

Helping Children Transition Between Activities

For some young children, moving from one activity to another (e.g., playing with toys to dinner time, playing outside to bath time, watching a movie to brushing teeth), results in confusion, frustration, or challenging behaviors. Adults can help children predict what is coming next which helps make transitions smoother.

Strategies to Support Transitions



Use a timer

(e.g., Show timer and say, "5 minutes of play and then dinner.").



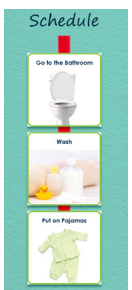
Provide a verbal warning that one activity is going to end and another is going to begin (e.g., "We'll finish this book, then brush our teeth and go to bed.").



Ask your child if they would like to bring a transition object or toy with them (e.g., "How about truck comes in the car with us? I bet he would live to sit next to your car seat!").



Use first/then language (e.g., "First clean up your dishes, then we can play blocks together." or "First wash your hair, then play in the bath.").



Use visual supports.

- visual schedule
- first/then board
- cue cards



Download instructions and templates at:
https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Routine_cards_home.pdf



Make the transition fun!

(e.g., If you need to leave the park, try these: "We can skip to the car.", or "Ride on daddy's shoulders to the car.").



Sing a silly or familiar song; most children love music and songs. Use technology to help you get creative. Many personal devices and applications will play clean up songs (e.g., Alexa, Spotify, etc.) and YouTube has many transition songs and videos available for preschool children to help you!



Give your child a job to do during the transition. Children like to be helpers! Your child can:

- put napkins on the table while you get ready for dinner;
- put all the shoes away when you get home; or
- be the "checker" who makes sure everyone has their backpacks before going to school.



Positive Solutions for Families

Family Routine Guide



Contents

How to Use the Family Routine Guide for Young Children with Challenging Behavior.....	3	Going Places.....	33
Family Planning Sheet.....	4	Shopping.....	38
Getting Dressed or Undressed.....	5	Restaurants.....	42
Brushing Teeth or Hair.....	8	Attending Community Or Family Events (e.g., Laundromat, Sporting Events, Church, Temple, Synagogue).....	44
Meal or Snacks.....	12	Going to School or Childcare.....	48
Taking a Bath.....	14	Transitions: Going from One Place or Activity to Another.....	50
Bathroom (Toileting, Wash Hands).....	17	When Parents Can't Play (Chores, working from home, on phone).....	54
Play.....	19	Medicine or Treatments.....	57
Outside Play.....	23	Going to the Doctor.....	59
Clean-Up.....	26		
Bedtime, Sleeping, Nap.....	29		



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How to Use the Family Routine Guide for Young Children with Challenging Behavior

This *Family Routine Guide* can assist parents and caregivers in developing a plan to support young children who are using challenging behavior. Children engage in challenging behavior for a variety of reasons, but all children use challenging behavior to communicate messages. Challenging behavior, typically, communicates a need to escape or avoid a person or activity or communicates a desire to obtain someone or something. Once caregivers understand the purpose or meaning of the behavior, they can begin to select strategies to change the behavior. They can do this by selecting prevention strategies, teaching new skills, and changing the way they respond to eliminate or minimize the challenging behavior.

The *Family Routine Guide* includes strategies for the common routines and activities that occur during the family's week.

How the Guide is Organized

1

Find the "Why" (Your child...)

- ▶ **Why might my child be doing this?**
- ▶ This section provides ideas that will assist caregivers in thinking about what the child may be communicating through challenging behavior. The strategies that are recommended require determining the "why" of behavior as it occurs in the routine.

2

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ **What can I do to prevent the challenging behavior?**
- ▶ This section provides prevention strategies that will help the child participate in the routine without having challenging behavior.

3

Respond

- ▶ **How do I respond when challenging behavior occurs?**
- ▶ This section provides the caregiver with ideas on how they can respond in a way that does not maintain the problem behavior (or keep the behavior happening).

4

Teach New Skills

- ▶ **What new skills can I teach to replace the challenging behavior?**
- ▶ This section suggests new skills to teach to replace the challenging behavior. Many of the strategies mentioned in the guide are quick and easy to implement.

It is important to use all of the sections in the guide [i.e., 1) function or why, 2) prevention strategies, 3) ways to respond to behavior, and 4) new skills] to develop a support plan that will be effective for your child. The guide provides ideas about commonly occurring situations and children's behavior. Please note that this list might not address all situations or reasons the child is using challenging behavior. If the child's purpose of challenging behavior is not represented on the chart, the parent is encouraged to write down the purpose and then think of prevention strategies, new skills to teach, and ways to respond to behavior.

Instructions for Use

A *Family Planning Sheet* is provided at the beginning of this *Family Routine Guide* for writing down the strategies that will be selected for the child. To develop the plan, first determine the routine(s) in which the child is having difficulty. Then look for the reason for why the child might be having trouble in the routine(s). Once you know why the child is using the challenging behavior, you can begin to look at the suggested strategies and determine what will work for your family and child. After you select the strategies that you will use, it is important to write down your plan using the *Family Planning Sheet*. If you write the plan down, you are more likely to implement the strategies.

Family Planning Sheet

What _____ does during _____:
(child's name) (routine)

Why I think my child does it:

What can I do to prevent the challenging behavior?

How do I respond when challenging behavior occurs?

What new skills can I teach?

What materials or resources do I need to implement the plan?



Getting Dressed or Undressed

Your child does not want to stop the “activity” that they are doing to get dressed or undressed.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Help them understand you know how they feel – Validate your child’s feelings and then point out what fun thing is coming up after getting dressed or undressed. For example: “I know you are disappointed to end your game, but once you are dressed, we will be able to read books.”
- ▶ Give clear expectations – First plan what the expectations are for getting dressed. Does your child need assistance? Is your child capable for taking off or putting on some articles of clothing? Do you have a realistic time on how long this will take? Then use some prevention strategies such as:
 - Signal your child ahead of time – Use a “warning” to let your child know that it will soon be time to “stop” and to get dressed or undressed. Depending on your child’s ability, you can use a timer or a verbal signal by saying “in five more minutes” or showing them a picture cue and then coming back to let your child know when it’s “one more minute”.
 - Reduce distractions – This might involve turning off the television or shutting the door while the child is getting dressed.
 - Use a “first-then” statement (e.g., “First get dressed, then play.”) to help your child clearly understand expectations and help your child through the routines.
 - Refer to a visual schedule (e.g., the sequence of getting undressed or dressed).
 - Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child and refer to the language or picture cues in the story that show the steps for getting dressed or undressed.
 - Encourage success – Praise your child and let them know that stopping is difficult, and you will make sure that the activity can be done at a later time or day (follow through on your promise).

Respond

- ▶ Repeat the instruction as a statement not a question. For example: “It is time to get dressed.”
- ▶ Point to a visual cue to remind the child that it is time to get dressed.
- ▶ Set a timer or point to a clock and say, “All done _____. Now we need to get dressed or undressed to (next activity).”
- ▶ Use a countdown “I am going to count to 1 and then all done: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 all done.”
- ▶ Follow through by helping your child get dressed or undressed. Use a calm voice and calm physical prompting when helping them. Just be matter of fact and say, “I will help you do it.”
- ▶ Validate feelings and say, “I know it’s hard to stop ____; you can do ____ again later. First get dressed or undressed, then (fun activity).” Feelings that may be validated are disappointed, frustrated, sad, angry, anxious or others.
- ▶ Praise any and all small attempts to stop activity and get dressed.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to follow your warning.
- ▶ Teach your child how to follow first-then statement: first get dressed or undressed, then (fun activity).
- ▶ Teach your child when they can have the “favorite activity” again.
- ▶ Teach the routine of getting dressed.
- ▶ Reinforcing the appropriate behavior:
 - First time asked
 - Completing all or some of the skills on their own.

Your child's refusal to participate in the routine becomes a game to get you to chase them or get your attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Signal your child ahead of time – Use a “warning” to let your child know that it will soon be time to “stop” and to get dressed or undressed. Depending on your child’s ability you can use a timer or a verbal signal by saying, “in five more minutes” and then go back to let your child know when it’s “one more minute”.
- ▶ Make getting dressed or undressed the fun activity – Say “pee yew” as each piece of clothing is removed and then try to make a “basket” by throwing the garment into the hamper. Another way to make the activity fun is to sing a song about getting dressed and incorporate silly dancing or play a song and ask your child to see if they can finish before the song ends.
- ▶ Use first-then statement – Tell your child “first get dressed and then you can ____.” Follow dressing or undressing with a fun activity your child can do with you (e.g., play chase, tickle, or ball with me).
- ▶ Praise your child for doing each step of the routine.

Respond

- ▶ If your child runs away or acts silly, ignore the behavior.
- ▶ Turn off television or device, or shut the door once the child is in the room you want them to be in.
- ▶ Use wait time. Give your child an instruction calmly, and then wait at least 4 seconds before repeating it.
- ▶ Provide a logical consequence, “If we don’t get dressed now, we may be late for school.” or “We may not have time to read books.” Be aware that both of these could be the function of the behavior (to avoid).

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to follow your warning.
- ▶ Teach your child how to follow first-then statement (e.g., first get dressed, then [fun activity]).

Your child has a difficult time getting dressed or undressed and wants to avoid the activity.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Simplify the activity – Have your child take off or put on one item while you do the other items or put the clothing items on part way and have your child do the rest.
- ▶ Make the task easier – Select clothing that your child can put on easily, (e.g., T-shirt and pull-on pants) for dressing “all by themselves” and assist your child with more difficult items.
- ▶ Give one step at a time – When giving your child directions, state steps one at a time. For example, if you want them to get their socks and shoes on, first say “Get your socks.”, and wait for them to get the socks. Then say, “Thanks for getting your socks. Now go get your shoes.” When they come back with the shoes, then say, “You are such a big helper; now I can help you put your socks and shoes on.”
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child and refer to the language or picture cues in the story that may cue the child what the expectation for getting dressed or undressed is.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore when your child does inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Follow through by helping your child get dressed or undressed. Use a calm voice and calm physical prompting when helping them. Just be matter of fact and say, “I will help you do it.”
- ▶ Praise any and all attempts to get dressed or undressed.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to put clothing on or take clothing off.
- ▶ Teach your child how to manipulate fasteners.
- ▶ Teach your child to put laundry in the hamper when undressing.
- ▶ Teach your child to select clothes and dress independently.

Your child does not want to change out of what they are already wearing.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Make getting undressed fun – Say “pee yew” as each piece of clothing is removed, and then try to make a “basket” by throwing the clothing into the hamper.
- ▶ Let them know what’s coming up – Point out what fun thing (or outfit) is coming up next.
- ▶ Use a mini-routine visual schedule or video model – Take photographs of your child (or of a peers or siblings) doing the morning routine and include ‘getting dressed’ in the routine. Do the same for the bedtime routine to include getting into pajamas. Then, display the photographs in the order of the routine, and allow your child to turn the pictures over to indicate that the routines are “all done”.
- ▶ Help your child understand they can wear it again – Remind them that the outfit will be cleaned, and they can choose to wear it again on another day. You may even want to put a picture on a calendar so your child knows when they can wear the item again. These expectations may vary per family culture.
- ▶ Use favorites and choice – For getting dressed allow your child to choose from two or three outfits, and make sure that at least one of the outfits has a preferred character or color on it. For getting undressed allow your child to choose which order to remove clothing.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise them for changing and for being a big kid.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings (e.g., “I know you like wearing your red dress.”) and then follow through helping your child dress or undress with minimal words and emotions. Say, “I know you love your ___ shirt. You can wear it again ___. You can get dressed or undressed on your own, or I can help you.”
- ▶ Refer to the visual photo mini-schedule and say, “First get dressed, then (next fun activity)” while showing your child the photograph.
- ▶ If appropriate, praise sibling(s) or parent. Say, “Wow, look how fast Daddy, got dressed. He’s ready for a fun day!”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to put clothes in the hamper when undressing or fold and put back in drawer (depending upon child’s development and family culture).
- ▶ Teach your child how to make a choice of what to wear or what article of clothing to remove in which order by offering realistic choices.
- ▶ Teach your child how to follow a mini-photograph routine schedule by modeling and using the visual schedule on a regular basis.
- ▶ Teach your child when they can wear their favorite item of clothing again by using a calendar or chart.





Brushing Teeth or Hair

Your child does not like being touched.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Simplify – Keep hair cut fairly short so that it is easier to manage.
- ▶ Handle with care – Hold the end of the brush, comb, or toothbrush to guide your child in brushing.
- ▶ Have everything out and ready to use to reduce the amount of time that your child has to wait.
- ▶ Offer fun choices – For brushing teeth, give your child a choice of what kind of toothbrush and what kind of toothpaste they can use (e.g., electric, character brand, favorite flavor, preferred color). For hair brushing, give your child a choice of a comb or brush, or wet it first or brush it dry.
- ▶ Download an app that can assist children to learn how to brush teeth.
- ▶ Play “Mirror, Mirror” – Model for your child how to brush. Point to a mirror to have them watch reflection, demonstrate how to brush, and then say, “copy me” or “I go, now you go.”. Praise any attempt to brush.
- ▶ Examine your materials – Is the hairbrush or toothbrush too stiff or rough? Select a brush or comb type that will not pull hair or select a soft toothbrush.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child and let them know that you are so happy or proud of them.

Respond

- ▶ Validate feelings, and say, “I know it’s not too fun brushing your _____. First, we’ll brush fast and then (fun activity).”
- ▶ Praise any and all small attempts to brush teeth or hair.
- ▶ Offer choices (see suggestions in prevention), and then help follow through the routine quickly.
- ▶ Ask if they want to play “Mirror, Mirror” and model for your child how to brush, and then say, “copy me”. Praise any attempt to brush.
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and help them follow through with minimal talking and emotion in your voice.
- ▶ Provide a countdown from 5; then provide gentle assistance by staying calm.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice, (e.g., “Do you want the red electric brush, or the regular blue brush?”).
- ▶ Teach your child to play “Mirror, Mirror”, and use the mirror to make it more fun. (e.g., “Look at me brush my teeth. Now you do it!”) or brush your teeth or hair together at the same time.

Your child does not want to leave the activity they were doing.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know you understand how they feel – Validate your child’s feelings and then point out what fun thing is coming up after brushing teeth or hair. For example: “I know you are disappointed to end your game but once you brush your teeth or hair, we will be able to read books”.
- ▶ Give clear expectations – First, consider your expectations for what you want your child to do. Does your child need assistance (most children under the age of 8 need assistance brushing their teeth and hair)? Then use strategies such as:
 - Signal your child ahead of time – Use a “warning” to let your child know that it will soon be time to “stop” and brush. Depending on your child’s ability, you can use a timer or a verbal signal by saying “in five more minutes” or showing them a picture cue and then coming back to let your child know when it’s “one more minute”. Most often brushing teeth or hair is combined with getting ready in the morning or going to bed. Be sure this becomes a clear expectation in these routines.
 - Reduce distractions – This might involve turning off the television or shutting the door during the routine.
 - Use a “first-then” statement (e.g., “First get dressed, then play.”) to help your child clearly understand expectations and help your child through the routines.
 - Refer to a visual schedule
 - Make brushing teeth or hair fun; sing songs, make up a game, download an app which will teach your child the proper amount of time to brush teeth and the positions of the brush.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child, let them know you understand that was really hard and that you will make sure that the activity can be done at a later time. Follow through on your promise.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and point to the timer or clock and say, “All done ____, now we need to brush ____.” Help your child follow through.
- ▶ Validate feelings, and say, “I know it’s hard to stop ____, you can do ____ again later. First brush ____, then (fun activity).”
- ▶ Praise any and all small attempts to stop activity and brush teeth or hair.
- ▶ Follow through with the instruction. Remember to state the instruction as a statement and not a question. For example: “Time to brush your teeth.” Instead of “Can you brush your teeth?”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to get ready to stop activity when “warning” is given.
- ▶ Teach your child to stop activity when time to brush teeth or hair.
- ▶ Teach your child to first brush ____, then they can do (fun activity).



Your child does not want to brush (i.e., doesn't like to or doesn't like the feel).

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Offer fun choices – For brushing teeth, give your child a choice of what kind of toothbrush and what kind of toothpaste they can use (e.g., electric, character brand, favorite flavor, preferred color). For hair brushing, give your child a choice of a comb or brush, gel or mousse, or wet it first or brush it dry.
- ▶ Use first-then statement – Have your child first brush (teeth or hair) and then do something really fun for your child. Say, “First brush, then (fun activity)”, and help them follow through so they get to experience the really fun activity.
- ▶ Use a mini-routine visual schedule – Take photographs of your child or sibling(s) doing the morning routine and include “brushing teeth” in the routine. Then display the photographs in the order of the routine and allow your child to turn the pictures over to indicate that the routines are “all done”.
- ▶ Use job chart – Create a job chart of the activities you want your child to do independently. List the activity and draw or paste a cut-out picture to represent each job. When your child completes the job, put a sticker or check mark on the chart. Let your child know that if they did their job, they can have a special reward, such as an extra book at bedtime to read with you, a bedtime snack, or time to sit on your lap. Do not use the job chart to take something away or threaten your child with the loss of something. The purpose is to help your child remember their goals and celebrate the accomplishment of them.
- ▶ Use detangling spray – If your child has knotted hair, this can help alleviate the tangles which can hurt. Also, if your child has longer hair, hold the ends, and comb through slowly.
- ▶ Make it fun – Take turns brushing or sing a song about brushing hair or teeth while incorporating silly dancing.
- ▶ Change your expectations and build your child's success – Reduce your expectations for your child. Instead of expecting the child to do a thorough job of brushing, ask them to begin by brushing 5 times. Praise them for the effort. Then you complete the job gently. Gradually, build up your expectations each time you do the routine.

Respond

- ▶ Validate feelings and say, “I know it's hard to brush your ____, you can do it! First brush ____; then (fun activity).”
- ▶ Praise any and all small attempts to brush.
- ▶ Remember to use favorites and choices (e.g., “Do you want the Spiderman toothbrush or the Elisa toothbrush?” or “Do you want to brush your hair wet or dry?”).
- ▶ If appropriate, praise a sibling or parent who brushed quickly. Say, “Wow, look how fast Mommy brushed her _____. She's speedy fast!”
- ▶ Restate “First brush your ____, then you can ____.” Pause (5 seconds) and if they still don't brush, say, “You can do it on your own, or I can help you.” Follow through on helping your child brush with minimal words and emotions (i.e., stay calm). Then when done, say, “Yeah, you brushed your ____!”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child the steps for brushing teeth (consult with dentist or local health department, there are many free programs available to assist children and families in proper teeth brushing.)
- ▶ Teach your child how to brush their hair. Be mindful of comfort use a brush or comb or products that assist with brushing out knots.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice by holding the choices out or pointing to for your child to choose.
- ▶ Teach your child to first brush teeth or hair, then (fun activity).
- ▶ Teach your child to copy their sibling or parent by modeling how to brush teeth or hair.

Your child doesn't know what they are expected to do.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Give clear expectations – Use a “first-then” statement to help your child clearly understand your expectation and help your child through the routines and praise. Say, “First brush, then (fun activity).”
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child and refer to the language or picture cues in the story that teach the routine for brushing hair or brushing teeth.
- ▶ Watch a video or download an app which teach you and your child proper brushing. Be sure that it is short, and you are with your child when they view a video or app.
- ▶ Use a mini-routine visual schedule – Take photographs of your child or a sibling brushing teeth or hair. Then display the photographs in the order of the routine and allow your child to turn the pictures over to indicate each step of the routine is “all done”.
- ▶ Give one step at a time – When giving your child directions, state steps one at a time. For example, if you want your child to come into the bathroom to brush, first say, “Go to the bathroom” while showing them the toothbrush or hairbrush and wait for 5 seconds and then restate. Then say, “Thanks for coming to the bathroom.” Now get the toothpaste or hair detangle spray while pointing to the location of the item. When they complete that step, then state the next, and cue them by also pointing to the expectation or by modeling the movement.

Respond

- ▶ Validate feelings, and say, “I know it’s hard to stop ____; you can do ____ again later. First brush, then (fun activity).”
- ▶ Refer to the visual photo mini-schedule and say “First brush, then (next fun routine or activity)” while showing your child the photograph.
- ▶ Remember to use one step directions.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child the steps for brushing teeth (consult with dentist or local health department there are many free programs available to assist children and families in proper teeth brushing.)
- ▶ Teach your child how to brush their hair. Be mindful of comfort use a brush, comb, or products that assist with brushing out knots.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow first-then statement; first brush teeth or hair, then (fun activity).
- ▶ Teach your child to follow the mini-routine photo schedule.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow one direction at a time.

Your child's refusal to participate in the routine becomes a game to get you to chase them or get your attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Signal your child ahead of time – Use a “warning” to let your child know that it will soon be time to “stop” and to brush hair or teeth. Depending on your child’s ability, you can use a timer or a verbal signal by saying, “in five more minutes time for ____”, and then come back to let your child know when it’s “one more minute”.
- ▶ Make brushing hair or teeth the fun activity – Sing a song about brushing, and incorporate silly dancing, or play a song and ask your child to see if they can finish before the song ends.
- ▶ Use first-then statement – Tell your child “first brush hair or teeth and then you can ____.” Follow brushing with a fun activity your child can do with you (e.g., play chase or tickle, play ball with me).
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise you child for doing each step of the routine.

Respond

- ▶ If your child runs away or acts silly, ignore the behavior.
- ▶ Turn off television or devices or shut the door once the child is in the room you want them to be in.
- ▶ Use wait time. Give your child an instruction calmly and wait at least 5 seconds before repeating it.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to follow your warning.
- ▶ Teach your child how to follow first-then statement: first brush teeth, then (fun activity).



Meal or Snacks

Your child has restricted eating preferences or has food sensitivities.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Encourage your child to be your helper – Allow your child to be a “helper” to encourage participation (e.g., help with preparing food, cooking, setting table, planning menu).
- ▶ Offer choices – Allow your child to choose food(s) and drinks(s).
- ▶ Modify your expectations – Don’t insist that your child “cleans the plate”. Allow the child to pick one non-preferred food to try (e.g., one bite).
- ▶ Use first-then cues – Say to them, “First take a bite of (less preferred item), then you can have (more preferred food item).”
- ▶ Cue to drink and sit – Allow your child to just have a drink and sit with sibling for snack.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise for eating or trying new foods.
- ▶ Give visual choices – Allow food choices. Cut labels or ads out to offer picture choices or hold a few food choices or preferred sauces (e.g., ketchup, BBQ, mustard) in front of your child.
- ▶ Help your child say, “all done” – Cue your child to gesture or say “all done”, and then let them out of the meal or snack for an alternate activity.

Respond

- ▶ Introduce non-preferred foods by giving very tiny portions alongside preferred food; do not expect them to eat the non-preferred food, just build up tolerance for the presence of food.
- ▶ Avoid force feeding; this can cause your child to become afraid of foods or may cause gagging or choking.
- ▶ Use first-then visual cue while saying, “First snack, then ____” (favorite item).
- ▶ Remind your child they can choose to just drink.
- ▶ Re-cue your child to gesture or say “all done”. Use hand-over-hand prompting to help them make the gesture, if necessary.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to expand food tolerance or preferences by offering the food with highly preferred foods or sauces.
- ▶ Teach your child to make food choices. If needed, show choices.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow first-then cue. If needed, show visually.
- ▶ Teach to gesture or say “all done.” If needed, help gesture to encourage success.

Your child doesn't like to sit to eat (e.g., roams and eats while walking around the house).**Prevent the Behavior**

- ▶ Be sure to make a routine during mealtime including snack. For example: “First we wash hands, then we sit at the table, then we eat our meal, when you are finished you bring your plate to the sink” (this routine may vary based on family culture).
- ▶ Use a timer – Set a timer for a short period of time (1 minute) and have your child wait for the timer before leaving the table. Slowly increase time as they succeed.
- ▶ Provide preferences – Provide your child highly preferred foods to encourage sitting.
- ▶ Offer fun choices – Allow your child to choose from a bowl or plate with favorite color or characters or color on it.
- ▶ Make sitting for meals fun – Talk with your child, praise your child for sitting, look at a book together while eating a snack or playing a game. Sit and engage with the child as you eat a snack or meal together.
- ▶ Encourage your child to be your helper – Have your child help prepare the table for snack or meals to encourage participation in routine.
- ▶ Use choices – Allow a choice of whom to sit next to, where to sit, or what cushion to sit on.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise for sitting.
- ▶ Provide a first-then cue – Say, “First sit and eat, then TV.”

Respond

- ▶ Gesture, and tell your child, “Say all done”, and let them leave. Slowly increase time required to sit.
- ▶ Cue to wait, and to watch timer.
- ▶ Comment aloud on others who are sitting (e.g., “Mary is sitting”).
- ▶ Remind with a first-then cue to “First sit, then eat” or “First sit and eat, then TV.”
- ▶ Offer alternate choices of food.
- ▶ Redirect by restating rule “sit to eat”, then remove plate or food if they do not sit. Take food away from child if eating while walking. Then restate rule.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to sit to eat by embedding choices.
- ▶ Teach your child to gesture or say “all done” and allow child to leave. Over time, increase how long the child must sit before leaving the table.
- ▶ As you increase time, teach to wait and to watch timer.
- ▶ Teach to follow visual or verbal first-then cue (e.g., “First sit, then eat”, or “First sit and eat, then device.”).

Your child is silly during snack or meals to get your attention or the attention of others.**Prevent the Behavior**

- ▶ Engage your child in non-silly conversations so that they have your attention.
- ▶ Seat your child near you so that you can give them more frequent attention for appropriate behavior.
- ▶ Use your child's name or interests when talking at meals (e.g., “Tanisha played with her friend Joey at school. They rode on the bikes.”).
- ▶ Play a game that your child can participate in while eating.
- ▶ Avoid asking your child questions that are too difficult to answer (e.g., “What did you do at Grandma's?”).
- ▶ Provide lots of attention for appropriate behavior.
- ▶ Be sure that the child is able to use utensils or knows what to do at mealtime. Does the child need assistance or need to be taught the mealtime routine and expectations?

Respond

- ▶ Ignore your child's silly behavior and talk to someone else.
- ▶ If the child gets out of control, calmly guide your child to his bedroom, and let them know that they can return when ready to behave or be calm at the table.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to ask for your attention. Say “I like talking with you. If you want to talk with me, you can say, “What did you do today, Mommy?”
- ▶ Teach your child to participate in mealtime appropriately by praising appropriate behavior.



Taking a Bath

Your child loves bath time and does not want to get out.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Review bath routine using a visual schedule or visual cue cards. Use bath routine sequence to cue steps. Use photographs of each step of the bath routine. If the pictures are laminated and Velcroed, your child can remove the picture, or turn the picture over to indicate completion.
- ▶ Set a timer – Let your child know that they have ___ minutes for bath and then it will be time for ____. Plan something fun just after bath time.
- ▶ Plan to do something that your child considers fun or exciting right after bath, and say to them, “First bath, then ____,” (e.g., fun activity).
- ▶ Help them understand you know how they feel – Validate your child’s feelings and then point out what fun thing is coming up after taking a bath. For example, “I know how much you love to take a bath and you sometimes feel disappointed when it is over. But once the bath is over, we will read a book and have a snack!”
- ▶ Give your child a warning to let them know that bath time will be ending soon. Say something like “In 5 minutes it will be time to get out of the bath and ____”. Then when there are 2 minutes left, let them know again. And finally, at 1 minute let them know one last time. When it is time to get out, say “Time to get out and ____” and quickly and safely help them out of the tub. Then make drying fun.
- ▶ Make drying off fun – Give your child choices such as, “Do you want me to dry your arms or your legs first?” or “Do you want the duck towel or the superman towel?”
- ▶ Have special pajamas with the child’s favorite character or color. Remind them that when bath is done, they will put on ___ pajamas.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and point to the timer or visual cue cards or visual schedule and say, “All done ____. Now we need to get out of the bath so we can ____ (ideally a preferred activity).”
- ▶ Show your child the timer and remind them it is time to get out and help out.
- ▶ Validate feelings and say, “I know it’s hard to stop playing in the bath. We can play in the bath again soon.”
- ▶ Point out the fun activity after bath.
- ▶ Remind your child about the favorite pajamas that they have to put on after taking a bath.
- ▶ Remind your child to give you their choice of what to dry first or what towel to use.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child the routine of bath time.
- ▶ Teach your child how to get out when the timer goes off; then they can do ____ (e.g., fun activity).
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of what parts of their body they want dried first, second, third.
- ▶ Teach your child how to follow a mini-photograph routine schedule by modeling and using the visual schedule on a regular basis.

Your child does not like water or soap in their eyes so struggles with washing hair.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a plastic visor so that the soapy water will not run in your child's eyes.
- ▶ Use plastic swim goggles so that the soapy water will not run in your child's eyes.
- ▶ Allow your child to hold a face cloth over their eyes, tilt their head back, and use a cup to rinse hair.
- ▶ Give clear expectations – Use a “first-then” statement (e.g., “First we wash your hair, then you can play in the bath”) to help your child clearly understand expectations and help your child through the routine.
- ▶ Encourage success—Praise your child and for doing each step of the hair washing routine.
- ▶ Sing a silly song or listen to music to make hair washing more fun.

Respond

- ▶ Model how to lean your head back.
- ▶ Validate your child's feeling: “I know you don't like water in your eyes. I will try to keep the water away from your eyes.”
- ▶ Ask your child if they need a face cloth, visor, or goggles.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to lean head back.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice to wear plastic visor, swim goggles, or hold a face cloth over their face.
- ▶ Teach your child to first wash hair; then they can continue playing in the bath or get out of the bath and do something fun.

Your child is silly or disruptive to get your attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to bath and talk about the steps of taking a bath. You could even laminate or clear contact paper the book and use it during bath time.
- ▶ Schedule time to “play with” your child – Let your child know when you can “play” (e.g., tickle, silly faces, or some other favorite activity) with them after bath.
- ▶ Use a timer, set it for 15 minutes, and let your child know when the bell rings bath time is finished or all done; give your child a warning before the timer goes off.
- ▶ Have something exciting in the tub to play with “together” – Use verbal first-then cue – say to your child, “First get in the tub, then we are going to ____,” and you may want to give them a highly preferred item or toy to play with in the tub.
- ▶ Encourage success – Give your child lots of attention for doing what is expected (e.g., getting in tub correctly, helping wash up, playing with toys the right way).

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and point to the timer or visual cue cards or visual schedule while restating the request.
- ▶ Remind your child what they need to do: “First ____; then you can play with ____, (e.g., highly preferred bath toy) with me.”
- ▶ Remember to use one-step directions.
- ▶ Remind your child that when the timer goes off, bath time is all done.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child that you can play with them when they first sit and wash.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow first-then statement; first brush teeth or hair, then (fun activity).
- ▶ Teach your child to follow the mini-routine photo schedule.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow one direction at a time.

Your child does not like bath time and wants to get out.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to bath and, if they are able, encourage them to read it (or pretend to read it) to you. You could even laminate or clear contact paper the book and use it during bath time.
- ▶ Review bath routine using a visual schedule or visual cue cards.
- ▶ Give clear expectations – Use a “first-then” statement (e.g., “First we take a bath and then we can read books together and eat a snack.”) to help your child clearly understand expectations and help your child through the routine.
- ▶ Move through washing your child quickly so that your child has minimal time in the water.
- ▶ Give your child a choice to sit or stand to get cleaned.
- ▶ Get fun toys for bathtub play and give your child choices of what to play with in the bath.
- ▶ Use bathtub tints or food coloring to make the bath water a different color. Let your child choose the color. You can even experiment with the colors and add more than one color to see what color it makes.
- ▶ Give your child a choice to take a shower or a “shower-bath”. Plug the drain, but let the tub fill at the same time you are showering.
- ▶ Use some “fun foam soap” that changes color and smells like different scents or bath crayons to draw on the tub.
- ▶ Sing a silly song, play music, or play a game with your child to make bath time more fun.
- ▶ Encourage success – Give your child lots of attention for doing what is expected (e.g., getting in tub correctly, helping wash up, playing with toys the right way).

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings: “I know you don’t like bath. We can do it fast.” And move through the steps quickly as you say what each step is.
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and point to the visual cue cards or visual schedule and say, “It is bath time. After bath, you can do ____ (a preferred activity)”.
- ▶ Remind your child of the bath time steps.
- ▶ Ask your child if they would like to sit or stand to get cleaned.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to follow a mini-photograph routine schedule by modeling and using the visual schedule on a regular basis.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow the bath time steps.
- ▶ Teach your child to make choices (e.g., stand or sit to get cleaned; bubbles, color tints, or bath crayons; a shower, bath, or shower-bath).
- ▶ Teach your child to first stay in the bath, then they can do something fun.





Bathroom (Toileting, Wash Hands)

Your child does not want to go to the bathroom.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to using the bathroom and talk about the expectations and the toileting routine.
- ▶ Review the potty routine using a visual schedule or visual cue cards. Make a visual schedule of the steps of the potty routine. Use photographs of each step of the routine. If the pictures are laminated and Velcroed, your child can remove the picture, or turn the picture over to indicate completion.
- ▶ Plan to do something that your child considers fun or exciting right after toileting, and say to them, "First potty, then ____," (e.g., fun activity).
- ▶ If your child had to leave a fun activity to use the bathroom, remind your child, "First potty, then you can go back to ____ (activity they were involved in).
- ▶ Offer a comfort item- Allow your child to take a favorite toy or book into the bathroom or play a preferred song or music.
- ▶ Discuss, label, and show feeling words your child might experience about using the potty (e.g., happy, sad, scared, excited). Model the emotion with your facial expression, use pictures, point out pictures in books or stories to discuss the feelings. Model for your child how they can express their feelings about the potty (e.g., say them, point to a picture, use a sign).
- ▶ Take small steps – Start by just having your child enter, maybe just to wash hands.
- ▶ Encourage your child – Praise for staying in the bathroom.
- ▶ Make it quick – Keep bathroom visits short in the beginning, especially when your child is first learning to use the toilet.

Respond

- ▶ Offer reassurance and say, "I will help you;" "Let's get your toy;" "Can you help me turn on the music?"
- ▶ Remind your child to ask or gesture for help.
- ▶ Prompt your child: "Let's look at the schedule and see what to do."
- ▶ Point out the fun activity after toileting and say, "First Potty, then ____ " (fun activity).
- ▶ Say to your child, "How do you feel?" You may have to ask, "Are you scared?" and then tell them, "Say (or sign, or point to) scared."
- ▶ Praise any and all attempts at the steps in the toileting routine.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to follow a mini-photograph routine schedule by modeling and using the visual schedule on a regular basis.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask or gesture for help.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow "first-then" verbal or visual cue: "First potty; then ____."

Your child wants attention or someone there.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Stay nearby – Stand near your child or in the doorway. Slowly increase distance over time.
- ▶ Let your child know – Tell your child that you are waiting just outside the door or in the doorway.
- ▶ Use first-then verbal or visual cue – “First potty; then I will help” or if your child toilets independently, “First potty; wash hands; then I will play with you.”
- ▶ Reassure your child – Let your child know that they will get assistance when finished. “I will be right here when you’re all done.”
- ▶ Use a timer – Set timer for one minute and check on your child. Do this throughout activity every minute.
- ▶ Encourage every attempt – Praise for washing hands or sitting on the toilet like a big kid.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Remind child of first-then cue; say, “First potty; then wash hands” with no direct eye contact and walk away.
- ▶ Give much encouragement when your child sits on the toilet.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow “first-then” verbal or visual cue: “First potty; then ____.”
- ▶ Teach your child that you will come back when the timer goes off and leave the timer near your child so they can see the time pass.

Your child does not want to wash hands.

Prevent the Behavior

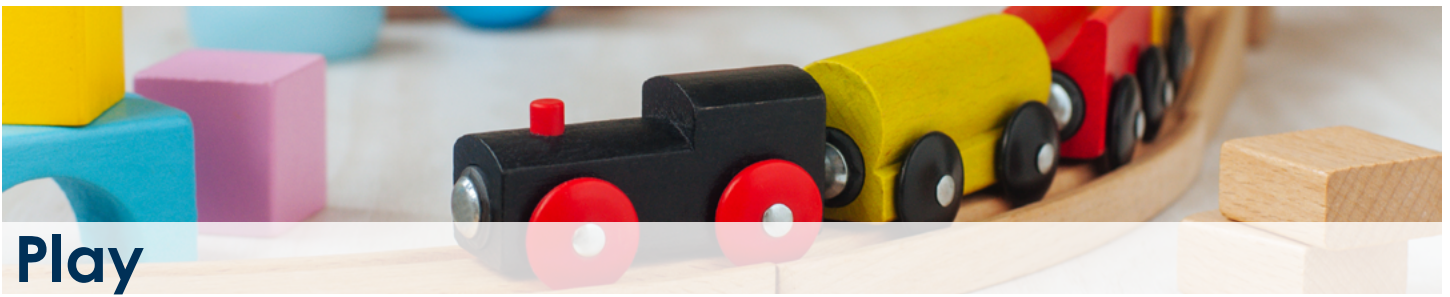
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to using washing hands and use the book to review the expectations and steps of handwashing. Point out the steps of the book that are happening while you do them.
- ▶ Make a visual schedule of the steps for handwashing. Use photographs of each step of the hand washing routine. If the pictures are laminated and velcroed, your child can remove the picture, or turn the picture over to indicate completion.
- ▶ Give clear expectations using a verbal or visual first-then cue – “First wash hands; then ____” (e.g., fun activity).
- ▶ Follow hand washing with something fun – Tell your child they can do something fun after hand washing.
- ▶ Make it fun – Decorate sink area with your child’s favorite characters.
- ▶ Sing a song – Sing a fun song about washing hands to encourage child to wash.
- ▶ Encourage your child – Praise for all attempts at washing hands.
- ▶ Make sure your child can comfortably reach the sink using a step stool.
- ▶ Prior to washing hands, remind your child of the expectations that they need to wash hands to be safe. Let them know a consequence for what will happen if they don’t wash their hands (e.g., “If you do not wash your hands, the germs might make you sick”).
- ▶ Let your child play in the sink after washing hands.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and help them follow through with minimal talking and emotion in your voice.
- ▶ Say to your child, “I will help you. You turn on the water; I will get soap.”
- ▶ Use a first-then cue or visual: first wash hands; then ____.
- ▶ Count with your child how many more steps or count how many times they need to rub hands together (e.g., “O.K. put soap on, now rub 1-2-3.”). Make it fun or silly.
- ▶ Validate feelings, and say, “I know it’s not too fun washing your hands. First, we will wash hands, then ____” (e.g., fun activity).
- ▶ Praise your child when trying to complete the handwashing steps.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to follow a mini-photograph routine schedule by modeling and using the visual schedule on a regular basis.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow “first-then” verbal or visual cue: “First we wash hands; then ____.”
- ▶ Teach the hand washing routine. Practice all the necessary steps, including teaching how to turn on the water, how to get hands wet, how to access soap, how to rinse soap off, and other steps.



Play

Your child wants adult's or friend's attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Get your child started – Accompany your child to the play area to get them started on play; then tell your child, “I’ll come back to play with you in a few minutes.”
- ▶ Limit play time – Set a timer to let your child know how long you will play during play time.
- ▶ Return when the timer rings – Set a timer to let your child know how long before Mommy or Daddy will return to play; this might need to be very short to begin with, and then gradually extend time you are away.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child for playing throughout play time and for gesturing or asking to play with you or friends.
- ▶ Special time together – Schedule “time” for your child to be with favorite friends or adult and tell your child when they can play with friends or adults (e.g., after lunch, after bath).
- ▶ When your child is playing independently, provide encouragement and praise. Say something like, “Wow, you look like you are having so much fun playing! Look at that tall tower you worked so hard to build!”
- ▶ When your child gestures or asks to play with you, provide encouragement and praise. Say something like, “You asked to play and then you waited while I put away the laundry. I cannot wait to play ___ with you.”

Respond

- ▶ Tell your child “When you are calm or quiet, I will come play with you.” Do so as soon as your child quiets.
- ▶ Prompt child to gesture or ask, “play with me”; then follow that with telling your child “I can play for ___ minutes (set timer), and then I need to ___.”
- ▶ Validate feelings; say something like, “I know you want to play with me; we have fun together. But first I need to do the laundry and then I can play with you.”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to gesture or ask “play with me” for attention from adults or friends.
- ▶ Teach your child to play independently for a few minutes through the use of verbal cues or timer. Slowly increase independent play time.
- ▶ Teach your child to say “Excuse me” or “Play with me” for your attention by pointing to mouth as a cue.
- ▶ Teach your child to gesture or say, “Look at me” or “This is fun”.
- ▶ Teach your child to wait for scheduled “special time together”.



Your child is confused or does not understand the activity.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Talk about the activity ahead of time – Introduce or show each step of the activity prior to the time your child plays with a sibling or friend.
- ▶ Use visuals. Show the steps of the activity or game in pictures.
- ▶ Pre-plan – Make sure that all materials are ready and that the activity steps are clear. There should also be enough materials to share.
- ▶ Keep it short and simple – Make sure the activity is neither difficult nor too long.
- ▶ Have your child play with a “friend” or sibling that can help them with the activity.
- ▶ Give a preferred job to do in the activity.
- ▶ Modify the activity – Sometimes children want to play with others but can’t play the game, or with the toy correctly. Think of ways the activity can be modified so that your child can join in. For example, if he can’t hit the ball with the bat, maybe he can run bases with the batter; or if the other children are racing on their bicycles, your child can say “Ready, set, go”.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child for participating and teach the other children to encourage your child and each other (e.g., clapping, thumbs up, high five).

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of the activity steps so that they know what’s next in the activity.
- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings when something is difficult. Say, “This is hard. Let me help you.”
- ▶ Verbally prompt your child to help pass out or get out materials while handing them the items.
- ▶ Prompt a sibling or friend to help. “Could you please show ___ how to ___?”
- ▶ Remind your child to gesture or ask for help.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow the steps or the sequence of activity by modeling how to do them.
- ▶ Teach your child to use gestures or words (e.g., “help please”, “What’s next?”).
- ▶ Teach your child to imitate sibling or friend. Cue them to look and say, “Look what ___ is doing; you do that.”



Your child wants the same toy as another child.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Teach your child about turn-taking – Say to your child, “First ___ plays, then your turn,” and point to each child as the phrase is spoken.
- ▶ For very young children, have two of the same item. Toddlers don’t understand the concept of waiting for a turn with an object.
- ▶ Demonstrate how two children can play with one toy, teach your child how to play with a toy together (e.g., “Push the truck to your friend. Now he can push the truck to you.”).
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to playing with peers and siblings. Point out the important friendship skills in the book (e.g., sharing, taking turns, or being kind).
- ▶ Use a timer – Set a timer or count so your child will know when their turn is coming up next, depending on the toy.
- ▶ Stay nearby to help – Plan to stay with your child to teach turn taking; use short turns to teach turn taking.
- ▶ Help your child learn to control anger – Use the “Turtle Technique” with visuals and a puppet to discuss and model self-regulation. Assist your child with understanding what is not available and how to think of a solution. Read Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think at Home available to download here https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/TuckerTurtle_Story_Home.pdf
- ▶ Encourage success – comment and praise any attempts your child makes to take turns.

Respond

- ▶ Remind child of the timer. Keep it short for turns. Say, “Listen for the bell”, or “I am going to count; 1, 2, 3, your turn.”
- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings, and re-cue verbally the turns. Say, “I know it’s hard to wait. First ___’s turn, then your turn.”
- ▶ If angry, re-cue to use “Turtle Technique” by showing picture steps from story and demonstrating how and help them through the steps.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child turn-taking or sharing through use of timer or counting.
- ▶ Teach your child to wait for a turn by saying, “First ___ plays, then your turn,” and point to each child as phrase is spoken.
- ▶ Teach your child to use the “Turtle Technique”: recognize their feelings, stop their body, tuck inside and take 3 deep breaths, and come out when they have thought of a solution.



Your child wants a different item, activity or wants an item or activity that is not available.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Show choices – Provide your child with choices of what to play. Use photographs or pictures from boxes, catalogs of the items or activities; some children may need to see real items to choose from.
- ▶ Give your child some assistance – Help your child find a fun toy or item based on your child’s preferences.
- ▶ Use first-then cue – Say, “First this toy or activity, then ____ (e.g., something your child prefers).”
- ▶ Help your child stop – Use a stop sign to indicate which items or activities are not available. For instance, put a stop sign on the computer screen, video game console, or tablet if that is not a current choice.
- ▶ Play with your child – Let your child pick a preferred family member to play with them with an alternate activity or toy.
- ▶ Help your child learn to control anger – Use the “Turtle Technique” with visuals and a puppet to discuss and model self-regulation. Assist your child with understanding what is not available and how to think of a solution. Read Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think at Home available to download here https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/TuckerTurtle_Story_Home.pdf
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise for choosing or staying with alternate activity or toy.
- ▶ Show your child when they “can” play – Visually depict when the item or activity will be made available, either on a visual schedule or on a week-long visual calendar. Take a photograph of the item or activity or hand draw picture on a sticky note pad and place it on the schedule or calendar.

Respond

- ▶ Restate your schedule and focus on preferred activities that are coming up.
- ▶ Show your child the choices and when the preferred activity will be available.
- ▶ Give words: say, “You’re sad you can’t play with _____. Maybe tomorrow. You can make another choice right now.” Show choices.
- ▶ Offer alternative choices by pointing out what is fun about the alternative choices.
- ▶ If angry, re-cue to use “Turtle Technique” by showing picture steps from story and demonstrating how and help them through the steps.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to “stop” by using a visual stop sign.
- ▶ Teach your child to predict upcoming events.
- ▶ Teach your child when that activity will occur through use of a week-long calendar visual.
- ▶ Teach your child to choose alternative activity or item.
- ▶ Teach your child to use the “Turtle Technique”: recognize their feelings, stop their body, tuck inside and take 3 deep breaths, and come out when they have thought of a solution.





Outside Play

Your child hates being hot and wants to go inside.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Quench your child's thirst – Have a drink available outside.
- ▶ Cool off – Allow them to wear a “cold pack” scarf.
- ▶ Cool off – Bring a fan outside.
- ▶ Cool off – Allow them to use a water mister.
- ▶ Made in the shade – Point out the “cooler activities”, such as sandbox if under a roof, swinging can be breezier, or going under a tree.
- ▶ Make it fun – Have highly preferred activities available your child really enjoys (e.g., bubbles, trikes, big bouncy balls).
- ▶ After using the above strategies, use a visual timer on your phone to show how much longer until it is time to go inside.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of the choices that might be selected to cool down (e.g., get a drink, stand near the fan, use a mister, sit under the tree).
- ▶ Validate your child's feelings. For example, you might say “I know it is hot, just a few more minutes and then we can go inside.” After validating the child's feelings, offer the choices that might be selected to cool down. Consider using a visual timer to show how many minutes are left before going inside.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to choose alternative activity that might be cooler or indoors.
- ▶ Teach your child to use cold pack scarf, mister, fan, or get a drink.
- ▶ Teach your child to say things like “I'm done playing” or “I am hot.”
- ▶ If your child is non-verbal you can teach them signs for “hot” or “all done” or requesting a drink. You might also have pictures to represent what your child is communicating (e.g., hot, inside, drink of water).

Your child wants an adult as a play partner (adult attention).

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know before you leave – Warn your child when getting up to leave from playing. For example, you might say “Three more scoops of sand, then I need to go push at the swing” or “One more time around the track and then a friend can pull you in the wagon.”
- ▶ Play partner – Pair your child with neighborhood friend or older sibling and frequently praise when child plays with them.
- ▶ A few more minutes – Use a timer to let your child know how long before you come back to play.

Respond

- ▶ Cue your child to say, “play with me”.
- ▶ Cue your child to ask a friend to play.
- ▶ Remind of timer and when it goes off you will come back.
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior, and cue to use new skills.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to ask adult to play.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask a friend to play.
- ▶ Teach your child to play alone for short periods of time after they have learned the above skills.

Your child loves running and thinks outside means run away.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Where can I run? – State when and where your child can run. Cue with a picture, if necessary. If possible, mark “running areas” outside.
- ▶ What can I do? – Give your child concrete boundaries. For example, you may say, “Not past the big tree.” If your child plays on the porch or driveway, you might use sidewalk chalk to draw a line the child should not cross.
- ▶ Reward chart – Create a check off list or sticker chart about “staying safe outside”, including outside boundaries and indicating where children can play. You can use a photograph, draw the “boundary” on the photograph, and place it on the chart.
- ▶ Make a book and include pictures of outside places where your child typically plays. Talk about places that are safe to run. You might also include pictures of games your child can play in those locations that include running (e.g., tag, Red Light /Green Light, relay race).

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of “outside” boundaries; show marked areas.
- ▶ Remind your child to stay with you.
- ▶ Use “staying safe” reward chart.
- ▶ Redirect your child by asking if they want to play a running game. Remind them of the safe spaces to run before playing the game.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Assist your child in learning when and where it is permissible to run through use of a photograph.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow outside expectations.
- ▶ Teach your child games like “Red Light, Green Light” you might replace the name and call it the “Stop, Go” game. Start by holding hands and modeling “Stop” and “Go”. Allow your child to take turns telling you when to “Stop” and “Go”. Incorporate these terms into your pictures (e.g., create “Stop zones” and “Go zones.”)
- ▶ Teach your child to ask you or a peer to play a running game when they feel like running in a safe space.



Your child wants objects or activity that another child is using or is having difficulty taking turns.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Have more than one of favorites – Provide multiples of same items or activities that have high child preference between the siblings or neighborhood friends.
- ▶ Time turns – Use a timer, when necessary, to indicate turns, preferably one that indicates time passing in a visual manner.
- ▶ Give your child the “words” to ask – Anticipate when your child wants an object or activity, and cue to ask or gesture to join in play: “Can I play?” or “My turn.” Use visuals from the Home Solution Kit.
- ▶ Use first-then verbal cue – Say, “First ask, then play.”
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to playing with peers and siblings. Point out the important friendship skills in the book (e.g., sharing, taking turns, being kind).
- ▶ Other fun choices – Provide alternative choices that are of high interest, have outside play choices available (e.g., bubbles, yo-yo, pin wheel, sidewalk chalk, balls, bug catcher, binoculars).
- ▶ Encourage your child – Praise your child when they use or attempts to use new skill in place of challenging behavior.
- ▶ Help your child calm down – Teach your child to use the “Turtle Technique” to recognize they are feeling anger, to stop and take 3 deep breaths, become calm and think of a solution (e.g., check the timer, pick another fun activity, ask for a turn). Read printable story, Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think at Home, or use the “Tucker Turtle Song and Fingerplay” on website www.challengingbehavior.org)
- ▶ Play self-regulation games during (e.g., Red Light, Green Light; Duck, Duck, Goose; Freeze Tag; or Hide and Seek) other times throughout the day to help prepare them for waiting. Note “Stop” and “Go” games like “Red Light, Green Light” can be played on playground equipment such as bouncy toys or swings where appropriate.
- ▶ During other times throughout the day, model turn-taking or sharing (e.g., “I’m being a good friend, I am sharing my snack with you” or “I am taking turns rolling the car to ___” or “Look, ___ and I both need the sink. I am waiting my turn and letting him wash his hands first.”) Before going to play outside, remind your child of the expectations are to take turns and share, or ask an adult for help.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child to ask or gesture to play.
- ▶ Remind your child to ask or gesture for a turn.
- ▶ Offer alternate activity or toy.
- ▶ Remind your child of when their turn is coming up and show timer.
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and offer alternative fun activity.
- ▶ Validate that they are angry, and remind your child to stop, take 3 deep breaths, calm down, and think of a solution (something to make it better).

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to gesture or ask to use object or activity, “Can I play?”
- ▶ Teach your child to wait for a turn.
- ▶ Teach your child to “think of a solution” using the Home Solution Kit for ideas. Solutions might include: get another item, ask to join, or ask another child to let them know when they are done.
- ▶ Teach your child to choose alternative activity while waiting.
- ▶ Teach your child to wait for the timer to sound prior to taking a turn.
- ▶ Teach your child to use the “Turtle Technique” to recognize their feelings, stop their body, tuck inside and take 3 deep breaths, and come out when they have thought of a solution.



Clean-Up

Your child might not want to clean-up.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Be sure the child understanding the clean-up routine and expectations.
- ▶ Use a “warning” – Give your child a warning for when it will be time to clean-up (e.g., 2 more times, 5 more minutes, or 3 more turns; then time to clean-up for next activity).
- ▶ Use a fun cue – Cue to clean-up with song, bells, or lights off. Then, go over to your child and provide the direction to clean-up.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to cleaning up and point out the steps in cleaning up.
- ▶ Play a turn-taking game – Take turns cleaning up with your child. Say, “First I put away a train; then you put away a train.” Also visually cue where to put the train by pointing to the container or shelf.
- ▶ Point out who’s cleaning – Praise sibling(s) or friend(s) who are cleaning up (e.g., “Look how Tim put the car in the bin.”, “Sammy is helping and putting away blocks.”).
- ▶ Turn clean-up into play – Use a toy scoop truck or small sand shovel to scoop up the small pieces and dump into the truck or bucket, and then transport to the toy bin. Sing or dance while you clean-up.
- ▶ Modify your expectations – Start with asking your child to clean-up a limited number of items (e.g., “You put the books in the basket”) and then praise. The next day have the child select two items or more to clean-up; gradually increase your expectations.
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue – Say, “First, clean-up; then (choice of preferred activity or item).”

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Point out “super cleaner-uppers” (e.g., another parent, sibling, or friend) and quickly praise your child if they imitate.
- ▶ Using verbal first-then statement remind child, “First clean-up; then (choice of preferred activity or item).”
- ▶ Redirect to area and model clean-up through turn-taking.
- ▶ Model the “fun way to clean-up,” show how to scoop, and dump into bin.
- ▶ Be sure that the instruction is delivered as a statement not a question (e.g., “It is time to clean-up” instead of “Can you clean-up?”).
- ▶ Follow through with the instruction using gentle and calm physical prompts if necessary.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow verbal “first-then” cue.
- ▶ Teach your child how to imitate cleaning up.
- ▶ Teach your child to clean-up through turn taking.
- ▶ Teach child how to make cleaning up fun.

Your child likes to dump toys or materials.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Be sure the child understands the clean-up routine and expectations.
- ▶ Use a “warning” – Give your child a warning about when it will be time to clean-up (e.g., 2 more times; 5 more minutes; 3 more turns; then time to clean-up for next activity). Be sure that you are prepared to assist your child to prevent them from dumping toys and materials by some of these options:
 - Using a visual cue of what the clean-up expectations are – Toys go into bins or box or shelf.
 - Make baskets – Provide a clean-up bin, such as a crate or laundry basket for developmentally younger children.
 - Matching photographs on shelf and containers so your child will know where items belong.
 - Assist and model how to clean-up.
- ▶ Make cleaning up fun – Turn-take cleaning up with the child. Say, “First I put away a train, then you put away a train.” Also cue visually where to put train by pointing to container or shelf.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child prior to cleaning up and point out the steps in cleaning up.
- ▶ Or make a personalized story for your child. Include pictures (either photos or drawings) of them and the clean-up routine. Include language which is written in positive terms.
- ▶ Encourage success – Encourage the child as they participate in cleaning, even if it’s just a little bit. Praise the sibling or friend that is cleaning up (e.g., “Look how Tim put the car in the bin” , “Samantha is helping put away blocks”).

Respond

- ▶ Model or have a sibling or friend model how to clean-up.
- ▶ Point or pat with your hand where the item(s) go.
- ▶ Say, “Let’s take turns putting in the basket. Do you want to go first or me?”
- ▶ Praise others for cleaning.
- ▶ Prompt a sibling or friend to help the child clean-up.
- ▶ Be sure that the instruction is delivered as a statement not a question (e.g., “It is time to clean-up.” instead of “Can you clean-up?”).
- ▶ Follow through with the instruction using gentle and calm physical prompts if necessary.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach the child how to clean-up. Put in basket, and match label.
- ▶ Teach the child how to imitate sibling or parent who is cleaning.

Your child might not have realized that clean-up time was coming up.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Give your child a “warning” – Tell your child clean-up is coming up, and then use a countdown signal (For example, 2 more times; 5 more minutes; or 3 more turns; then time to clean-up).
- ▶ Use a fun cue – Let your child know that it is time to clean-up by signing a song or flicking the lights off. Then, go over to your child and give the instruction to clean-up.
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue – Cue child individually by saying, “First clean-up, then (next activity).”

Respond

- ▶ Verbally re-cue using first-then statement. Say, “First, clean-up, then outside.”
- ▶ State “all done play” while repeating fun cue, “Do you need help, or can you clean-up on your own?” Help child if needed, and immediately praise.
- ▶ Validate feelings, by saying, “I see clean-up is hard,” and remind when your child can do the activity again.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach the child how to clean-up.
- ▶ Teach the child how to imitate cleaning up like parent or friend.
- ▶ Teach the child how to follow a fun cue, such as a song, bell, lights off, to start cleaning.

Your child has not finished doing the activity and wants more time.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a timer – Set timer and allow your child a minute or two to finish.
- ▶ Save special projects for later – Place unfinished projects or activities in a special place to finish later; let your child know when unfinished projects or activities will be rescheduled.
- ▶ Help your child learn to control anger – Use the “Turtle Technique” with visuals and puppet to discuss and model anger control. Assist your child with understanding what is not available and how to think of a solution. Read Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think at Home available to download here https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/TuckerTurtle_Story_Home.pdf

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child that they can finish later and tell them when.
- ▶ Validate feelings, “I know you want to finish. We can finish ____.” Show on schedule or tell when can be completed later. “Let’s put your work ____ (special place).”
- ▶ If angry, re-cue to use “Turtle Technique” by showing picture steps from story, demonstrating how, and help them through the steps.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach the child to finish in the allotted time.
- ▶ Teach the child to place work in special place to finish later.
- ▶ Teach the child to use the “Turtle Technique” and recognize feelings of anger, think “stop”, go inside “shell”, and take 3 deep breaths, become calm, and think of a solution.

Your child might want adult’s, sibling, or friend’s attention.

Prevent the Behavior

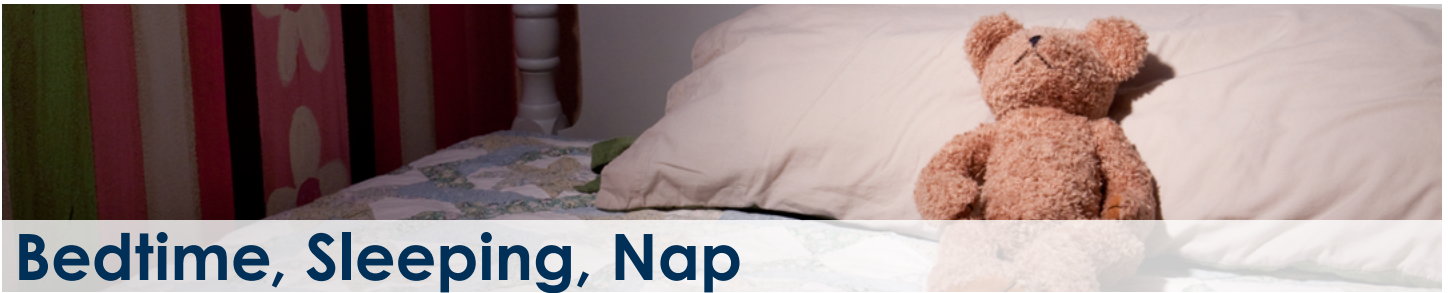
- ▶ Take turns cleaning up with the child – Say, “First I put away a train, then you put away a train.” Also visually cue where to put the train by pointing to container or shelf.
- ▶ Point out who’s cleaning – Praise children who are cleaning up (e.g., “Look how Tim put the car in the bin” ,“Samantha is helping put away blocks”).
- ▶ Make cleaning fun – Have your child pick a helper or clean-up buddy (e.g., sibling, friend, or parent) where one carries the bin, and the other loads items in the bin and then they switch roles.
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue – “First clean-up, then ride bikes with friends” as an incentive or use some other preferred activity or item.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise for cleaning up. Give high fives, thumbs up.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Point out if sibling or friend cooperating, and quickly praise your child if they imitate (e.g., “Kirsten is cleaning up; wow what a helper.”).
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue to remind child: “First clean-up, then ____.”
- ▶ Remind child to gesture or ask for help from a parent, sibling, or friend.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow “first-then” cues.
- ▶ Teach your child to clean-up through turn taking or with a buddy.
- ▶ Teach child to gesture or ask for help either from adult, sibling, or friend.



Bedtime, Sleeping, Nap

Your child doesn't like to sleep (or nap) or is not tired.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to the sleep routine. Point out the steps in the sleep routine while you read the book.
- ▶ Set a timer, and let child know when it goes off, nap time is over.
- ▶ Allow child to use a favorite sleep item (e.g., stuffed animal, pillow, blanket).
- ▶ Give child alternative quiet activities (e.g., reading a book, color, squish ball) to do if not tired.
- ▶ Use first-then visual or verbal cue: first sleep; then ____.
- ▶ Schedule a fun activity after sleep and use stories or first-then statements ("First sleep, then cartoons in the morning.") to remind your child of the schedule prior to sleep time.
- ▶ Try to darken the room or your child's sleep area.
- ▶ Keep your child's room at a comfortable temperature (e.g., not too hot or too cold).
- ▶ Keep the bedroom clutter free and limited of distractions.
- ▶ When quiet, lying down, and covered, offer to rub back for a short period of time, then leave for a minute or two. While your child is still lying down and quiet, return again to rub their back; do this intermittently.
- ▶ Allow child to look at a book or to do a quiet activity while staying in bed for nap or sleep.
- ▶ Play soothing music.
- ▶ Avoid technology (e.g., television, iPad, phone) at least an hour before the scheduled bedtime or nap time. Too much exposure to blue light can affect children's natural sleep rhythms.
- ▶ Keep bedtime consistent even through the weekend.
- ▶ Your child might not need naps any longer, maybe just to go to bed a bit earlier at nighttime.
- ▶ Praise for resting quietly.

Respond

- ▶ Remind child of favorite or fun activity that comes next.
- ▶ Tell your child, "First, rest quietly; then I will rub your back." Wait for child to quiet. This will not reinforce problem behavior if your child is quiet.
- ▶ Validate feelings, and offer alternative, "I know this is hard. You want to play, but it is time to rest. You can lie down, and when you are quiet, I will sit with you, or you can look at a book."
- ▶ Offer child choice of alternate quiet activity (e.g., stuffed animal, book, color, squish ball). Say, "First rest quietly; then you can ____ or ____."

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to stay in bed and sleep.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask to have back rubbed.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a quiet activity.
- ▶ Teach your child how to use a first, then visual (if using this strategy).

Your child wants adult attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use first-then verbal cue – “First rest; then I will rub your back.”
- ▶ Create a visual schedule that shows after bedtime or nap they will see you.
- ▶ Keep the bedtime or naptime routine calming, consistent and predictable.
- ▶ Manage needs ahead of time (e.g., bathroom, a glass of water, request for a specific stuffed animal).
- ▶ If your child is delaying bedtime by asking for more books or other requests, provide clear expectations (e.g., 2-3 book limit).
- ▶ Have child positioned with minimal distractions and “escape routes”.
- ▶ Rub child’s back and slowly back away while increasing distance over time.
- ▶ Provide a choice of a doll, stuffed animal, or a comfort item to sleep with.
- ▶ If nap time, schedule a short fun activity with child following nap so that they can have time with you.
- ▶ Praise for resting quietly.

Respond

- ▶ Use first-then prompt to remind, “First rest or lie down; then I can come rub your back”.
- ▶ Offer choice of a comfort item.
- ▶ Avoid providing attention for non-essential needs.
- ▶ If your child gets out of bed, gently and calmly take them back to their own bed, say good night, and walk out.
- ▶ Your child might actually need something. Maybe they had a bad dream, fear a monster under the bed, or had an accident. Validate your child’s feelings, calm them, and then encourage sleep. Consider a night light if your child is afraid of the dark.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child expectations for bedtime (e.g., “First rest quietly; then I will rub your back.” or Two book rule or bathroom before bed).
- ▶ Teach your child to stay in bed and rest or sleep.
- ▶ Teach your child alternative quiet activities to do until they fall asleep (e.g., to rub baby doll’s or stuffed animal’s back, listen to music, look at a book).
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a comfort item to rest with.



Your child wants to sleep with you, or have you lie down with them.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to the sleep routine. Point out the steps in the sleep routine while you read the book.
- ▶ Allow your child to take one of their stuffed animals to bed to keep them company. You might want to get a “bigger” stuffed animal so that they feel more comforted, like someone is nearby.
- ▶ For the first week or so, you can sit in their room as they doze off, say good night, and leave. Make sure to say good night, and let your child see you leave. Over time, slowly back your chair up so that it is closer to the door. Once you leave, don’t go back into the room. You can reassure your child from outside the room.
- ▶ Let your child know you will check on them and follow through. Set up consistent times (e.g., every 5 minutes in the beginning) until your child falls asleep. You can lengthen the amount of time you check on your child as they begin to successfully fall asleep on their own.
- ▶ If transitioning to a new room or bed, provide safety through play. Practice putting dolls or stuffed animals to sleep in the bed or play together in the new room. Eventually fade yourself from the play so your child begins to feel comfortable in their new space.
- ▶ Use a job chart – Make a chart to keep track of when your child sleeps in their own bed. Put on the chart “I can sleep in my own bed!” with a photograph on the chart of your child in their bed. On the mornings that your child wakes in their own bed, celebrate their success and have your child put a sticker or stamp mark on the chart.
- ▶ If needed, use a night light to help your child feel safe.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings to let them know you understand, and then restate that you have your bed and they have their own bed.
- ▶ If your child gets out of bed, gently and calmly take them back to their own bed, say good night, and walk out.
- ▶ Offer choices of stuffed animals to sleep with.
- ▶ Remind your child that they are a big kid now and needs to stay in their bed until the sun comes through the edges of the window.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to sleep in their own bed.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a comfort item.



Your child has a hard time settling down or soothing self to sleep.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Offer to put on music or rock or rub your child's back using a first-then visual or verbal prompt: "First go lie down; then I can rub your back or rock you for a bit".
- ▶ Have child positioned with minimal distractions or escape routes.
- ▶ Provide a choice of a doll or stuffed animal to sleep with.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for your child to be active during the day (e.g., outside play, taking walks together, bike riding, swimming)
- ▶ Avoid technology (e.g., television, iPad, phone) at least an hour before the scheduled bed or nap time. Too much exposure to blue light can affect children's natural sleep rhythms.
- ▶ Try to darken the room or your child's sleep area.
- ▶ Keep your child's room at a comfortable temperature (e.g., not too hot or too cold).
- ▶ Add calming rituals (e.g., warm baths, breathing exercises or yoga stretches) into your child's bedtime routine to help them calm.
- ▶ Give child alternative quiet activities (e.g., reading a book, color, squish ball) to help them calm or get tired.
- ▶ Praise for resting quietly.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to the sleep routine. Point out the steps in the sleep routine while you read the book.

Respond

- ▶ Say, "First lie down quietly; then I will put on the music, rub your back, or rock you."
- ▶ Offer choice of comfort item.
- ▶ Practice consistent calming rituals, if needed, stay in the room with your child as they lie down, until they are asleep and slowly fade yourself out.
- ▶ If necessary, you may need to consult with a doctor.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to first rest quietly; then you will turn on music and rub back or rock.
- ▶ Teach your child to rub baby doll's or stuffed animal's back.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a comfort item.
- ▶ Teach your child calming strategies (e.g., breathing, warm baths, yoga stretches) that they enjoy and help them to sooth themselves to sleep.
- ▶ Teach your child words or phrases (e.g., my body feels busy) that describe how their body is feeling like excited, anxious, calm, or tired to express how they are feeling.



Sleep on this!

Sleep can be a more complex problem for both children and adults. We recommend reading the following book for more strategies around "sleep issues":

Durand, V. Mark. (1998). *Sleep better! A guide to improving sleep for children with special needs*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.



Going Places

Your child does not want to sit in their car seat during the drive.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Check for physical discomfort: is your child too hot? Is the sun in their eyes? Have they outgrown the current positioning of the car seat and are ready to transition to the next position?
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to getting into the car seat. Point out the steps for getting in the car seat while you read the book.
- ▶ Check with your local police department or community events for checking the car seats. They may have child-friendly resources about riding in the car seat.
- ▶ Create a book with your child that outlines the steps for getting in and out of the car seat, and the expectations of staying in the car seat while the car is moving. Explain to your child that the car seat will keep them safe, and that it is unsafe if they are not in their car seat while you drive. You also might show them your seat belt and explain that your seat belt will keep you safe too.
- ▶ Play a game like "I spy" and talk with your child about what you see while you drive or play music and sing together.
- ▶ Offer your child choices of toys, books, music, or snacks (if appropriate) they can bring along for the ride
- ▶ Prior to transitioning to the car, remind your child of the expectation that they need to stay in their car seat while you drive so they can be safe. Let them know a consequence for what will happen if they don't stay in the car seat (e.g., "I will have to stop the car until you are safe." "I will have to drive home and we won't go").
- ▶ Provide frequent praise when your child is sitting in the car seat (e.g., "You are doing such a good job staying in your car seat! I am so proud of you!").
- ▶ Use a sticker chart and provide a sticker for each trip your child stays in the car seat. Provide choices, and let your child decide an appropriate reward for when you get home safely.

Respond

- ▶ Restate the expectations using positive language (e.g., sit in your car seat with your straps on). Provide a warning and restate the consequence. Be sure to follow through with whatever consequence you talked about if the behavior does not stop.
- ▶ If the child is safe, ignore inappropriate behavior.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to strap themselves into their car seat.
- ▶ Teach your child what is "safe" and "unsafe" when traveling in a car.

Your child does not want to get in the vehicle.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know where you are going – Prior to your child ending previous activity let them know that soon you are leaving to go to _____. You might also have pictures on hand of places you and your child frequent. Use Velcro to put the pictures in order and show when you will come home.
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue – Say to your child, “First get in the car, then you can play with _____.”
- ▶ Provide your child with a highly preferred item or toy that they can hold in the car.
- ▶ Make going to the car fun or walking to the bus stop fun – Give your child fun choices for how to go to the car (e.g., “Do you want to hop, skip, or fly like a plane to the bus stop?”).
- ▶ Give choices – Offer choices of what to bring in the car (e.g., “Do you want to bring a stuffed animal, your favorite music, books, or toy cars?”).
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to getting into the car. Point out the steps in the routine while you read the book.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and remind your child where you are going.
- ▶ Restate to your child, “First get in the car, and then you can play with _____,” and give them the preferred item to hold while riding in the vehicle.
- ▶ Restate choices of fun ways to go to the car or bus.
- ▶ Help your child to the car, keeping your emotion as calm as possible. Once in the car, quickly encourage them by saying, “Look at you! What a big kid you are sitting in your car seat!”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of how to go to the vehicle and make it fun (e.g., fly, skip, hop).
- ▶ Teach your child to first sit and put on seat belt or buckle up car seat. Then, they can play with something fun in the car.

Your car is too hot, and your child hates being hot.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Cool the car off – If at home, run the air conditioner in the car for a bit before getting in. If this is not possible, try parking your car in a shady spot to limit the amount of direct sunlight it receives.
- ▶ Cool the seat – Put an ice pack with a towel over it on the seat of the car seat or place a towel over the seat if ice is unavailable. Store the ice pack in a small cooler.
- ▶ Quench your child’s thirst – Have a drink available for the car ride.
- ▶ Cool off – Allow them to wear a “cold pack” scarf.
- ▶ Spray the heat away – Allow them to use a “mister”.
- ▶ Offer a cold drink – Freeze a bottle of water or juice that can thaw while you get out of the car. Offer your child the slushy when you get back in the car.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child that you cooled off the car. Your child could be prompted to touch the seat to feel that it is cool.
- ▶ Offer a drink.
- ▶ Offer a mister spray.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to sit once car is cooled off a bit.
- ▶ Teach your child to use a cold pack scarf or a spray mister to cool off.
- ▶ Teach your child to first sit and then they can have a drink.

Your child refuses to get in the vehicle so that you will chase or play with them and they get your attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Schedule time to play with your child – Let your child know when you can play (e.g., chase, tickle, run with, hide and seek) with them.
- ▶ Make getting in the car fun – If you are at home, you could say, “Let’s ___ (e.g., race, jump, fly) to the car.” If you are out in the community, you could say, “Let’s ___ (e.g., hold hands and swing our arms, tip-toe, choo choo) to the car or bus stop.”
- ▶ Have something exciting to play with – Use verbal first-then cue (e.g., say to your child, “First get in the car, then we are going to ___”).
- ▶ Provide your child with a highly preferred item or toy that they can hold in the car.

Respond

- ▶ Show your child a timer, remind them that it is time to get in the car, and help your child move to the car. Once in the car, praise your child immediately, even if you had to help.
- ▶ Re-cue your child by saying, “First get in the car, then you can play with ___.”
- ▶ Validate that your child wants to play and let them know that they can play ___ later. Say something like, “I see you want to play ___, (e.g., chase, hide and seek, tickle). We can play when we get home. Right now, it is time to get in the car.” Quickly and with no emotions, help your child to the car, then praise for sitting in the car seat, and hand a toy to play with in the car. Ignore inappropriate behavior.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to go to the car by having them choose an appropriate way to go to the car (e.g., jump, fly, holding hands).
- ▶ Teach your child when it is time to play (e.g., chase, tickle, running, hide and seek).
- ▶ Teach your child that when they sit, then they can play with a toy in the car.

Your child gets restless on a long car ride.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Download your child’s favorite music, video, books or an audiobook to entertain during the ride.
- ▶ Have your child prepare a bag with you full of snacks, drinks, toys, games, activities. Try including some novel toys if extra distraction is needed.
- ▶ Play “I spy” games and talk with your child about what you are both seeing during the ride.
- ▶ Leave time in your schedule to plan out places you can stop and take a walk to stretch and get some energy out.
- ▶ Create a book or visual schedule for your child using pictures to represent your schedule, places or people you might see, or where you are going and what might happen. Be sure to alert your child if any changes happen to the schedule.

Respond

- ▶ Take a deep breath, validate your child’s feelings, and let them know what is next.
- ▶ If feasible, and you know how long it will be until your next stop, use a timer to show how much longer until you can stop.
- ▶ Cue your child to tell you if they are hungry, tired, or need to stop for a break or to use the bathroom.
- ▶ Try to redirect with a game, snack, music or something from their travel bag to redirect.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child words, gestures, signs, or how to point to pictures to communicate their needs and wants (e.g., I’m tired, I’m hungry, I feel sick, I need the bathroom, I need a break).
- ▶ Teach your child the plan you intend to follow for your trip. Alert them when changes will take place.

Your child does not understand where they are going.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Plan for the transition – Start transition about 5 minutes before end of activity and every minute after do a countdown (e.g. “5 more minutes, 4 more minutes, 3 more minutes...”).
- ▶ Use a timer – Set the time for 5 minutes and let your child know when the bell rings the activity is finished or all done; give your child a warning before the timer goes off.
- ▶ Let your child know where you are going – Prior to your child ending the previous activity, let them know that soon you are leaving to go to _____. You might also use pictures of where you are going. Use Velcro to put the pictures in order and show when you will come home.
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue – Say to your child, “First get in the car; then we are going to _____”.
- ▶ Provide your child with a highly preferred item or toy that they can hold in the car.
- ▶ If you are going to a new place or a place your child does not like (e.g., the doctor) create a book with pictures that shows your child where you are going, who you might see, and what might happen. Read the book with your child prior to the transition during your regular reading time. Show the book again when you alert them of where you are going and allow them to hold it to look at in the car.

Respond

- ▶ Show your child a timer, remind them that it’s now time to get in the car, and help your child move to the car. Once in the car, praise your child immediately, even if you had to help.
- ▶ Ask your child to repeat to you where it is that you are going, and if they cannot recall, restate where you are going.
- ▶ Re-cue your child by saying, “First get on the bus, then you can play with _____.”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to listen for the timer and go to the car.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask to bring a toy along for the ride.
- ▶ Teach your child to go to the car.
- ▶ Teach your child to restate where it is that you are going.

Your child wants to keep doing the activity they were doing before getting into the car.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Plan for the transition – Start the transition about 5 minutes before end of activity and then provide a count-down each minute (e.g., tell your child “5 more minutes”, wait, and then count down).
- ▶ Use a timer – Set it for 5 minutes, and let your child know when the bell rings the activity is finished or all done; give your child a warning before the timer goes off.
- ▶ Bring it along – If the item they are playing with can be used in the car, then allow them to take it or a piece of it on the car ride.
- ▶ Let your child know – Show your child when they can return to the activity again. Point to the time on the clock or the day on the calendar for older children or use a visual schedule to let your child see that when you get back, they can continue the activity.

Respond

- ▶ Show child timer, remind them that it’s now time to get in the car, and help them to the car.
- ▶ Ask your child if they want to bring the toy with them.
- ▶ Let your child know that they can continue the activity they were doing when you get back. Leave the activity out so that they can see that it will still be there.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to listen for the timer and go to the car.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask to bring a toy in the car.
- ▶ Teach your child to go to the car.
- ▶ Teach your child that they can return to the activity at a later time.

It is a challenge for your child to engage during the community outing or your child wants to leave.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Have your child help you pack a bag with favorite snacks, books, and toys they can have access to during the outing.
- ▶ Talk to your child in advance and during the car ride about where you are going and what will happen. You might also use visual images of places you are going, people you might see, and things that will happen.
- ▶ Let your child know what choices they will have during your outing (e.g., requesting a break, snack, or toy).
- ▶ Use a timer to show your child how much time there is until you can go home.
- ▶ Use a visual schedule to show the sequence of events of your trip. If this is a routine outing, you might create a visual calendar to show your child the day and the activity (e.g., it is Tuesday, and we go to the park on Tuesdays).
- ▶ If you have any control over the time spent in the community, know your child's limits in advance and plan around it. If they can only handle 20 minutes, then plan for activities you can do in that time limit. Gradually increase time spent out in the community.
- ▶ If your child seems sensitive to the noise in the environment, offer your child noise-cancelling headphones to wear.
- ▶ Provide frequent positive praise and attention for when your child is engaging in appropriate behavior.
- ▶ Plan your outing during times your child is not hungry or tired.

Respond

- ▶ If your child's behavior is occurring because they are overstimulated by the environment, offer a cue to request a break, and take a walk or find a safe space to relax. If needed, use a timer to show when you will go back to the activity.
- ▶ Use cues to help your child request a snack, a nap (if appropriate and able) or a toy.
- ▶ Remind your child of the schedule (visual or verbal) and when it will be time to go home (e.g., First we are going to the library, and then we will go home).

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to alert you when they are tired, hungry, need a break or need the bathroom using words, gestures or pointing to pictures.
- ▶ Teach your child the expectations of community events (e.g., when we go to the library to hear a story, we will sit and use our listening ears).





Shopping

Your child wants to leave or wants to go home.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Make a list together – Let your child know ahead of time, what you plan to do. Draw in a small notepad pictures to represent the 3 items you need, and then a picture of a house to indicate that after you get those “3 items,” (list them) “then, we will go home.”
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to the shopping trip. Point out the steps in the shopping routine while you read the book.
- ▶ Plan shopping when you child is well-rested.
- ▶ Plan shopping when your child is not hungry.
- ▶ Make shopping time short, and slowly increase time to 30 minutes as your child is successful with shorter time spans. If needed, start at 5 minutes, and slowly increase time shopping.
- ▶ Play a game while shopping – Look for something red, look for something that begins with “A”, look for something that you drink, etc.
- ▶ Prior to shopping, create a visual schedule with a predictable routine of what will happen (e.g., we will get a cart, find the items on our list, pay the cashier, put our bags in the car, drive home). Allow your child to be a helper during each part of the routine by finding the items on the list or handing the cashier payment. Allow your child to check things off as completed (e.g., we need to pay for our food, then we will put the bags in the car to go home). Follow this routine each time you shop together.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings and restate what is left on your “shopping list”. “I see you are sad. We need to buy one more thing. First we get ____; then we go home.”
- ▶ Remind your child by saying, “First we pay, then we can go to the car.”
- ▶ Show “shopping list pictures” again and remind child of what is left. Have them help you locate those items.
- ▶ Show your child the visual schedule and remind them of the steps.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to look at the pictures of the items you need to buy and to check off the “shopping list” as you buy each item.
- ▶ Teach your child “First check off list, then go home.”
- ▶ Teach your child words, signs, gestures, or how to point to visuals to make requests or meet their needs (e.g., I’m hungry, I’m tired, I need the bathroom).

Your child does not like riding in the cart or stroller.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Offer choices – Give your child a choice of holding your finger. Many children don't like you holding their hand but will hold your finger or will hold onto the shopping cart.
- ▶ Distract – If the child must ride in a cart or stroller, give them a choice of something small to hold (e.g., juice cup, goldfish crackers, small car, small baby doll).
- ▶ Check it off – Give your child a small notepad and crayon to mark off the “shopping list”. Draw 3 pictures of 3 items that you are shopping for so that they can check them off once they are placed in the cart.
- ▶ Play a game while shopping – Look for something red, look for something that begins with “A”, look for something that you drink, etc.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child the moment that they sit appropriately or walks with you holding the cart or your hand or finger.
- ▶ Allow your child to be a helper (e.g., let them help push the cart, carry their own basket, help put produce in a bag, or help hand the cashier payment).

Respond

- ▶ Redirect your child to make a choice to hold the cart. Point to the cart as you say it or hold your hand or finger. Reach out your hand as you say it.
- ▶ Validate your child's feelings, and then say, “First sit quietly in the stroller or cart, then you can have ____ (e.g., toy, snack, juice).”
- ▶ Show “shopping list pictures” again and remind child of what is left. Have them help you locate those items.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice to hold hand or finger or side of the cart.
- ▶ Teach your child to first sit quietly, then they can have ____.
- ▶ Teach your child to check off the pictures that represent the 3 items on your shopping list.
- ▶ Teach your child how to help push the cart safely (e.g., “use walking feet”, letting them know when to stop or go) and the sequence for putting produce in the bag.

Your child wants the adult to pay attention to them. They may want to play chase or hide and seek.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Encourage success – Pay attention to and praise your child for walking or riding quietly with you. Purposely do this every few minutes.
- ▶ Helping hands – Have your child be your “helper”. Give your child items that they are supposed to help you look for and put in the cart.
- ▶ Have your child help you put items on the check-out counter or belt.
- ▶ Schedule time to “play” (e.g., chase, hide and seek) together at home.
- ▶ Engage your child as you shop. Look for things together. Talk about what you are seeing. Make your child a “shopping buddy”.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of the items you need help finding.
- ▶ Remind your child you need help putting the items on the checkout belt.
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Cue your child to say, “I want to help”.
- ▶ Let your child know when you will play with them. Say, “When we get home, we can play chase or hide and seek”.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to be a helper and help you find the items.
- ▶ Teach your child to put items in the cart.
- ▶ Teach your child to put items on the checkout belt.
- ▶ Teach your child to say, sign or gesture or use a picture to communicate: “I want to help”.

Your child wants toys or items off the shelves.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Encourage your child – Praise your child for walking or riding quietly next to you.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to the shopping trip. Point out the steps in the shopping routine while you read the book.
- ▶ Make a list – Prior to shopping, make a list of what you will be getting at the store, and review the list with your child. Use simple pictures on a small notepad to indicate what you are getting and show it to your child.
- ▶ Check it off – Give the “shopping list” to your child while you are shopping and allow them to check off the list. Stress that “we are only buying things on the list today”.
- ▶ Offer choices – Prior to shopping, offer a shopping item choice to your child. For example, your child can pick out a snack, the type of bubble bath soap they would like, or maybe a small toy item. Then put that item on the “shopping list”. Again, stress that you are only buying items on the list.
- ▶ Do your homework and locate local stores that offer free snacks (e.g., Kroger, or samples from Trader Joes or warehouse stores like Costco). Find a way to add the snack into this routine by either offering it in the beginning as a distraction, or as a prize for finding things on your list.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child that you have a “shopping list”.
- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings. Say, “I know you really want _____. Maybe another time. Today we are buying _____, _____, and _____.”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a “shopping list” item that they want prior to going shopping.
- ▶ Teach your child how to look at the shopping list and check off items as you get them.

Your child does not know why you are in the store or how long it will take to shop.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know ahead of time what you plan to do. Draw in a small notepad pictures to represent the 3 items you need and then a picture of a house to indicate that after you get those “3 items” (list them), then we will go home.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book to your child often and prior to the shopping trip. Point out the steps in the shopping routine while you read the book.
- ▶ Plan shopping when your child is well-rested.
- ▶ Plan shopping when your child is not hungry.
- ▶ Make shopping time short and fun.
- ▶ Play a game while shopping (e.g., look for something red, look for something that begins with “A”, look for something that you drink).

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings and restate what is left on your “shopping list”. “I see you are upset. We need to buy one more thing. First we get _____; then we go home.”
- ▶ Review the entire shopping list. Keep the list to a minimum until your child understands the shopping routine.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to look at the pictures of the items you need to buy and to check off the “shopping list” as you buy each item.
- ▶ Teach your child “first check off list; then go home”.

Your child wants to be carried or held.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Give your child a choice of walking or riding in a cart.
- ▶ Avoid shopping when your child is tired or hungry. Make sure they are well rested and well-fed prior to shopping.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child for walking or riding in the cart.
- ▶ Limit your expectations – Reduce the length of the trip to match your child’s tolerance level.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child that they have a choice to walk or ride.
- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings. Say “I know you want me to carry you, but I can’t because I need to push the cart. I know you are sad, but you can walk holding my hand or ride in the cart, and I will talk to you”. You can periodically give hugs.
- ▶ Ask your child if they are tired. If they are, then have them ride in the cart.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to walk.
- ▶ Teach your child to ride in the cart.
- ▶ Teach your child to tell you if they are tired.





Restaurants

Your child wants an adult to play or pay attention to them.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before going out to eat. Refer to the language or picture cues in the story to teach the routine for eating at a restaurant.
- ▶ Bring quiet but interactive activities that you and your child can do while waiting for the meal (e.g., paper and crayons, books, small puzzle, mini action figures, sticker books).
- ▶ Make sitting fun – Talk with your child, play simple games, give your child positive attention when sitting.
- ▶ Encourage success – Praise your child for sitting, eating, or waiting to go outside.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of the steps that you need to go through when at a restaurant.
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Restate choices of quiet activities or toys to play with while waiting.
- ▶ Try to redirect with a game, snack, music or something brought with you into the restaurant.
- ▶ Let your child know when you will play with them. Say “Let me order the food, and then we can color a picture together.”

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a quiet activity to play with. You may even want to show them the options so that the choice is easier than just hearing the choices.
- ▶ Teach your child to review the steps of eating at a restaurant.
- ▶ Teach your child to say, “Play with me” to get adult’s attention.

Your child is very hungry and can't wait for food.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Give your child a small snack prior to the meal.
- ▶ Bring a small snack with you to the restaurant.
- ▶ Distract your child and play simple games (e.g., “I spy” is a great game for the restaurant) or read a book while waiting for the meal.
- ▶ If your child is hungry, go to a restaurant where you know you can receive the food quickly.
- ▶ Use a mobile application or restaurant website to view the menu ahead of time.
- ▶ Use a mobile application to place your order before you arrive at the restaurant or place an order for an appetizer ahead of time to have ready for your arrival.

Respond

- ▶ Ask your child if they are hungry. If they are, offer choices of a small snack.
- ▶ Ask your child if they would like to play a game or read a book.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to make a snack choice.
- ▶ Teach your child to eat the snack choice.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice to play a game or read a book.

Your child wants to leave or go home or go outside.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know the steps you need to go through at a restaurant: First we order, draw or read while waiting for food, eat; and then we get our check, pay, and go home.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before going out to eat. Refer to the language or picture cues in the story to teach the routine for eating at a restaurant.
- ▶ Let your child know about how much time there is before they get to leave or go for a walk outside.
- ▶ Give your child a choice of alternate, quiet activities to do while waiting. (e.g., paper and crayons, books, small puzzles).
- ▶ Go to an outdoor restaurant.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child's feelings. Say something like, "I see you are mad. First, we pay, then we can leave."
- ▶ Remind your child of the steps that you need to go through at the restaurant.
- ▶ Remind your child of the choices of alternate activities.
- ▶ Point out how nicely others, especially children, are sitting in the restaurant.
- ▶ Remind your child to first sit quietly for a few minutes, they can ask to go for a walk outside.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to ask, "how much longer?"
- ▶ Teach your child to wait quietly while doing an alternate activity, such as drawing, reading, or playing with a small toy.
- ▶ Teach your child the steps you need to go through at a restaurant.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask to go for a walk outside in a calm voice while sitting quietly.

Your child does not like sitting.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Practice sitting to eat at home.
- ▶ Limit your expectations of how long your child might sit and wait at a restaurant or sit and wait. Children younger than 5 might only be able to sit for 20 minutes before becoming restless and needing an activity change.
- ▶ Take a photograph or a video of your child sitting in a chair at home at the meal table. Then you can use that photograph or video of your child sitting to prompt them to sit in the chair. Show the photograph or video to your child and say, "First sit (while patting the seat of the chair); then ___ (a favorite food)".
- ▶ Make sure that your child is sitting comfortably. For instance, make sure that the child is stable in their seat. Consider using a booster seat that fits securely on the chair and leaves enough room on the seat to rest their feet.
- ▶ Make sitting fun – Talk with your child; play simple games; give your child positive attention when sitting.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before going out to eat. Refer to the language or picture cues in the story to teach the routine for eating at a restaurant.
- ▶ Encourage your child, and praise for sitting.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and point out others who are sitting quietly and correctly.
- ▶ Show your child their photograph sitting in a chair for a meal and say "First, sit. Then ___". Show snack item.
- ▶ Remove plate from child's reach; prompt to sit; and then allow to eat once they are sitting.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to use a booster chair, if appropriate for their age.
- ▶ Teach your child to look at their photograph or video sitting and still.



Attending Community Or Family Events

(e.g., Laundromat, Sporting Events, Church, Temple, Synagogue)

Your child does not understand where they are going.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know where you are going – Prior to your child ending the previous activity, let them know that soon you are leaving to go to _____. You might also use pictures of where you are going. Use Velcro to put the pictures in order and show when you will come home.
- ▶ Use the pictures to prompt your child to leave and to help your child transition to the activity (e.g., “Time to get in the car; we are going to the laundromat.”).
- ▶ Show your child images from an internet search that shows your child where you are going. Many locations have images you can view that might help your child visualize where they are going.
- ▶ Use verbal first-then cue – Say to your child, “First get in the car; then we are going to _____”.
- ▶ If you are going to a new place or a place your child does not like (e.g., the laundromat or siblings’ sporting event) create a book that shows your child where you are going, who you might see, and what might happen. Read the book with your child prior to the transition during your regular reading time. Show the book again when you alert them of where you are going and allow them to hold it to look at while on the way to the event.
- ▶ Pack a choice bag of preferred objects, quiet toys, or activities that your child can do by themselves if you think your child might become bored or restless. As soon as there is an indication that your child is not interested in the activity, offer a choice of an alternate activity. Don’t wait to see if your child might become interested, head off the behavior by offering the choice.

Respond

- ▶ Prompt your child with the visuals that show where you are going and what is next.
- ▶ Remind the child using first-then.
- ▶ Review the book that describes where you are going and what will happen.
- ▶ Ignore the inappropriate behavior and confidently use the prevention strategies to help your child comply with the direction.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to say how they feel.
- ▶ Teach your child to take slow deep breaths to calm down.
- ▶ Teach your child to review the schedule or book that describes where you are going.
- ▶ Teach your child to select an alternate activity or toy.

Your child wants an adult to play or pay attention to them.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Limit your expectations of how long your child might sit and watch or sit and wait. Children younger than 5 might only be able to sit for 20 minutes before becoming restless and needing an activity change.
- ▶ Create a scripted story that describes what will happen at the event. Include information about when you can't play with your child and also include information about what your child can do (e.g., "When Mommy is at church, she can't talk to me. I can read a book or play with my fidget, but I can't talk to Mommy.>").
- ▶ Let your child know the steps of the activity. Have your child help or actively participate as much as possible. For example, in church, your child might open the door, get out the hymnal, put the envelope in the basket, and shake his neighbor's hand. If your child knows the steps and sequence, your child might be more interested. If you are going to the laundromat, consider all the steps of the activity and how your child might participate.
- ▶ Bring a choice bag of quiet but interactive activities that your child can do at the event that are appropriate (e.g., paper and crayons, books, small puzzle, mini action figures, sticker books).
- ▶ Bring visuals that will help your child understand what you want them to do. Visuals might include stay in seat, no talking, or play with toys. Use the visual to provide instructions to your child.
- ▶ If you know the duration of the activity, you can use a timer or visual to let your child know how many more minutes the activity will last. That will help your child know when the activity will end and when you can pay attention to them.
- ▶ Use visual first-then cue, show the activity that you will be doing with a preferred activity that will follow. For example, you might have a visual of the baseball game followed by a visual of the playground. Use this to explain to your child what will follow the nonpreferred activity.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Redirect your child using the visuals.
- ▶ Offer your child a choice from the choice bag.
- ▶ Set a timer and tell your child to hang in for ___ more minutes. When the timer is up, play with your child or leave the activity.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to take slow deep breaths to calm down.
- ▶ Teach your child to select an alternate activity or toy.
- ▶ Teach your child to actively participate in the activity when possible.
- ▶ Teach your child to use the timer to see how much more time is left in the activity.



Your child is bored or uninterested in the activity; Your child wants to leave and go home or go outside.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Limit your expectations of how long your child might sit and watch or sit and wait. Children younger than 5 might only be able to sit for 20 minutes before becoming restless and needing an activity change.
- ▶ Let your child know the steps of the activity. Have your child help or actively participate as much as possible. For example, in church, your child might open the door, get out the hymnal, put the envelope in the basket, and shake his neighbor's hand. If your child knows the steps and sequence, your child might be more interested. If you are going to the laundromat, consider all the steps of the activity and how your child might participate.
- ▶ Create a scripted story about the activity. Take photographs or find pictures and staple several pieces of paper together to make a book for your child by gluing in the photographs and writing the steps of the activity. Include steps of what your child will be doing.
- ▶ Pack a choice bag of preferred objects, quiet toys, or activities that your child can do by themselves if you think your child might become bored or restless. As soon as there is an indication that your child is not interested in the activity, offer a choice of an alternate activity. Don't wait to see if your child might become interested, head off the behavior by offering the choice.
- ▶ If you know the duration of the activity, you can use a timer or visual to let your child know how many more minutes the activity will last. That will help your child know when the activity will end and when you can pay attention to them.
- ▶ Create a visual schedule of the activity steps (e.g., 1) park car, 2) sit in bleachers, 3) watch game for 20 mins., 4) take walk, 5) watch game for 20 mins., 6) get snack, 7) watch game for 10 mins, 8) get in car, 9) watch YouTube on tablet). If possible, build in activities that your child likes (e.g., walk, snack) and set reasonable expectations for sitting and watching. Follow the activity that your child prefers (e.g., watch YouTube on tablet).

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child's feelings. Say something like, "I see you are frustrated. 10 minutes and then we go home".
- ▶ Ignore the inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Remind your child of the steps of the activity using the story or visual schedule.
- ▶ Indicate how many more minutes until the activity ends on the timer or with a visual.
- ▶ Offer your child a choice from the choice bag.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to take slow deep breaths to calm down.
- ▶ Teach your child to select an alternate activity or toy.
- ▶ Teach your child to actively participate in the activity when possible.
- ▶ Teach your child to use the timer to see how much more time is left in the activity.



Your child does not understand the expectations or rules of community or family event.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know the steps of the activity. Have your child help or actively participate as much as possible. For example, in church, your child might open the door, get out the hymnal, put the envelope in the basket, and shake his neighbor's hand. If your child knows the steps and sequence, your child might be more interested. If you are going to the laundromat, consider all the steps of the activity and how your child might participate.
- ▶ Create a scripted story about the activity. Take photographs or find pictures and staple several pieces of paper together to make a book for your child by gluing in the photographs and writing the steps of the activity. Include steps of what your child will be doing.
- ▶ Create a visual schedule of the activity steps (e.g., 1) park car, 2) sit in bleachers, 3) watch game for 20 mins., 4) take walk, 5) watch game for 20 mins., 6) get snack, 7) watch game for 10 mins, 8) get in car, 9) watch YouTube on tablet). If possible, build in activities that your child likes (e.g., walk, snack) and set reasonable expectations for sitting and watching. Follow the activity that your child prefers (e.g., watch YouTube on tablet).

Respond

- ▶ Ignore the inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Remind your child of the steps of the activity using the story or visual schedule.
- ▶ Indicate how many more minutes until the activity ends on the timer or with a visual.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to take slow deep breaths to calm down.
- ▶ Teach your child to go through the steps in their book or review the visual schedule.
- ▶ Teach your child to actively participate in the activity when possible.

The activity is noisy and irritating to your child.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Allow your child to wear noise-cancelling headphones or listen to music during the activity.
- ▶ Let your child know where you are going – Prior to your child ending previous activity, let them know that soon you are leaving to go to _____. Show your child that you are bringing their headphones or earbuds to remind your child that they can listen to music or block the sound if it becomes too loud.
- ▶ Create a scripted story about the activity. Take photographs or find pictures and staple several pieces of paper together to make a book for your child by gluing in the photographs and writing the steps of the activity. Include steps of your child selecting to use the headphones or listening to music when it becomes too loud.
- ▶ If you know the duration of the activity, you can use a timer or visual to let your child know how many more minutes the activity will last. That will help your child know when the activity will end and when you can pay attention to them.
- ▶ Pack a choice bag of preferred objects or calming activities that your child can do by themselves.

Respond

- ▶ Prompt your child to put on their headphones or earphones.
- ▶ Remind your child of the steps of the activity using the story or visual schedule.
- ▶ Indicate how many more minutes until the activity ends on the timer or with a visual.
- ▶ Offer your child a choice from the choice bag.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to take slow deep breaths to calm down.
- ▶ Teach your child to select a calming activity or toy from the choice bag.
- ▶ Teach your child to put on their headphones when the noise becomes too loud.



Going to School or Childcare

Your child doesn't want to leave you to go to childcare or preschool.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before dropping off your child at school or childcare. Refer to the language or picture cues in the story to teach the routine for the drop off routine.
- ▶ Review the school or childcare drop-off routine using a visual schedule or visual cue cards. Use photographs of each step of the routine. If the pictures are laminated and Velcroed, your child can remove the picture, or turn the picture over to indicate completion.
- ▶ Talk frequently about the school routine. Keep the routine at home consistent prior to school or childcare.
- ▶ Ask your child's teacher if your child can bring a comfort item from home and access it during day.
- ▶ Collaborate with the teacher or school to drop child at the door or designated drop off area and say a quick "good-bye" and "see you after school."
- ▶ Comment on the fun or interesting activities their friends are doing when you arrive.
- ▶ Comfort and reassure child that someone, mommy, daddy, or caregiver, will pick them up after school.
- ▶ Discuss, label, and show feeling words your child might experience about going to school (e.g., happy, sad, scared, excited). Model the emotion with your facial expression, use pictures, point out pictures in books or stories to discuss the feelings. Model for your child how they can express their feelings when they go to school (e.g., say them, point to a picture, use a sign).
- ▶ Help them understand you know how they feel – Validate your child's feelings and then point out fun things about school (e.g., "I know you might be feeling scared about going to school but remember your friends and your teacher are waiting to play with you!").
- ▶ Collaborate with your child's caregiver to create a consistent drop off routine. The routines might include: providing a fun job for your child to do after entering the classroom, having a friend from the class greet your child each day, or allowing your child keep photo of their family in their cubby or pocket.

Respond

- ▶ Tell child to say or gesture good-bye to you while waving and vice versa.
- ▶ Help child inside classroom.
- ▶ Comfort child by saying "You'll see Mommy or Daddy after school."
- ▶ Validate your child's feelings: "I see you might be feeling sad about going to school today. Your teacher and friends are waiting for you. Let's go say hello."
- ▶ Redirect your child with a comfort item and allow your child to take the item to the next activity.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to ask or gesture for a hug or to sit on caregiver's lap.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow visual schedule and predict when parental figure will pick up.
- ▶ Teach your child to say or gesture good-bye. Use hand-over-hand prompting if necessary, so that you can then praise your child for saying good-bye.
- ▶ Teach your child to label their feelings.

Your child doesn't want you to leave when there is a new caregiver.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before having a sitter or caregiver in the home. Refer to the language or picture cues in the story to teach the routine for having a sitter.
- ▶ If possible, arrange a time for a meet-and-greet with the new sitter ahead of time, or have the sitter arrive early so your children can get acquainted with them when you are there.
- ▶ If possible, provide your child with advance notice that they are having a sitter or another caregiver. For example, at breakfast you might say, "Remember that tonight the sitter is coming over while Mommy has to work. They are very excited to get to come and play with you!"
- ▶ Prior to leaving, create a visual schedule with a predictable routine of what will happen when the babysitter is there and include when you will be home (e.g., play toys, eat dinner, watch a TV show, eat a snack, brush teeth, bed, I come home).
- ▶ Involve your children. Allow them to show the babysitter or caregiver around the house or let older siblings know they can be special helpers and show the sitter how to care for younger siblings.
- ▶ Pre-arrange fun activities your child might do with the sitter. For example, set out a preferred game, activity, or snack for them to do together when you are gone.
- ▶ Discuss, label, and show feeling words your child might experience about you leaving them with another caregiver (e.g., happy, sad, scared, excited). Model the emotion with your facial expression, use pictures, point out pictures in books or stories to discuss the feelings. Model for your child how they can express their feelings when they have a sitter (e.g., say them, point to a picture, use a sign).
- ▶ Provide reassurance to your child. Your child might feel more secure if they know you are a phone call or a text message away. Let them know the caregiver can call you and offer to check in with them as well.
- ▶ Comfort and reassure your child that you will be back later.

Respond

- ▶ Tell your child to say or gesture good-bye to parent while waving and vice versa.
- ▶ Comfort child by saying "You'll see Mommy or Daddy very soon!"
- ▶ Validate your child's feelings: "I see you might be feeling sad about Mommy leaving. I will be back soon."
- ▶ Redirect child with comfort item.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow visual schedule and predict when you will be back.
- ▶ Teach your child to say or gesture good-bye. Use hand-over-hand prompting if necessary, so that you can then praise your child for saying good-bye.





Transitions: Going from One Place or Activity to Another

Your child doesn't want to leave an activity they enjoy (like time playing with technology).

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Start the transition about 5 minutes before end of activity and then provide a count-down each minute (e.g., tell your child “5 more minutes”, wait, and then count down).
- ▶ If needed pair a visual with the transition warning to show your child what is next.
- ▶ Tell your child when they will do the activity again. Say, “We’ll do that tomorrow” or “after snack you can play (activity) again”
- ▶ Use a timer, set it for 5 minutes, and let your child know when the bell rings the activity is finished or all done; give your child a warning before the timer sounds. Say, “One more minute, then bell and all done.” (Try downloading a free visual timer on your phone like “Visual Countdown”)
- ▶ Have your child transition with a friend, sibling, or yourself. Use affirming statements like “we can go to (next activity) together.”
- ▶ Give choices of what they can do in the next activity (e.g., person to play with, materials to use).
- ▶ Use a calendar to show child when upcoming fun activities with a friend or sibling will occur. Allow child to count the days by crossing through days on the calendar.
- ▶ Have or help your child put materials away for closure. Play a clean-up turn-taking game.
- ▶ Praise child for putting away materials regardless of any other behaviors that occur and move to the next activity.
- ▶ Praise child for going to next activity regardless of any other behaviors that occur.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings, “I know you like ___; we’ll do that tomorrow.”
- ▶ Let your child know when they can do the activity again by putting a picture or allowing your child to put up the picture of activity on a schedule for the next day or on a calendar.
- ▶ Tell your child, “I know you really like ___, but you will have fun at _____. I can help you go to the ___, or you can go on your own.” Pause, then assist if needed and immediately praise.
- ▶ Redirect, and focus child on the visual schedule and upcoming fun activity.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to gesture or ask for one more minute or one more turn and then transition.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow the visual schedule and predict when the activity will happen again.
- ▶ Teach your child to choose a preferred activity or person for the next activity.
- ▶ Teach your child to use or ask to use a timer to help them know how much time is left.
- ▶ Help your child learn to control anger – Use the “Turtle Technique” with visuals and puppet to discuss and model anger control. Assist your child with understanding what is not available and how to think of a solution. Read *Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think at Home* available to download here https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/TuckerTurtle_Story_Home.pdf
- ▶ Teach your child feeling words (e.g., angry, mad, sad, frustrated, nervous) to communicate how they are feeling.

Your child doesn't like or want to go to or do next activity.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Start the transition about 5 minutes before end of activity and then provide a count-down each minute (e.g., tell your child “5 more minutes”, wait, and then count down).
- ▶ Use a timer, set it for 5 minutes, and let your child know when the bell rings the activity is finished or all done; give your child a warning before the timer goes off.
- ▶ Stay close or physically help your child move from the current activity to the next activity.
- ▶ Give your child a special job that they can do in the next activity. If necessary, cue with a picture or object.
- ▶ Have child transition with a photograph or an object that represents the area or activity that is next.
- ▶ Have your child walk with a sibling or parent while holding hands or one finger.
- ▶ Make sure there is something fun for your child in the next activity, such as a special job or something of interest for your child. Let them know what's in the next activity. (e.g., “I know you are excited to play with your new toy. We can go play with it once you take your coat off.”)
- ▶ Help your child find something fun about the next activity.
- ▶ Give choices of where to sit, what to play with, or who to play within the next activity.
- ▶ Use a fun “transition activity” such as “move like a frog to ___”, “hop on one foot to ___”, “choo-choo like a train to ___,” or sing a song about the next activity.
- ▶ Use a photograph visual schedule– take photographs of your daily routine, post it in an easy to reach location, and review the schedule with your child each day so that they can predict upcoming events throughout the day.
- ▶ Praise child for going to next activity (e.g., “Great job cleaning up your toys and going to the bathtub.”).

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of a special job that they can do in the next activity. If necessary, cue with a picture or object.
- ▶ Use photograph of something fun in the following activity and say, “First ___; then ___.”
- ▶ Redirect child by stating exactly what you want your child to do and ignore the challenging behavior when possible.
- ▶ Cue sibling or friend to show them where to go or to take their hand to help.
- ▶ Re-cue your child to follow the expectation by pointing to photograph, showing an object used in the next activity, or gesturing where you want them to go.
- ▶ Re-cue child to make a choice.
- ▶ Use a timer to show the child how long they have left in the activity they do not like. If needed start small with 5 minutes and expand the length of time as they gain success.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of what and whom to play with in upcoming activity.
- ▶ Teach your child to transition through the use of prevention strategies listed.

Your child doesn't understand where to go or what to do.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Have next activity totally set-up so that when your child transitions it is ready, and the activity can begin immediately.
- ▶ If you need to wait to start the next activity, give your child a “transition activity” to reduce wait time (e.g., look at book while waiting, sing a song, coloring activity, puppet play at seat, photo albums, a favorite toy).
- ▶ Sing a transition song that lets the child know what to do (e.g. clean-up song, washing hands song, or make up your own song).
- ▶ Give your child a visual, picture, photograph, or real object to walk with to the next activity to cue them where to go and what to do.
- ▶ Use a photograph visual schedule – Take photographs of your daily routine and post it in an easy to reach location. Review the schedule with your child each day so that they can predict upcoming events throughout the day.
- ▶ Give one step at a time – When giving your child directions, state steps one at a time. For example, if you want your child to get his backpack and put his lunch box inside the backpack, first say “Get your backpack,” and wait for them to come back with the backpack. Then say, “Put your lunchbox inside your backpack” while handing them the lunchbox and pointing to the backpack.
- ▶ Praise your child as they complete transition steps
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children’s book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before activities that involve transitions. Refer to the language or picture cues in the story to teach the steps in the transition.

Respond

- ▶ Redirect child verbally and with a visual photograph or object as to what to do or of next activity; help your child succeed if needed and then immediately praise.
- ▶ Model expected behavior.
- ▶ If possible, point out sibling or friend who is transitioning appropriately.
- ▶ Let your child know you can help (e.g., “I know it can be frustrating to zip your jacket. I can start it and you can pull it up the rest of the way.”) Use verbal prompts, gestures or hand over hand support to help your child complete the transition (e.g., point where to go, have your child hold their backpack as you help them to hang it). Fade your support as your child learns to do the steps themselves.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow visual photograph schedule.
- ▶ Teach your child to transition with a photograph or object representing the next activity.
- ▶ Teach your child to imitate sibling or parent.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of a “transition activity” while waiting for next activity.
- ▶ Teach your child to ask for help when they don't know what to do.



Your child is silly or resistive to get attention from friends or adults.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Have your child carry something to next activity.
- ▶ Let your child choose a sibling or parent to walk with to the next activity.
- ▶ Have child transition while moving like an animal (e.g., hop like a frog, crawl like a turtle).
- ▶ Stay close to your child during the transition so that you can prompt and praise.
- ▶ Allow your child to do something special in the next activity (e.g., sit next to a friend or parent, help with a favorite activity).
- ▶ Sing a transition song that lets the child know what to do: (e.g., Cleanup song, washing hands song, or make up your own song).
- ▶ Praise your child for their participation in the transition (e.g., "I like how you put your coat on all by yourself!").

Respond

- ▶ Help or remind them how to move to the next area or activity.
- ▶ Give them something to carry (e.g., picture of where to go, item to use in next activity).
- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior and praise siblings or adult that transition appropriately.
- ▶ Remind them to walk correctly and model, then remind that they can sit next to a friend or parent in next activity.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to choose a preferred activity or person for the next activity.
- ▶ Teach your child to pick someone to walk with to the next activity.
- ▶ Teach your child to request your help or to hold your hand as you move to the next activity.





When Parents Can't Play

(Chores, working from home, on phone)

Your child wants your attention.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Prepare a small box of fun toys and activities and keep it in an easily accessible location. If you need to make a phone call, work from home, or do a chore without interruptions; then your child can have the small box of toys and activities to play with.
- ▶ As you work or are on the phone, pause and praise your child for waiting and playing appropriately, and remind them that you will play with them when you are done.
- ▶ Let your child know that you need to work or talk alone for a bit and if possible, set a timer. When the timer goes off, stop and play with your child, and praise them for playing by themselves.
- ▶ Say to your child, “First I need to ____; then we can play ____.”
- ▶ If completing a household chore, like laundry, cooking, or cleaning, provide small tasks your child can do with you. Can your child match the socks while folding laundry? Can your child help wash the vegetables before you chop them? Can your child dry off the surfaces after you have wiped them?
- ▶ Use a visual cue to help develop work-at-home boundaries. Let your child help you make “stop” and “go” signs you can hang in your work area.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore inappropriate behavior.
- ▶ Remind your child to play quietly with small box of fun toys or activities.
- ▶ Show your child the timer and let them know how long before you can play.
- ▶ Validate feelings. For example, say, “I know it might make you feel sad when I am busy. First you play by yourself, then we can play together.”
- ▶ Ask your child if they would like to help you while you are completing household chores.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to say, gesture, or use a visual for “Play with me.” And then play with them for a bit and set the timer.
- ▶ Teach the child to wait for the timer to go off before you can play with them again.
- ▶ Teach your child to play nearby with small box of toys.
- ▶ Teach your child the steps or routine of helping in household chores.
- ▶ Teach your child that a “stop” sign means that you are working and that a “go” sign means that they can talk or interact with you.

Your child wants to talk or video chat on the phone.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know that sometimes devices (e.g., phone, tablet, computer) are for parents only. But that when grandma, another relative, or special friend calls, then they can talk.
- ▶ If needed, plan times when they can talk to a grandparent, relative, or special friend.
- ▶ Use a visual cue to help develop work-at-home boundaries. Let your child help you make “stop” and “go” signs you can hang on or near your computer or device.
- ▶ Prepare a small box of fun toys and activities and keep it in an easily accessible location. If you need to have a conversation without interruptions, then your child can have the small box of toys to play with or you can take your conversation in a location where you can still monitor your child for safety.
- ▶ Have a play phone available that your child can talk on while you are also talking on the phone.
- ▶ Remind your child that first you talk, and then if they can talk to the individual, your child can talk or video chat on the device.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings: “I see you want to talk.” If it’s someone they can talk to then say, “First I talk; then you can talk.” If it’s someone they can’t talk to then say, “First I talk; then we can call ____.”
- ▶ Remind them to gesture or say, “Talk please.”
- ▶ Hand them their play phone to talk on.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to appropriately gesture or say or use a visual for, “Talk on phone please.” Slowly increase your expectations as they learn how to use this skill of asking to talk and say something like, “In ___ minutes I will let you have a turn on the phone.”
- ▶ Teach your child that a “stop” sign means that you are working and that a “go” sign means that they can talk or interact with you.

Your child doesn’t like waiting for item or activity until you are done.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Prepare a small box of fun toys or activities and keep it in an easily accessible location. If you need to make a phone call, complete work from home, or do a chore without interruptions, then your child can have the toys and activities to play with.
- ▶ Use first-then verbal or visual cue – “First I have to do work and you can play by yourself; then we can play together.”
- ▶ As you work or are on the phone, pause and praise your child for waiting and playing appropriately, and remind them that you will play with them when you are done.
- ▶ Let your child know that you need to work or talk alone for a bit and if possible, set a timer. When the timer goes off, stop and play with your child, and praise them for playing by themselves.
- ▶ Prior to beginning your work or phone call, ask your child if they need or want anything, and let them know that you need to work or talk on the phone, and then you can help them again after.
- ▶ Set out a bin of healthy snacks and a water bottle your child can access when you are working and cannot provide help.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child’s feelings: “I know it’s hard to wait; I will be done in ___ minutes,” and set the timer.
- ▶ Cue your child to look at the timer and remind them how much time is remaining.
- ▶ Remind your child of the choices of what to play with while you are busy.
- ▶ Remind your child to gesture or say, “Play with me.” Then play with them for a bit if they say it and reset timer.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to wait by using a timer.
- ▶ Teach your child to appropriately gesture or say or use a visual for, “Play with me.” Slowly increase your expectations as they learn how to use this skill of asking to play and say something like, “In ___ minutes I will play with you.”
- ▶ Teach your child to follow first-then verbal or visual cue (e.g., “First I have to do work and you can play by yourself; then we can play together.”).

Your child needs your help.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ If your child needs help with something that cannot wait; stop and help. Let your child know that you need to work or talk on the phone, and then you can help them again after.
- ▶ Prepare a small box of fun toys or activities and keep it in an easily accessible location. If you need to make a phone call, complete work from home, or do a chore without interruptions, then your child can have the toys and activities to play with.
- ▶ As you work or are on the phone, pause and praise your child for waiting and playing appropriately, and remind them that you will play with them when you are done.

Respond

- ▶ Cue your child to gesture or say or use visual for “help me,” and then help.
- ▶ Remind your child to play and offer box of toys and activities.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to say, gesture, or use a visual for “Help me.”

Your child does not know what do.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Give clear expectations using a verbal or visual first-then cue (e.g., “First I have to do work and you can play by yourself; then we can play together.”).
- ▶ Give your child a few choices of independent activities prior to beginning work, chores, or phone call, such as coloring, computer play, favorite toys, or dry erase board.
- ▶ Take out 3 sets of bins with toys or activities in it and have your child play on the floor near you. You can also set a timer to have your child rotate through activities or toys.
- ▶ Use a visual choice board – Take photographs of your child preferred toys and activities. Then display the photographs and allow your child to select the toys they want to play with.
- ▶ For longer periods, consider use of a visual schedule. Clearly indicate the time of day you will be working (not available) and time of day you will be available (for play, help, answering questions).
- ▶ As you work or are on the phone, pause and praise your child for waiting and playing appropriately, and remind them that you will play with them when you are done.

Respond

- ▶ Restate choices or allow child to select new toy choices from the choice board.
- ▶ Gesture to your child to play with one of the 3 bins of toys you have set out.
- ▶ Remind your child of the visual schedule and show them the next time you are available.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice of what to play with while you are busy. Before starting your work or phone call, make sure they have made a choice and have begun to play.
- ▶ Teach your child to follow first-then verbal or visual cue (e.g., “First I have to do work and you can play by yourself; then we can play together.”).



Medicine or Treatments

Your child doesn't understand why they have to take medicine.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know what the medicine is for. You could say something like, “This medicine helps you feel good. When you don't take this medicine, you might ____.”
- ▶ Let your child know that first they take medicine, then they can ____ do fun activity.
- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before taking medicine or treatment. Use the book while giving your child medicine by pointing out the steps of the book that are happening while you do them.
- ▶ Let your child know that sometimes you have to take medicine, and then give them an example of when you had to take medicine and why.
- ▶ If possible, give your child choices around taking medicine (e.g., flavor of medicine, when they take medicine, what they take medicine with, what they drink after they have medicine, where they take their medicine, how they take their medicine [e.g., a syringe, a small cup, out of a spoon]).

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child why they have to take the medicine. “This medicine helps you feel good. When you don't take this medicine, you might ____ (e.g., have a hard time breathing, get a sick tummy).”
- ▶ Remind your child to first take medicine, then they can ____ (e.g., do fun activity).

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to first take medicine; then they can do something fun.
- ▶ Teach your child that the medicine will help your child feel better.

Your child wants your attention (playing chase, acting silly, etc.)

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know that first they take medicine; then you both can ____ (e.g., do fun activity, together). Say, “First I will watch you take your medicine and then we can ____.” (You can remind them with this phrase until they take their medicine).
- ▶ Point out what your child is doing correctly and provide praise.
- ▶ Provide a lot of praise and attention around your child's taking their medicine.
- ▶ Make a “medicine chart” – Use a chart and list the medications. Every time your child takes a medicine your child puts (or you put) a sticker on the medicine chart.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore the challenging behavior and to wait to respond and pay attention to your child when they are using a more desirable behavior.
- ▶ Remind your child that first you will watch them take medicine; then you can ____.
- ▶ Point to the “medicine chart,” and remind them to take medicine, and check off or put a sticker on the chart.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to first take medicine; then they can ____.
- ▶ Teach your child to use the “medicine chart”, and you or your child check off or put a sticker on the chart when finished taking medicine.
- ▶ Provide a lot of attention for your child when they take the medicine and when they use the chart to mark off that they have taken their medicine.

Your child doesn't like the taste of their medicine.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before taking medicine or treatment. Use the book while giving your child medicine by pointing out the steps of the book that are happening while you do them.
- ▶ If possible, give your child choices around taking medicine (e.g., flavor of medicine, when they take medicine, what they take medicine with, what they drink after they have medicine, where they take their medicine, how they take their medicine [e.g., a syringe, a small cup, out of a spoon]).
- ▶ Give your child medicine in combination with something that tastes good, like a sweet juice or a yummy snack.
- ▶ Remind your child that they can check off on the chart when they are done.
- ▶ Tell your child that first they need to take medicine, and then they can ____ (something fun).
- ▶ Make taking medicine fun – If your child takes more than one medication, tell your child to think of what medicine they want to take first, and then you will try to guess what medicine it is that they are going to take.
- ▶ Make it a race – Play a game with your child and have them try to take medicine before you finish 30 jumping jacks, push-ups, or putting all the dishes in the dishwasher (make it even more fun by letting them choose what you're going to do!).
- ▶ If you, as the adult, also take medicine, take your medicine at the same time as your child, and see who can take all their medicine first.
- ▶ Make a "medicine or treatment chart" – Make a chart that lists the medications and every time your child takes a medicine or uses an inhaler. For each day or time your child takes medicine give your child a sticker to put on the medicine chart. Consider allowing your child to do something special when they get a certain number of stickers.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child's feelings. "I know you don't like taking medicine. But you have to take it (e.g., to feel better, to breathe easy, so your tummy doesn't get sick)."
- ▶ Remind your child that first they need to take medicine, then they can ____ (something fun).
- ▶ Remind your child that they put a sticker on the chart when done and that they only need X more stickers until ____.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to use a sticker chart for taking medicines. Celebrate when your child takes the medicine by putting a sticker on the chart (some children respond well to stickers alone and other children might need to be motivated by earning a reward after a certain number of stickers).
- ▶ Teach your child to first take medicine and then do something fun.
- ▶ Teach your child how to quickly and easily take medicine.

Your child wants to do something different than taking medicine (e.g., play, run, chase).

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know that first they take medicine; then they can ____ (e.g., do fun activity).
- ▶ Schedule taking medicine at a time of the day to allow for something fun to occur after medicine time.
- ▶ Give your child a choice of something fun to do after medicine is taken (e.g., "First medicine and then you can ____ or ____.").

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child to first take medication; then they can ____ (e.g., do fun activity).

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to first take medicine; then they can do something fun.



Going to the Doctor

Your child is fearful and wants to leave.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before going to the doctor. Bring the book with you and point out the steps of the book that are happening during your child's doctor's visit.
- ▶ Pretend that you're going to the doctor while playing (before you go)! Pretend to be a doctor and a patient. Practice with each other, or use a baby doll, stuffed animal, or anything your child loves as the patient!
- ▶ Discuss, label, and show feeling words your child might experience at the doctor (e.g., happy, sad, scared, excited). Model the emotion with your facial expression, use pictures, point out pictures in books or stories to discuss the feelings. Model for your child how they can express their feelings at the doctor (e.g., say them, point to a picture, use a sign).
- ▶ Talk with your child about what scares you and let them know that you take deep breaths to do the scary thing.
- ▶ Allow your child to choose and bring a comfort item to the doctor's visit, such as a soft stuffed animal, favorite small toy, a sippy cup, or a blanket.

Respond

- ▶ Validate your child's feelings by saying, "I see you are scared. I will stay with you the whole time."
- ▶ Re-read the story about going to the doctor.
- ▶ Say to your child, "How do you feel?" You may have to ask, "Are you scared? Say, sign, or point to (if you have pictures available) scared."
- ▶ Remind your child to take slow deep breaths. Model how to take deep breaths.
- ▶ Ask your child if they want a stuffed animal to hold or a small toy, sippy cup, or blanket.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to communicate (in whatever means works best for them) what they are feeling.
- ▶ Teach your child to take slow deep breaths.
- ▶ Bring the book to the doctor and use it as a teaching tool. Teach your child to go through the steps in their "Going to the Doctor" book and to use it as a support to understand what is happening, what is next, and when the visit will be over while you are at the doctor's office.
- ▶ Point to what is currently happening, when that step of the visit is over, comment on how it is all done and remind your child what is next.

Your child is seeking comfort and wants to be held or carried.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Have your child request (in whatever way works best for them) for you to hold or carry them.
- ▶ If holding or carrying is not an option, or you are trying to work on walking consistently across most situations, give your child a choice of holding your finger, hand, purse strap, or belt loop.
- ▶ Let your child know that first they have to be like a big kid and walk into the doctor's office; then they can sit on your lap.

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child to ask (by saying, using a picture, using a sign) first and then you will carry them.
- ▶ Give your child a choice of holding a hand, finger, purse strap, or belt loop.
- ▶ Remind your child to first walk; then they can sit on your lap.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to ask to be held, if possible, in whatever form of communication they use.
- ▶ Teach your child to make a choice to hold your hand, finger, purse strap, or belt loop.
- ▶ Teach your child to first walk, then they can sit on your lap. Using a first-then visual might be helpful to teach this concept.

Your child wants you or another adult to pay attention to them.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Let your child know ahead of time that when the doctor comes into the room that first you will talk to the doctor, and then you can play and talk to them.
- ▶ Praise your child frequently for doing what the doctor asked or for waiting quietly.
- ▶ Take toys or books that you can use to play with your child while waiting (toys they really like or that are not as familiar and, therefore, may be more exciting). Encourage your child to play or look at the book while you talk to the doctor.

Respond

- ▶ Ignore the challenging behavior and to wait to respond and pay attention to your child when they are using a more desirable behavior.
- ▶ Remind your child that first, you talk to the doctor and then you'll play with them.
- ▶ Redirect your child (with minimum attention) to play with a toy or to read a book.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child what to expect by bringing a first-then visual that shows first, you talk to the doctors and then you'll play with them.
- ▶ Teach your child how to look at books or to play with the toys you bring to ensure that they're engaged while you're talking to the doctor.
- ▶ Teach your child to communicate, "Play with me" by asking, signing, showing you a picture, or by doing something else that they do to communicate.

Your child wants to leave or go home.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Use a book! Find a children's book on this topic or make your own using photos. Read the book with your child often and before going to the doctor. Bring the book with you and point out the steps of the book that are happening during your child's doctor's visit.
- ▶ Let your child know the steps you need to go through during the doctor's visit (e.g., sign-in, sit and wait or play, go step on scale, go into doctor's room, get blood pressure, give gentle arm hug, wait for doctor, doctor checks you, go pay, get in car).
- ▶ Let your child know about how much time there is before they get to leave (e.g., "After the doctor checks you, then we pay, and then we can go.").
- ▶ Encourage your child and praise all their appropriate responses during the visit to the doctor.
- ▶ Bring several small, highly preferred items that your child loves to play with and give them choices of items to encourage them to stay.
- ▶ Point out that first you are going to the doctor, and then you are going to ___ (something fun).

Respond

- ▶ Remind your child of the steps you will go through at the doctor's office.
- ▶ Remind your child about how long it will be before you can leave.
- ▶ Give your child a choice of items to play with.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child to follow the steps of what to do at the doctor's office. The book you create might be helpful or you might bring a visual schedule that your child can use to put pictures into an "all done" spot as you move through the doctor's visit.
- ▶ Teach your child to choose (by saying, sighing, pointing, touching) what to play with while waiting.



Your child may be seen regularly by a doctor or by doctors (for example, they might frequently go to the Children’s Hospital) or related provider (e.g., therapy) and they may want to leave or go home.

Note: These recommendations are specific to regularly occurring visits, and can be used with the “They may want to leave or go home” recommendations listed earlier.

Prevent the Behavior

- ▶ Create an individualized visual schedule for your child that outlines the steps you follow when visiting the doctor or provider. You might include real pictures of the doctor or provider, of the doctor or provider’s office, and of toys or activities your child likes to do while in the office. Try to follow the same routine each time you go so that your child becomes familiar with what to expect and so the steps are as routine as possible.
- ▶ If possible, try to make it a routine to do something fun or special after each visit (e.g., go to the cafeteria and let your child pick out a particular food item, your child gets to pick the songs on the radio on the way home after the visit, you always watch a particular show when you get home after the visit, you spend special play time with your child when you get home doing what they choose).
- ▶ Provide your child with as many choices as possible during the appointment and following the regular routine.
- ▶ Create and follow simple rituals that you always do to make the appointments as fun as possible. For example:
 - Let your child press the elevator button.
 - Give the person at the front desk a high five when the visit is over.
 - Lots of tickles after blood pressure is taken.
 - Therapy always ends with everyone singing your child’s favorite song.
 - Blow up a medical glove in the office and pretend it’s a balloon.
 - If possible, bring some form of timer that counts down to the end of the visit or session that your child can see and watch to know when their visit is over.

Respond

- ▶ Redirect your child’s attention to the visual schedule and remind them that you have X more things before you can go.
- ▶ Remind your child that first you see the doctor or therapist, and then you ____.
- ▶ Remind your child how much time is left (use the visual timer if possible) before you leave and go home or do something fun.

Teach New Skills

- ▶ Teach your child how to use the visual schedule by putting the “done” steps in a “done” pocket or place.
- ▶ Teach your child to know what they do during each step of the routine, how they know a new step is coming, what comes next, and when the routine is over.
- ▶ Teach your child that you provide more attention and support when they are engaging in desirable behavior instead of challenging behavior by paying more attention to the desirable behavior than the challenging behavior.
- ▶ Teach your child how to tolerate changes in the routine or schedule (because things don’t always work out as planned) by taking deep breaths, using a problem-solving skill, or by following the steps of Tucker the Turtle.

Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions

Introduction

Visual supports can help children learn new skills and prevent challenging behavior. Visuals help young children learn and follow routines by helping them understand what is happening “now” and what is going to happen “next.” Visuals serve as reminders for verbal directions and help children know exactly what is expected of them.

Use the following visual cue cards and templates to develop visual supports that work for your child and family!



Visual Schedule



Visual Schedules

Using a visual schedule at home provides young children with predictability (i.e., they know what activity or routine is coming and when) and consistency (i.e., the schedule of activities or routines is the same). Visual schedules help children know what their day will look like by letting them know when activities or routines will happen. These visual cards will make this process easy!

Making a Visual Schedule

1. **Identify when you need a visual schedule.** A visual schedule might outline parts of a day, half-day, or an entire day. Pick the times of your day when your child might need extra support to engage in activities or cope with transitions.
2. **List the steps** you want your child to follow. For example, for a bedtime routine, you might list:

- go to the bathroom
- wash
- put on pajamas
- brush teeth
- read a book
- bed time

TIP! Structure the day so that fun activities follow ones that are challenging. You might put cleaning up right before going outside or brushing teeth right before reading books.

3. **Cut out the cards.** Optional: Print cards on cardstock, attach to thicker paper, laminate, or make cards sturdy by covering with clear tape or clear contact paper.
4. **Select the visual cards** for the schedule you want to create. *Don't see a visual you need? It's easy to make your own! See the page 4 for directions.*
5. **Get creative!** Use tape, Velcro, or magnets to post the visual cards in the order your child will do them. Families find that posters, file folders, or hanging pocket charts work great for visual schedules.

TIP! Schedules work best when children can see when they are done with an activity. Here are some ideas:

- Create a pocket at the bottom or end of the display that represents “finished” or “all done.” Place visuals in envelope or pocket when finished.
- Make a schedule with visuals that can be removed.
- If your schedule is a book format, turn the page.
- Use a placeholder (like a clothespin or paper clip) that can move from visual to visual.

6. **Post the schedule.** Place the schedule at the child's eye level in a place where you go often (e.g., kitchen) to promote consistent use. Use the schedule as part of your daily routine!



How to Use

- ▶ **Teach your child how to use the schedule** by explaining and demonstrating how to use the pictures.
- ▶ **Refer to the visual schedule** throughout the day (e.g., “We just got home, let’s go check your schedule to see what is next.”).
- ▶ **Talk about the schedule** (e.g., “Look, you just got dressed. Now it is time for breakfast!”).
- ▶ **Make it active!** Teach the child to indicate what is complete. You can have your child flip the card over or remove it from the schedule and put in the “finished” pocket depending on how your schedule is set up.
- ▶ **Celebrate!** Be sure to celebrate your success and the child’s success. Acknowledge and provide positive feedback to your child after activities or routines, especially ones that are not as fun (e.g., “You cleaned up! You must be feeling so proud!” or “Your teeth are so clean now. You are so healthy!”).

First/Then Boards

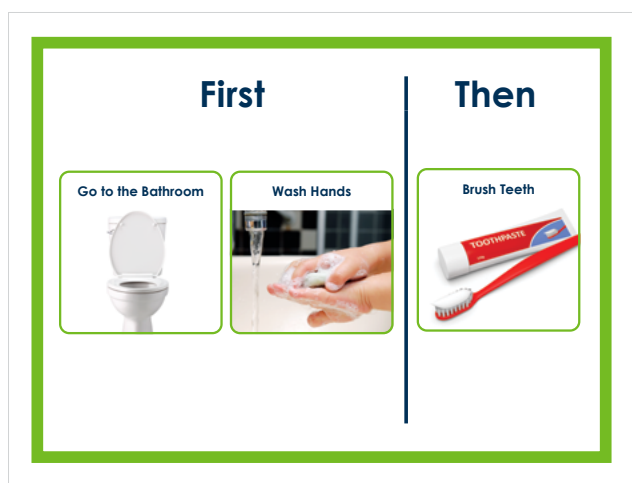
First/Then boards can be used for a variety of reasons. They can be used to:

- ▶ Assist with transition from one activity to another. For example, “First clean up, then play outside.”
- ▶ Break routines into smaller steps. For example, “Go to the bathroom and wash hands, then brush your teeth.”
- ▶ Encourage children to complete tasks they might not enjoy in order to do a more enjoyable task. For example, “First brush your teeth, then you can have your tablet.”

Making a First/Then Board

1. **Cut out the cards.** Optional: Print cards on cardstock, attach to thicker paper, laminate, or make cards sturdy by covering with clear tape or clear contact paper.
2. **Select the visual cards** that represent the activities you need. *Don’t see a visual you need? It’s easy to make your own! See page 4 for directions.*
3. **Make the boards.** Print the board templates provided on pages 5 and 6, or get creative and make your own!
 - Use a file folder, large (4x6) index card, or a piece of cardboard. You want it large enough to hold several of the visuals.
 - Divide board into two sections by making a vertical line to make a FIRST section and a THEN section. Label one section “First” and the other section “Then.”
4. **Attach cards.** If you are able, use small pieces of Velcro on the back of the pictures.

TIP! Velcro has a rough side and a soft side. Be sure you use the same side on all the pictures. Next, place a strip of opposite Velcro on both sides of the First/Then board.



How to Use

- ▶ **Try it out!** As you use the First/Then board with your child, place a preferred activity or item on the “then” side of the board. This will increase the likelihood that the child will complete the activities on the “first” side of the board. See the examples below:



- ▶ **Flip the picture over**, as each activity is completed, to indicate that the activity is “finished.” If you place a strip of Velcro on the front of the picture card, you can flip it over and stick it to the board.
- ▶ **Celebrate!** Acknowledge and provide feedback to your child after they complete the “first” activity and are moving to what is coming next (e.g., “You washed your hands and now we get to eat our yummy snack! What a big kid!” Or “You put on your pajamas and now we get to read a book together. Thanks for being such a great bedtime helper!”).

Making Your Own Visual Cards

*Don't see a visual you want
or a visual that matches your activity?
It's easy to make your own!*

1. **Identify the steps** in your routine that are missing visual cards.
2. **Using the blank cards** provided on page 9, you can:
 - draw a picture
 - attach a photo
 - cut out and attach a picture from a magazine

TIP! In addition to the visuals that we have provided, you might want to add more specific visuals that can help your child. For example, if your child receives speech therapy, take a picture of your child’s speech therapist and use it instead of the visual we have provided. If your child rides a bus to school, take a picture of a bus that you can use with the visual for going to school.

3. **Label the visual.** Write on the template or if using the electronic template, type in the name of the routine. For example, if you drew a picture of going for a walk, then label the picture, “go for a walk.”
4. **Cut out** the new visual and it add to your visual schedule or first-then board.

TIP! Remember, the more specific the visual is to your child and your daily routines, the more likely you will be able to teach the steps and your child will follow the routine.



First

Then

First

Then

Then

First

Wash



Go to the Bathroom



Brush Teeth



Wash Hands



Get Dressed



Put on Pajamas



Outdoor Play



Indoor Play



Learning



Read a Book



Screen Time/TV



School/Childcare



Stop



All Done



5 More Minutes



Wait



Medicine/Treatment



Therapy



Meal



Snack



Sit at Table



Lie Down



Rest



Bed Time



Clean Up



How to Create Rules:

- ▶ **Identify 3-5 rules** that are important for your family.
- ▶ **Write down the rules** as “do’s” (instead of “don’ts”).
- ▶ **Pick rules that apply to situations** where your child needs reminders.
- ▶ **Pick rules that your child can learn to do** (e.g., appropriate for your child’s age and abilities).
- ▶ **Make a rules chart.** Add a picture that shows your child following the rule. Have your child help or watch you make the chart.

How to Teach Rules:

- ▶ **Show and tell** – focus on teaching your child the rules.
 - Find a time when your child is not distracted to show your child the rules and talk about using them.
 - Your introduction to the rules should be for teaching your child in an interesting and fun way, not scolding your child for the times they have violated the rules.
 - Show your child what it looks like to follow the rule. You might need to break it down into smaller steps.
 - Discuss the rule and demonstrate. Take turns with your child showing what it looks like to follow the rule and not follow the rule. Do this to teach the rule and have fun with the demonstrations.
 - Make a scripted story about the rules and use it to review the rules.
 - After learning the rules, play a game to see if your child can remember the rules. Give a big hug or high five after they recite the rules to you.
 - Remember that your child is learning the rules. It will take time and practice before they can follow them.



- ▶ **Practice makes perfect** – review and practice the new rules many times.
 - Review the rule chart before the activity where the rule is needed and several other times a day.
 - If you are feeling creative, you can use a puppet, stuffed animals, a song, or movements to review the rules with your child.
 - Create scenarios for your child to practice or problem-solve and understand the importance of the rule.
- ▶ **You got it!** – celebrate your child’s effort and success.
 - Praise and encourage your child for learning and following the rules.

Our Rules

Put a picture here

1. _____

Put a picture here

2. _____

Put a picture here

3. _____

Put a picture here

4. _____

Put a picture here

5. _____

I Brush My Teeth *Example*

I Brush My Teeth



A photo of your child brushing teeth would be placed here.

Photos help your child become interested in reading the story with you.

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The story is written as if your child is talking.



When it is time to go to school and go to bed, I brush my teeth. It keeps me healthy and strong.



Sometimes I might not like the way it feels, but I have to do it every day to keep my body strong.

When I brush my teeth, I know what to do!



I turn on the water



I get my toothbrush



I put my toothbrush under the water



I put toothpaste on my toothbrush



I put my toothbrush on my teeth and brush



I spit out toothpaste in the sink

When I brush my teeth, I know what to do!



I rinse and spit in the sink



I rinse off my toothbrush



I put my toothbrush away



When I brush my teeth, I am healthy and strong. My family feels proud of me when I brush my teeth. I feel proud too!

Change the wording to make it specific to your child.

Example:
My Mom sets a timer for 2 minutes.

A photo of the child's smile, with clean teeth after brushing, will help your child understand the goal.

Clean up Story *Example*

Cleaning Up My Toys



A photo of your child playing would be placed here.

Photos help your child become interested in reading the story with you.

The story describes the steps.

The story contains details that are specific to your child.

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The story is written as if your child is talking.

Add photos that are specific to each step of a routine, such as a photo of a timer and your child cleaning up.



I like to play.



Sometimes I play by myself. Sometimes I play with my brother, Devonte.



I play with lots of different toys. Things like blocks, puzzles, and dolls.



I can use the toys when I am playing. But when I am done playing, I need to clean up my toys. This keeps everyone safe. Leaving the toys on the floor is not safe. Someone could get hurt. It could break my toys.



When it is time to clean up, my Mom or Dad sets a timer for me and tells me, "Five more minutes of play."



When the timer goes off and my Mom or Dad says, "It's time to clean up," I start to put away my toys. My toys go on the shelf and in bins.

A photo of your child cleaning up will help your child understand the goal.



Cleaning up my toys is a big job. I am a big helper when I clean up my toys. My Mom and Dad are proud of me when I am a big helper and I clean up.