



**AUTISM BRIGHT START**  
APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS SERVICES



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**Our Services**

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- ❖ Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
- ❖ Behavior Management/FBA's
- ❖ Parent Training
- ❖ Potty Training
- ❖ School Consultation

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**Agenda**

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- Behavior Management
- Identifying and Treating Challenging Behaviors
- Strategies to Get your Child to Listen
- Questions


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Behavior Management  
Background

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## Background

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- Behavior problems in general are most often treated in a **reactionary** manner instead of in a **proactive** manner
- Most reactions are **exclusionary** instead of **inclusionary**
- Most are **punitive** instead of **instructive**

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## Background

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The focus of behavior management should be on

1. Proactive measure taken to prevent or minimize problem behaviors
2. Instructive means to teach appropriate replacement skills to use in place of inappropriate behaviors
3. Ways to keep children included in their environment as much as possible (community outings, schools, related services, etc...)

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## Preventative Strategies

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The following strategies can alleviate many problem behaviors

1. Organized setting
2. Establishing rules
3. Effective monitoring
4. Consistent consequences


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Pro-Active Monitoring

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## Pro-Active Monitoring

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- **Definition:** Looking around the classroom, house, or setting at times other than when reacting to problem behaviors
- Should be done minimum of once every 2 minutes during instruction, independent work, or unstructured times
- Purposes:
  - Children are less likely to engage in problem behavior if they know they are being watched
  - Gives opportunity to praise appropriate behavior
  - Increases children's on-task and appropriate behaviors

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## Establishing Rules and Routines

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## Rules and Procedures

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- **Establishing rules** provide a general sense of what is expected of children
- **Rules** provide guidance to the children describing how certain activities will be performed or the way certain situations will be handled

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## Why Establish Rules and Expectations?

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- Provide guidelines or expectations for behavior
- Provide a standard for judging behavior
- The establishment of rules has been shown to result in decreased disruptive behavior


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## General Behavior Management Strategies

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## General Behavior Management

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- Focus on positive as much as possible
  - Can not have “time out/break away” without “time in”
  - There is always someone doing something right....no one does nothing right all day....
  - Remember that children learn from the examples of others, especially if you point out and teach what behavior is appropriate

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## Focusing on the Positive

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- Four to one rule - -
- Goal is at least 4 positive comments for every 1 behavior correction

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## General Behavior Management

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- Beware of “Don’t” comments without a “Do” comment
  - We can not assume that all children actually KNOW how to act appropriately
  - Children need to learn appropriate behaviors to use in place of inappropriate

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## Effective Instruction Delivery

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- Presenting demands in a specific manner can in itself increase compliance
- Components:
  - Proximity
  - Eye-contact
  - Use of directive statements
  - Follow-through

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## Proximity

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- Get close to the child before giving the demand
- Suggested: Less than 5 feet from the child at start of demand sequence

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## Eye Contact

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- Obtain the child's eye contact to ensure attention to the demand
- May need to be prompted, i.e., "Johnny, look at me"
- **Especially for Special needs children, Praise compliance with this request EVERY time**

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## Use of Directive Statements

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- Use statements, not questions
  - Incorrect: "Can you sit and eat, please?"
  - Correct: "Sit down. It's time for lunch."
- Be specific in instructions avoiding ambiguity
  - Incorrect: "pick up your toy"
  - Correct: "put your truck on this [point] shelf"
- Use only one step directions at a time to avoid confusion
- **Praise every step completed or appropriately attempted**

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## Follow Through

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- Make sure the child completes task even if physical guidance (i.e., hand over hand) is necessary
- **NO empty threats or promises**
- **Only issue the command if you are 100% committed to making sure the child complies**
- Do not allow child to escape from task demands
- May need to use prompting strategies to make it consistent

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## Understanding Problem Behavior

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## Development and Problem Behavior

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- Progression of child development must be considered when assessing and treating problem behavior
- Techniques that are effective for a 3 year-old may just be confusing to a 1 year-old.

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## Development and Problem Behavior


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- 0-18 months
  - Most behavior we don't want is a natural product of development (i.e., curiosity, biological needs)
  - It is unlikely that a baby's behavior in the first year of life is intentionally maladaptive
  - Thus, ignoring "attention-seeking" behavior etc... is unlikely to be beneficial with babies
  - Inattention and high energy level is expected

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 **Development and Problem Behavior**


- As babies grow and develop, however, maladaptive behaviors may emerge
- 11-14 Months
  - This is the time many experts say that **temper tantrums** begin to emerge (Ramey & Ramey, 1999)




The illustration shows a child in a red shirt and blue pants having a tantrum in a store. The child is crying and holding their head. In the background, a woman is pushing a shopping cart, and another person is standing near a display.


 **Development and Problem Behavior**

- 15-18 months
  - Asserting independence (i.e., “NO!”)
  - Defiance
    - Refusal to do what you want (i.e., going to bed, bath time)
    - Doing what you don’t want (i.e., disruptive behavior, aggression)







The illustration consists of three panels. The first panel shows a girl with pigtails sitting on a green chair. The second panel shows a child hitting another child who is sitting on the floor. The third panel shows a child in green pants standing next to a brown dog.

 **Significant Problem Behavior**

- Noncompliant and disruptive behavior are the most frequent presenting problem in children referred for psychological intervention (Barkley, 1997; Forehand & McMahon, 1981)
- Aggression
  - Biting, hitting, kicking, scratching
- Disruptive Behavior
  - Throwing objects, breaking objects, spitting, screaming, crying, flopping to the ground, elopement
- Self-injurious behavior
  - Hitting, biting, scratching self, head-banging
- Over activity

 **Problem Behavior**


- Problem behaviors mainly occur during:
  - Down time
  - Unknown procedures/routines
  - Unsupervised
  - Disorganized
  - Crowded



## Understanding Problem Behavior

- **Most Common Functions** of Behavior
  - **Attention** Maintained Problem Behavior (To get attention)
  - **Tangible** Maintained Problem Behavior (To gain access to desired items)
    - To continue an ongoing activity
  - **Escape/Avoidance** Maintained Problem Behavior (To stop or avoid an activity such demands)
    - To be left alone
  - **Self-Stimulation** (i.e., sensory)


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## Understanding Problem Behavior

- ❖ Two Primary Ways
  - ❖ **Functional Assessment**
    - ❖ Observe and describe antecedents and consequence
    - ❖ No manipulation
  - ❖ **Functional Analysis**
    - ❖ Manipulate the antecedents and consequences
    - ❖ Place demands
    - ❖ Give escape
    - ❖ Give attention
    - ❖ Give tangible item


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## Treating Problem Behavior

- ❖ Knowing the function of the behavior is essential in order to effectively choose an intervention strategy
- ❖ Numerous studies have demonstrated that interventions designed to address the function on the behavior are more effective than others (Iwata, Pace, Cowdery & Miltenberger, 1994; Iwata et al., 1990; Rincover & Devaney, 1982; Carr & Durand, 1985; Van Houten & Doleys, 1985)

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## Analyze and Think

- ❖ What are the different circumstances under which problem behavior occur
- ❖ Does the behavior occur only in the presence of certain people
- ❖ Could the problem behavior be related to a social or academic skill deficit
- ❖ Does the behavior occur at certain times of the day
  - ❖ Transitions
  - ❖ Morning
  - ❖ Unstructured times

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## Based on this Information

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Make a change in the environment


- ❖ Changing the environment could include:
  - ❖ Addressing communication goals
  - ❖ Increasing or changing reinforcement schedules
  - ❖ Changing programs
  - ❖ Adding visual or auditory aids during transition times
  - ❖ Teaching the child to request breaks

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## Attention Maintained Behaviors

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## Attention Maintained Behaviors

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- ❖ Attention-maintained behavior
  - ❖ Child behaving well → Ignored/Left alone
  - ❖ Child misbehaves → Lectured/Disapproving look
- ❖ Over time, the child learns that attention, albeit negative, is available for disruptive/aggressive behavior
- ❖ Attention-maintained behaviors that result in attention are inadvertently positively reinforced

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## Attention Maintained Behaviors


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Treatment for attention-maintained behavior

- ❖ Planned Ignoring (i.e., extinction)
  - ❖ Notice when your child is trying to get attention with bad behavior and IGNORE that behavior!!!
  - ❖ Ways to Ignore
    - ❖ Refuse to speak or answer
    - ❖ Look away, turn your back
    - ❖ Walk away
    - ❖ Do not acknowledge in ANY way
- ❖ Do not use when:
  - ❖ The behavior is significantly harmful to self, others or property

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## Reducing Behavioral Excesses

- Increase Overall Level of Attention
  - Deprivation of attention may increase motivation to behave in ways that get attention
  - If problem behavior results in attention, the child may be motivated to exhibit disruptive behavior
  - Increasing overall level of attention, may alleviate attention-seeking behavior


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## Attention Maintained Behaviors

- ❖ Differential Reinforcement of Other Behavior (DRO)
  - ❖ Adding in programmed attention following periods of time in which there is an absence of problem behavior
  - ❖ Period of time should be based on an average length of time that problem behavior is absent
  - ❖ Gradually increase period of time required


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## Real Life Example- Attention

My child is a pleasure to be around as long as I am paying attention to them but starts doing “bad behaviors” anytime I need to do something or I start talking to my husband

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## Real Life Example - Attention

Things to try **before** the child demonstrates challenging behaviors:

- Give preferred item, toy, or activity when you can't provide undivided attention
- Make them part of the activity
  - Helps make dinner
  - Sorts the silverware or laundry
- Give physical and visual attention
  - Rub on back, thumbs up, etc...

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## Real Life Example - Attention


- Do not provide attention and see how long it takes before the child demonstrates challenging behaviors.
  - Provide attention before you know the child will demonstrate challenging behaviors
- Teach appropriate ways to get your attention
- Once the child can appropriately get your attention, require the child to wait for your attention.
  - **Start slow**- 5 seconds and work your way up

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## Tangible Maintained Behaviors

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## Tangible Maintained Behaviors

- ❖ Tangible-Maintained Behavior
  - ❖ Wants toy → Tantrums → Gets toy
  - ❖ Although this results in ending the tantrum in the short term, the long term effect is to teach the child to tantrum to get access to items

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## Tangible Maintained Behaviors

Treatment of Tangible-Maintained Behavior

- ❖ When the answer is “yes”
  - ❖ Functional Communication Training (i.e., teach the appropriate way to get things)
  - ❖ Ignore inappropriate attempts to get items and prompt and reinforce appropriate attempts such as appropriate requests

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## Reducing Behavioral Excesses

Treatment of Tangible-Maintained Behavior

- When the answer is “no”
  - Planned Ignoring
  - Redirect
  - Block access, walk away


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## Real Life Example 1- Tangible

I can't bring my child shopping without having to buy him something at the store. If I don't buy him something, he throws a tantrum and everyone stares at me.

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## Real Life Example 1- Tangible

**Proactive Strategies:**

- Set up contingencies
- Use first then statements
- Establish a token economy
- Provide alternatives
- Teach appropriate communication to access desired items


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## Real Life Example 2 Tangible

My child always has tantrums when transitioning from something he likes (TV, I-pad, toys) to doing something he doesn't want to do (i.e.) bathroom, brush teeth, sitting at the table to eat, leaving the playground

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## Real Life Example 2 Tangible


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**Proactive Strategies:**

- Use first then statements
- Bring the reinforcing items with you
- Provide a visual schedule of when you are taking the item or activity away and when they can access the items again (Time or behaviors required)

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## Real Life Example 2 Tangible

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**Proactive Strategies:**

- Provide reinforcing items for transitioning with appropriate behavior
- Try to avoid placing demands right after transitioning from a preferred item/activity


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## Escape Maintained Behaviors

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## Escape Maintained Behaviors

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- ❖ Escape-Maintained Behavior
  - ❖ Give Instructions → Demand      Problem Behavior      Withdraw
- ❖ Problem behavior is reinforced by the removal of demands
- ❖ In the future, problem behavior will occur in order to escape or avoid demands

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## Escape Maintained Behaviors

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- ❖ Treatment of Escape-Maintained Problem Behavior
  - ❖ Continue to present demands regardless of problem behavior
  - ❖ Require compliance
  - ❖ 3-step guided compliance
    - ❖ Tell (Give instruction)
    - ❖ Show (Repeat instruction and model correct response)
    - ❖ Do (Physically guide the correct response)
    - ❖ Allow 5 seconds to initiate compliance with each step
  - ❖ Functional Communication Training
    - ❖ Teach appropriate request for a break

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## Real Life Example - Escape

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I can never get my child to pick up their toys/ clothes. I either need to ask them five times before they do it, or I end up picking up the toys.

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## Real Life Example - Escape

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**Proactive Strategies**

- Give first then statements
- Break down the direction
- Use non ambiguous language
- Be specific
- Give directive statements
- Provide praise and a reinforcer for listening
- Help in the clean up process
- Create an environment that is organized


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## Changing Behavior

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## Changing Behavior

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- ❖ Think Small
  - ❖ Kids have learned maladaptive behavior patterns over several years-changes will not occur overnight
- ❖ Encourage progress no matter how small the steps
- ❖ Set small manageable goals

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## Things To Avoid

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- ❖ Giving up too soon
- ❖ Expecting too much too soon
- ❖ Taking things personally
- ❖ Assuming he/she knows what to do
- ❖ Using punishment first
- ❖ Blanket consequences that apply to everyone and that are NOT based on the FUNCTION of the problem behavior

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## Strategies to get your Child to Listen More

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## Exercise

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Susan does not like to sit at the table to play with her brothers and sisters. She likes to run around the room or throw toys on the floor. Her mother is trying to teach her to sit quietly and play with her siblings. She says "Susan sit down", she jumps off her chair and runs around. Her mom says "come over here right now", Susan throws more toys on the floor. " Stop it" her mother says. Susan stops throwing toys but keeps running. Her mother gets her favorite snack and gives it to her "eat this". Susan takes it and runs away. Her mom says, "stay in one spot". Susan keeps running around.

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## Questions

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- ❖ How many directions did Susan's mom give her daughter
- ❖ How many did she follow
- ❖ How many were consequted (praised or corrected)

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## Questions

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- ❖ How many directions have you given your child/ children/students today
- ❖ What happened after each direction? What did your child/student do
- ❖ What did you do

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## Listening

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- ❖ Here are some strategies to try:
  - ❖ Give clear directions
  - ❖ Give the child time to listen and comply
  - ❖ Follow through
    - ❖ Praise
    - ❖ Correction

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## Give Clear Direction


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- ❖ Make sure the child is attending
  - ❖ Close proximity
  - ❖ Eliminate distractions
  - ❖ Say the child's name
  - ❖ Make eye contact
  - ❖ Make light physical contact (tap on shoulder)
  - ❖ Have the child repeat the instruction

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## Give Clear Directions

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- ❖ Make commands direct (not as a question)
- ❖ Give one command at a time, not a string
- ❖ State commands positively (say what to do)
- ❖ Make commands specific, not vague

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## Give Clear Directions

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- ❖ Use first then statements
- ❖ Use a neutral tone of voice, no yelling no begging
- ❖ Give choices when possible
- ❖ Limit the use of explanations
- ❖ Choose your battles

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## Waiting For a Clear Response

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- ❖ Give your child time to listen and respond
  - ❖ 3-5 Seconds
- ❖ Did your child hear the direction
- ❖ Did your child understand your direction
  - ❖ If not you may want to prompt/help your child to understand the direction and what behavior you would like to see

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## Follow Through

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- ❖ It's important that you follow through whenever you give your child a direction
- ❖ Your child will learn to follow your directions if you reinforce (praise/reward) him/her for doing so and teaching him/her when he/she does not know.
- ❖ If your child does not follow your directions, teach them by guiding him/her through the task.

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## Follow Through

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- ❖ If your child refuses to follow the direction do the following:
  - ❖ Ignore him/her for a few seconds
  - ❖ Don't give him/her something else to do
  - ❖ Don't give a new direction until the first one is followed
  - ❖ Give him/her the same command again and guide him/her to start the task
  - ❖ Let him/her finish the task alone if possible then praise!!

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## Praise

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- ❖ Children like and want to please you
  - ❖ Tries to get your attention
  - ❖ Smiles when you hug them
- ❖ When you follow one of your child's behaviors with praise and attention, that behavior will increase in the future
- ❖ Let your child know that you are happy when they listen to you

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## Thank You

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## Contact Information

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