

Alternate Curriculum Program

You Have to Build the Plane as You Fly It!: **Core Components of an Evidence Based Behavior Support Program**

Part Two:

*Focus on Social/Emotional/Behavioral Skills Instruction and
Reinforcement*



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Key Concepts to Remember-Reinforcement

- PAIR, PAIR, PAIR!
- Be creative and think outside the box.
- Watch what they do when they have free access.
- Don't forget to be animated!
- Calculate a variable schedule of reinforcement.



Adapted from PaTTAN Resources-Reinforcement

- Tips for Pairing
- Tips for Reinforcement
- Differential Reinforcement
- Guidelines for Positive Reinforcement
- Pairing in Group Activities

[Link](#) to Resources



Tips for Pairing

- Remember that reinforcement is “free” when you are pairing.
- Pair your voice and child’s name with reinforcement.
- Be aware of the child’s behavior and signs of interest.
- Reinforce all interaction and engagement (approach behavior) such as eye contact, smiles, laughs, walking/running to you.
- Narrate the activities rather than instruct.
- Evaluate yourself often-Does the child run to you or away from you?
- Withhold reinforcement when undesired behaviors occur.
- Do not turn reinforcing activities into a task.
- Avoid associating yourself with aversive events.
- Avoid statements such as “stop”, “no”, and “don’t”.
- Avoid asking questions (remember these are demands)

Tips for Reinforcement

- Make sure you have a variety of valuable reinforcers (e.g. food, toys, activities, videos) easily accessible before you start.
- Don't require too much effort from the learner-it has to be worth it!
- Reinforce IMMEDIATELY following target responses
- Vary what you deliver and how you deliver it
- Vary the schedule of reinforcement-keep it unpredictable
- Give more reinforcement when you get better responses
- Stop delivering before child loses motivation completely...you want them to want it when you offer it again

The Power of Potential Reinforcers is Constantly Changing!

Deprivation	Satiation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having too little or reduced access• The item is powerful! They person REALLY wants or needs it!• “I’m starving!”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having too much or unlimited access• The item has no power or may even start to be a punisher. The person does not want or need it.• ” I can’t eat another bite.”



Variable Ratio (VR) Schedule of Reinforcement

- The number of trials before accessing reinforcement is the schedule of reinforcement
- Should stay low enough to minimize challenging behavior
- Should be variable or unpredictable so that the learner never knows when it is going to happen (slot machine analogy) so should on average be at the student's determined VR
- Promotes strong and steady responding



Determining a Student's VR Schedule

- Do a series of “run-throughs” (first direction given to reinforcement) recording how many they can cooperate and remain successful and not engaging in ANY problem behavior occurs.
- Repeat three to five times.
- Calculate the average and set the BEGINNING VR slightly lower.

Run-through #1 =4

Run-through #2 =6

Run-through #3 =3

Total Trials = 13 (4+6+3)

Total “Run-Throughs” = 3

$13/3 = 4.3$ Student VR would most likely be set at 4 or 3



Differential Reinforcement

**Better reinforcement
(more quality/quantity)
for better, quicker,
| more independent responding**

Shaping: Providing differential reinforcement for closer approximations to the target behavior

Don't expect your learner to jump to the top of the mountain



Eat the elephant one bite at a time

If problem behavior occurs because child WANTS something (positive reinforcer):

- **Do not give what child wants**
- **Remain neutral**
- **Withdraw reinforcer**
- **Avert your eye gaze and attention until behavior stops for at least 3-5 seconds**
- **Deliver the reinforcer paired with enthusiasm**

Pairing in Group Activities

- Pairing is an important part of preparing the learner for group times (circle, story, etc).
- Often, the learner has never been exposed to participating in a group for a long period of time.
- Pairing with known reinforcers is useful during activities that require this.
- Initially the learner receives back-up reinforcement (e.g. M&M's, doodles, a fidget) quite often so that the activity is adequately paired.
- Once the student is able to tolerate the activity the time between delivery of reinforcement should be gradually increased.
- Every time a back-up reinforcer is delivered it also be paired with social reinforcement (e.g. high five, thumbs up, smile) so this eventually becomes a conditioned reinforcer.
- The student should never be turning around and manding for reinforcement. These mands should be put on extinction!

Key Concepts to Remember- Social/ Emotional/Behavioral Skill Instruction

- Don't just teach the skill in isolation, PRACTICE multiple times a day across people and settings.
- During work session, prompt and reinforce the BEHAVIOR you are targeting-not just task completion.
- Use/tweak the PaTTAN behavior protocols and data systems/process for common behaviors to target that you may not have thought of.

[Link](#) to sample daily schedule with practice times embedded throughout the day

Adapted from PaTTAN Resources- Social/Emotional/Behavioral Skill Instruction

Behavior Protocols

- Walk With Me
- Wait
- Give Up Reinforcer
- Interruption-Transition
- Accepting No
- Come Here



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[Link](#) to folder with different protocols

