

# Acknowledging Children's Positive Behaviors

HANDOUT 22



## ☀ Give positive responses to the desired behavior and avoid responding when that behavior is not occurring.

- Positive responses include telling the child what he or she did well.
- Positive responses can include presenting favorite toys or other items.
- Nonverbal responses might include smiles, thumbs-up, and pats on the back.
- Be prepared for the child's behavior to get worse initially in one or more areas before it begins to get better.
- Make a plan for responding to unsafe behavior.

## ☀ Record the number of times the behaviors of interest occur.

- Pay attention to child behavior and adult behavior.
- Write down what and how often the child engages in undesirable and desirable behaviors.
- Write down how often and what types of attention adults provide to the child (for desirable as well as undesirable behaviors).
- An example of a form might be:

Before the behavior	The behavior	After the behavior
<i>Asked to clean up and reminded of being responsible for their toys</i>	<i>Cade cleans up with peers</i>	<i>Teaching assistant smiles and gives Cade and his two peers a "high five"</i>

## ☀ Design a plan to meet your individual needs.

- Individualize the plan for each situation.
- Select one desired behavior as a starting point.
- Move to more challenging behaviors after experiencing some success.
- Define the behavior you want to see occur more frequently (consider where, when, and how often).
- Think of situations or activities that might increase the child's opportunities to engage in the desired behavior.
- Develop a list of positive responses that adults can use when the child engages in the positive behavior (consider nonverbal as well as verbal responses).
- Do not respond to unacceptable behavior unless the child, someone else, or an important object is in immediate danger. If you have to react because of safety, do so quickly and with a minimum amount of interaction.
- Decide on a schedule to begin Acknowledging Positive Behaviors.

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