and fork
- ❖ talking instead of shouting

Reward children when they are being good, e.g.

- ❖ doing as you ask
- ❖ sharing toys
- ❖ waiting patiently
- ❖ sitting quietly

Reward children when they are making an effort to improve their behaviour, e.g.

- ❖ when they begin to dress themselves
- ❖ when they start to use words to request things rather than pointing or grunting
- ❖ when they start to listen to what you say the first time, not after you've repeated yourself

Reinforce your children when they learn something new, e.g.

- ❖ naming colours
- ❖ drawing a circle
- ❖ doing up buttons
- ❖ using a knife at a meal

When to Reward

It is not only the kind of reward used that is important, but also **when** it is used. To be effective the reward **must** be given **immediately** after the **positive** behaviour, especially in the early stages. If you delay the reward you may find that you have, by mistake, encouraged and rewarded some other behaviour your child has done. At first it is also necessary to reward frequently in response to the smallest sign of the behaviour you want. Do not insist on a perfect performance on the first day, but do reward a good try!

Once the positive behaviour has been learnt, you need to teach your child to continue doing it - even when you are not there to remind them. As progress is made, instead of rewarding every time the behaviour occurs, a reward can be given after several occurrences (maybe three or four) and at varying intervals. To keep the newly learnt positive behaviour going - reward only sometimes, but vary the frequency, so that your child doesn't know when to expect the reward. After some time the new

behaviour will maintain itself, with occasional encouragement and praise.

When Not to Reward

It is important to be very careful not to reward the **negative** or poor behaviours that you don't want. Children can be taught undesirable, negative behaviour if you give in to them once in a while. For instance, if you give in to a tantrum or constant whinge occasionally, it will make it happen more. If your child keeps on after you've said "NO", so that you give in for an easy life, the whinging and persistence will increase - they know they just have to try harder and for longer to wear you down and to get their own way! The more you are firm and stick to your word, the sooner they will learn that they will **not** be rewarded, and the sooner the tantrums or whinging will stop.

Timing the Giving of Rewards

When we reward has a very powerful effect upon how successful that reward will be. There are several patterns of administering it which are important when trying to manage behaviour.

Continuous Rewarding: This is when a reward is given on every occasion that the desired behaviour occurs.

This is especially effective when trying to establish a new behaviour, in order to make sure that the behaviour happens again and again, until the person gets used to doing it. It has been found to be one of the surest ways of **establishing** a new behaviour.

Partial (Intermittent) Rewarding: One of the surest ways of **maintaining** a behaviour.

This can be done in several fixed ways which may be decided beforehand, but in everyday situations this is usually not practical, especially when working with small children.

The most common form of partial rewarding is one which occurs pretty much at random (i.e. when you 'catch them being good', but not every time). The person never knows exactly when the reward will occur and this is particularly potent for producing high rate of responding. There are two very common every day examples which illustrate this:

The 'slot machine syndrome, occurs when a person keeps paying coins into a machine. The person believes that the more frequently they respond, the more likely will be the pay-off, even though there is no way of predicting when the pay-off will occur; it could be after the first coin or the twentieth, but the person keeps trying knowing that it will happen eventually. When it does, the behaviour starts all over again to receive another pay-off.

The "I want some sweets" scenario works on exactly the same principle. When a child asks for something and is at first refused, the child will keep on trying - whining, crying, shouting etc. If the child knows that the adult will eventually give in (i.e. pay out)! All s/he has to do is keep "responding" until s/he gets them. When s/he does (anything for peace and quiet!), the sweets become the reward which ensures that the behaviour (whining, crying etc.) occurs again.

Fading: This is when a behaviour has become successfully established and maintained, so that a reward is no longer needed. A partial pattern of rewarding is used, but gradually

reduced in frequency so that reward eventually fades out altogether.

By this time the child should be so practised at doing what you have encouraged that they will be doing it all the time as a matter of course and will no longer need rewarding.

However remember the value of -

"Catching Children Being Good."

Catch Them Being Good!

Too often the children get most of their attention by misbehaving. When they are doing well, or being good, we tend to leave them be and make the most of the opportunity to get the chores done, cook the meal or see to the other children. Consequently to get our attention children revert to 'bad' behaviour. They get more and more attention for bad behaviour and less and less for good. The more we criticise, tell off and try to punish the worse they get. There have been shown that negative behaviour brings the attention they crave. It is better to concentrate on finding **positive** behaviours to praise, rather than always to be looking for the negative behaviours to criticise or punish.

How many times have you said to your child "I like the way you are playing quietly"?

To begin with you may need clues or reminders to help you to remember to praise when you see your children being good. These ideas may help.

Set up a daily practise time - 30 minutes will be fine. Stop what you are doing every five minutes and find one thing to praise and reinforce them for. Another good time is during a meal - there may be others present and you can praise every one for good behaviour!

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Put up signs to remind you to praise:

Have them on the fridge, cabinets, doors and mirrors. They could say:

Praise (child's name)

Tell them what they did right

Give them attention when they are behaving as you want them to

Catch them being good!

Give out tangible rewards - stickers, smiley face charts, food etc.

Remember to use praise when you pass out the tokens. Make sure you mean it - SMILE and look pleased.

You have probably been using reinforcement all along to teach and manage your children. To make the rewards most effective you need to use them systematically. Following the above rules can help you use it more effectively and to strengthen the desirable positive behaviours you are looking for, and not to strengthen by mistake the negative undesirable ones.

Ideas for Rewards

These suggestions were made by children and parents who are already using these management techniques.

Primary Rewards / Food Rewards - try to use as little as possible.

a sweet/chocolate (preferably only one!)

a favourite biscuit

an ice cream when out

raisins (small packet)

crisps/nuts (a few in a small bowl)

pop corn

Secondary Rewards - these have no value in themselves, only in what can be done with them. Remember to exchange them at regular intervals for something tangible - see list below.

Tokens, stars, ticks, stickers

Collectibles (cards, stickers, small books/ornaments)

Ladybird books

an inexpensive longed for toy

dolls clothes

play dough/plasticine

blowing bubbles

balloons

money - small coins for a piggy bank

bubble bath

comic/magazine

colouring book & pencils

Exchanging tokens for/spending money on something the child wants

Social Rewards - the cheapest, most readily available and most powerful reward of all

Praise - "Well done, you've completed that puzzle"

Attention with approval- "Good girl, you were listening to me"

A smile

A gentle touch, hug, kiss, pat stroke, cuddle

Activity Rewards - these are "healthier" rewards which can be fun for everyone, and help to build your relationship. They need not cost money, but if they do, make sure you can afford the money or the time before you promise them.

read a story - or an extra one!

read a chapter of a favourite book

read/look at a book together

listening to a story tape together

song tapes - which you can both sing to

painting/finger painting

a visit to a children's playground (or park or pub garden)

being pushed on a swing for 10 minutes

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sprinkler/paddling pool in the garden
helping mum to make a cake
popping the pop corn
choosing a video/t.v. programme
spending 15 minutes alone with mum/dad and choosing what to do
going swimming
going ice skating
going for a bike ride with mum and dad
going to the pictures
going to the library and choosing a book for mum/dad to read to them
helping to wash the car/do the garden
feeding the ducks at the pond
having a friend to sleep over
phone a friend at the weekend (use an egg timer if long distance)
playing a board game together
play a game together (if necessary set a time limit e.g: 15 minutes)
going shopping to spend some pocket money
having face painted
spending time with mum doing makeup, hair etc
eating out (the activity is the going out)
staying up half an hour later at weekends
visit to the zoo/wildlife park (this is a BIG reward)
a family outing (another BIG reward)

Homework Task

Behaviours to Encourage

Identify **one** behaviour you would like to encourage in your child over the next weeks. You may like to discuss which one to focus on with the group.

Decide with your child what reward your child will receive when the accumulator is full.

Report back to next week's group on how it works.