

Tips on Using Rewards

- ✿ Give the reward as soon as possible after the target behavior is performed.

Target behavior then reward. Right after.

- ✿ At the same time as you give the reward, let your child know that it is because she performed the target behavior

Use specific, labeled praise.

“I’m really happy did such a good job putting your clothes away.
Let’s go out and swing.”

Praise is also an excellent form of reward. It can be used on its own or in combination with a tangible reward, say a favorite activity.

- ✿ We want children to experience success.
Make the target behavior something your child can *definitely* accomplish *regularly*.
- ✿ Include others in the process. You may want to choose rewards that others could also give your child, outside home or therapy.
- ✿ Be consistent.
Everyone offering that reward should give it for the same behavior.

(You will want to discuss beforehand how to determine exactly what that behavior is. Therapists can help with this.)

- ✿ Reward *every time* your child performs the desired behavior.

Talk to your therapist or interventionist if you are thinking about altering the reward schedule.

- ✿ Help your child choose, even define the reward.
- ✿ You can make a list together that may end up a little wild. Later, you can agree on what works.
Generally, children really want to earn things that are congruent with what parents desire for them.
- ✿ We frequently do not know what children need until we sit down and think about it together. Offer some ideas and kids may come up with their own. Be positive about any of their notions even if eventually you need to agree on something else. We want children to be able to dream about what they want.
- ✿ We can all get sated after some time.
You might offer your child the choice of something she has not had for a while as the next reward.
- ✿ No mixed messages.
Refrain from punishing or criticizing the child in any way around the time of the reward.

Let your child enjoy earning and receiving what you have offered, pure & simple.

Rewards are not to be withdrawn, even if your child does not meet expectations outside of the target behavior.

For example, if the reward is for folding laundry and the child did just that today, the reward is **not** to be denied because he came home with a bad grade on a test.

Keep it simple.