

# Reinforcement, Bribery, or Negotiation

tools that can **make** or  
**break** your behavior plans

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I am going to show you how utilizing reinforcement correctly and making simple changes to the way you are approaching challenging behaviors can make a huge impact in teaching positive, prosocial, communicative behaviors.



**ALL Behavior is Learned**

• But what does that really mean?

## All Behavior is Learned

• What happens around our behavior determines if we want to do that behavior more often.



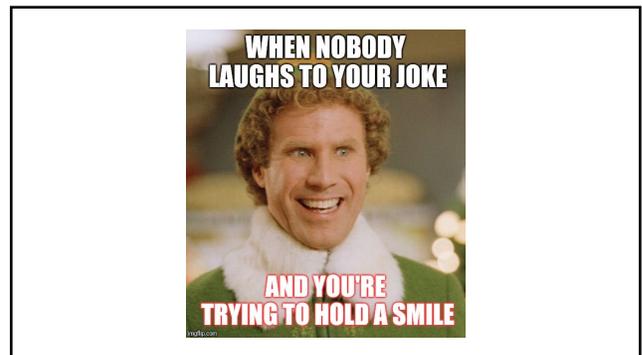


**Behaviors that Result in Something Awesome...**

- are done again and again
- we **learn** what things result in something awesome and what things don't

**The Reverse**

- We also learn what behaviors do not result in something awesome.
- We avoid or stopping doing those things.



## Reinforcement Plays an Important Role

- reinforcement is the "something awesome" that shapes which behaviors we continue to do
- reinforcement may seem easy and straightforward but it can get complicated quickly

In today's webinar, we will explore what can go wrong and how to use reinforcement correctly!

But Sasha... I'm more worried about how to get rid of or decrease the negative behaviors!

Don't worry - you are in the right place!

BAD  
STUFF

GOOD  
STUFF

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Can you imagine what it would feel like if your student or child had more opportunities for learning and inclusion?



## Reinforcement is the Key

- to positive behavior change
- to decrease negative behaviors
- to increased inclusion opportunities
- to learning new academic, social, and functional skills

## Reinforcement SEEMS simple...

*add something awesome to all positive behaviors and move on*

## Reinforcement SEEMS simple...

- What is "something awesome"?
- When do we give the "something awesome"?
- How often do we give the "something awesome"?
- What if they are engaging in a negative behavior?
- What if we don't see very many positive behaviors?

story telling time...

**I don't negotiate...**

**...except that I do.**

## Following Advice



as a teacher, clinician, or therapist it is a LOT easier to give advice than it is to follow advice



sometimes from the other side of the fence, we don't see everything that is going on and how hard implementing strategies can be



two very different thing: knowing what to do and actually doing it

## Back in the day...

I DON'T  
NEGOTIATE  
WITH TERRORISTS OR  
TODDLERS



## Fast forward...



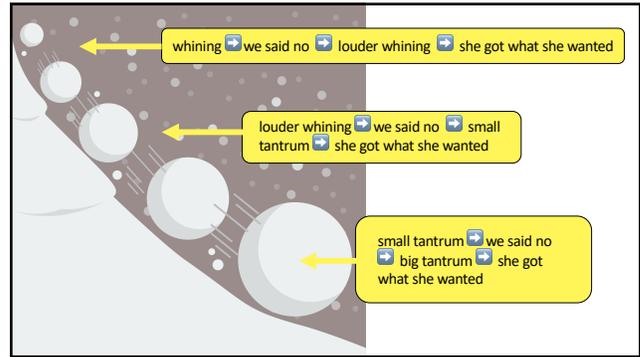
## We negotiated.

- We did what we had to do to get her out the door.
- Tantrums kept occurring and escalated.
- Tried to hold out from what she originally was tantruming for.



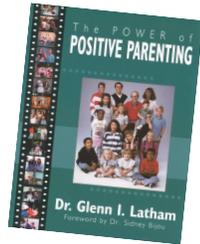
## Bribery Was Winning

- We were using bribery to get the negative behavior to stop and positive to start.
- Her behavior had snowballed from a small problem to a big problem because of bribery.



## New Plan

- Proactive strategies:
  - ✓ routine & structure
  - ✓ lots of reinforcement for all the little positive behaviors
  - ✓ consistent approach when negative behaviors happened



I am here to help you whenever you are ready to do \_\_\_\_\_.

But when you act that way, you don't get to be around me.

## Quick Example -

## Change Bribery to Reinforcement

- change the contingency so awesome things (toys, mom and dad's attention, break, etc.) came after positive behaviors

## 5 Components of Reinforcement

1. How to pair and convey belief in your student.
2. How to identify reinforcers.
3. When to give reinforcement.
4. Differentiate between bribery and reinforcement.
5. How to make delayed reinforcement work



## Difference between Bribery and Reinforcement

## What is reinforcement?

- reinforcement is something that comes **after** a behavior that increases the chance of that behavior happening again in the future

## Some Examples



She gets a good grade and praise from her teacher.



His mom tells him "good job" and he avoids being scolded for not covering his mouth

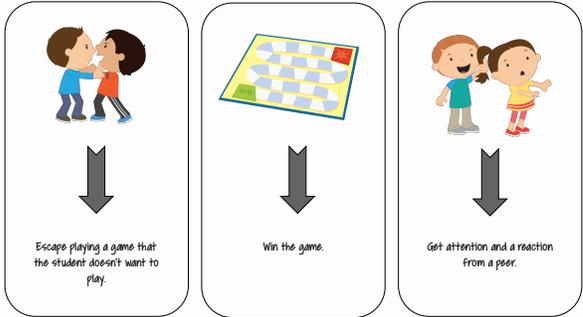


People listen and stop. Other workers can do their job. His coworkers are happy.



remember

both positive and negative behaviors can be reinforced



Escape playing a game that the student doesn't want to play.

Win the game.

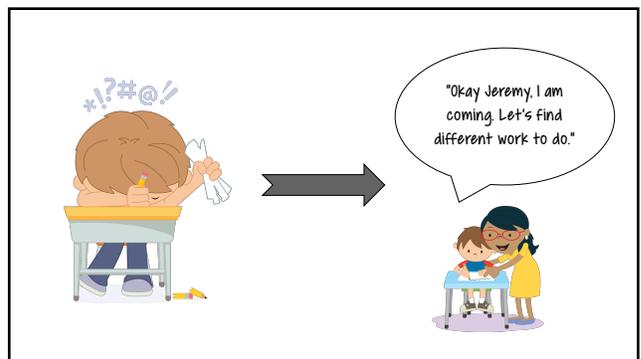
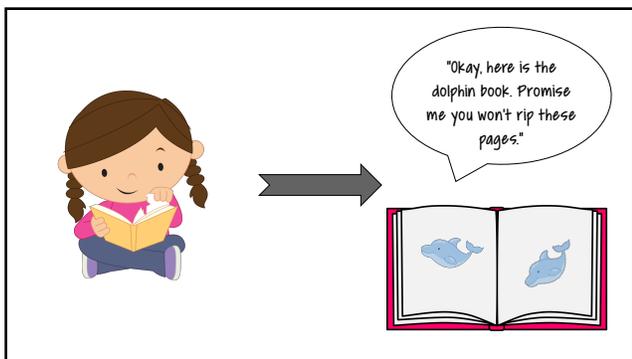
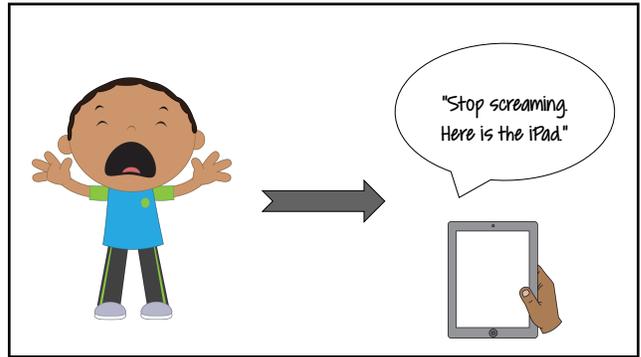
Get attention and a reaction from a peer.

**Both positive and negative behaviors are learned and reinforced.**

**What is bribery?**

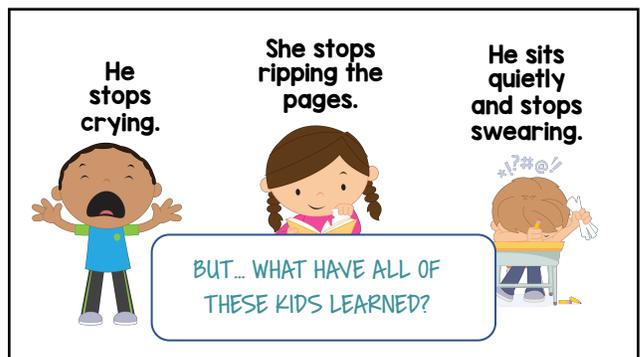
- bribery is something that comes **before** a behavior in hopes that a desired behavior will come and/or in hopes of stopping a negative behavior

# Some Examples



# Why Bribery Works and Then Doesn't

In the moment bribery may work...



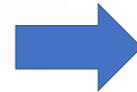
**Negative behaviors result in something awesome.**

**What are they likely to do in the future to get what they want?** | negative behaviors



**Who else's behavior is reinforced in the bribery scenarios?**

- the teacher or parent
- the negative behavior stops as a result of the bribe
- so – the teacher or parent is more likely to use a bribe in the future.



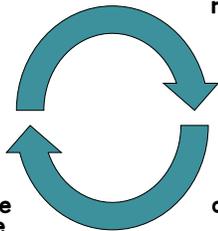
tantrum stopped and we got to leave for day care

negative behavior happens

bribery stops negative behavior in the moment

adult is more likely to use bribes in future

child is more likely to use negative behavior in the future

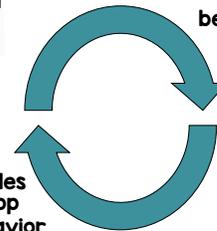


escalated negative behavior happens

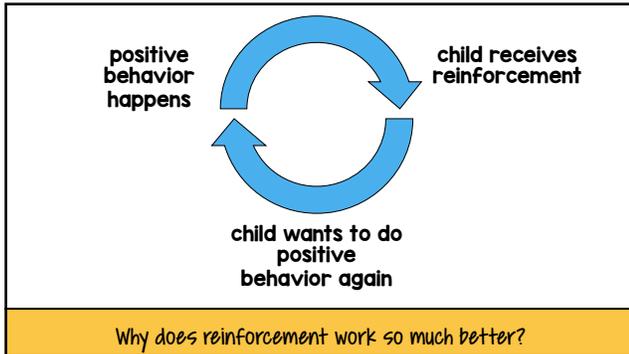
adult does not reinforce the behavior (ie does not provide a bribe)

adult provides bribe to stop negative behavior

child escalates to a worse negative behavior



What happens when we try to stop this?



## Coercion vs. Cooperation

- With bribes, the payoff buys begrudging compliance with the request.
- With reinforcement, the consequence encourages the individual to perform in similar ways in the future.

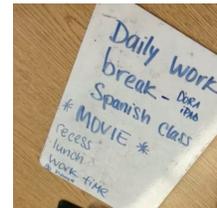
## 5 Ways to Know You are Using Reinforcement

1. The preferred item does not come until **after** you see the positive behavior.
2. You see more positive behaviors in the future.
3. There is not a requirement of stopping a negative behavior.
4. The positive behaviors of the child are the only thing that benefits the adult.
5. There is minimal negotiation happening.

#1

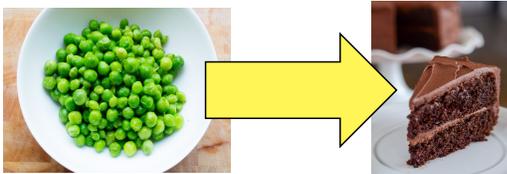
Preferred item does not come until **after** you see the positive behavior.

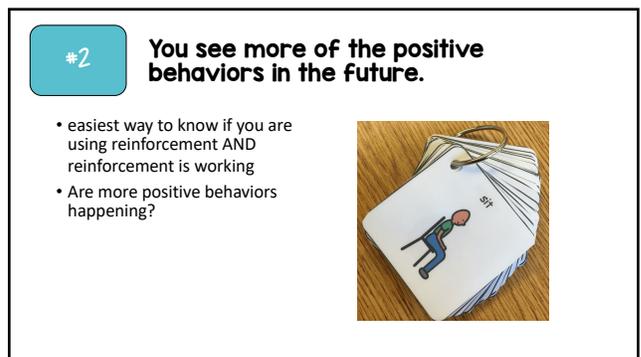
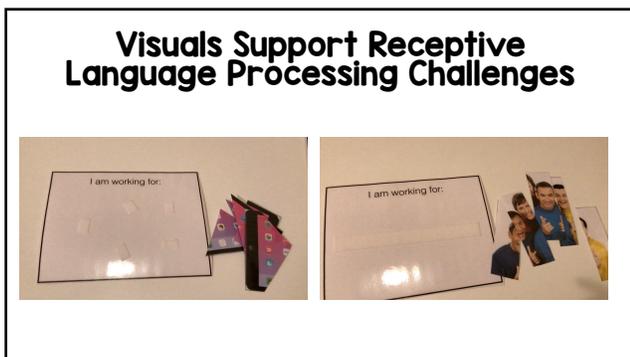
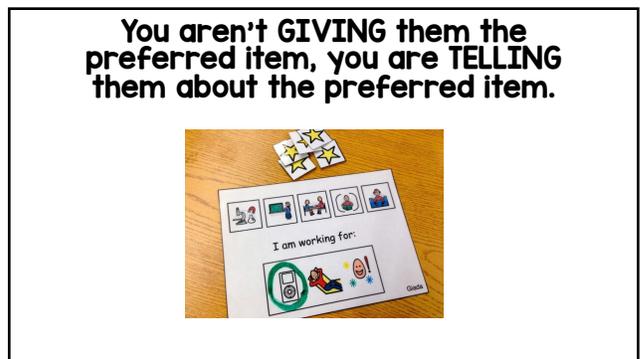
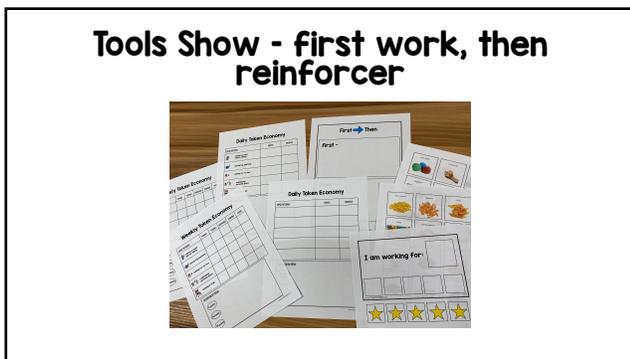
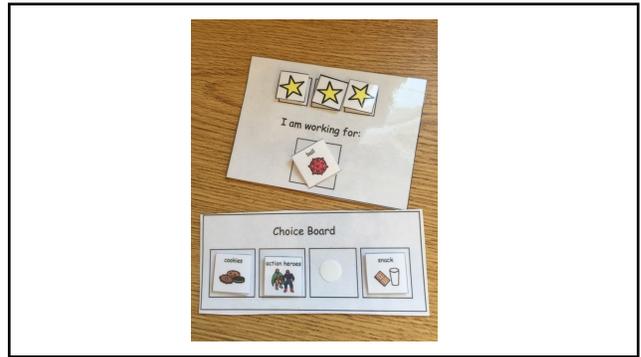
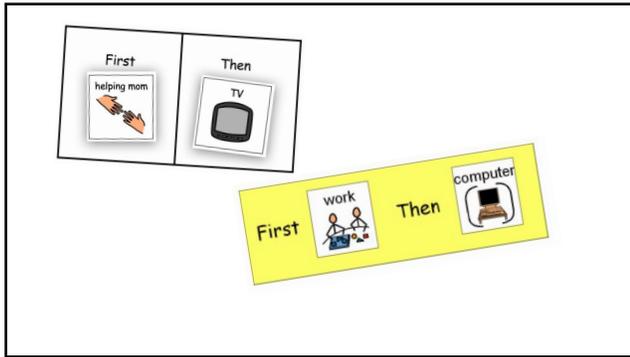
- you need to see the behavior before the preferred item is given
- not a "promise" of the behavior



## Premack Principle

- This rule is called the Premack Principle or Grandma's Rule, "First you finish your dinner, then you get dessert."





**If you are NOT seeing more positive behaviors...**

→

- make sure you are using reinforcement not bribery
- make sure the preferred item/activity is actually a reinforcer
- make sure the positive behavior you are asking them to do is something they know how to do

#3

**There is not often a requirement of stopping a negative behavior.**

- bribery typically circles around stopping a negative behavior and starting a positive behavior
- catch them before the negative behavior starts



**What if they are engaging in the negative behavior already?**

- prompt for positive behavior
- reinforce positive behavior
- for the future: plan antecedent strategies for preventing the problem behavior to use next time



#4

**The positive behaviors of the child are the only thing that benefits the adult.**

- Reinforcement does not need to *directly* benefit the adult.
- With bribery, there is a direct benefit to the adult (i.e. stopping a negative behavior).
- With reinforcement, the positive behaviors of the individual are what benefit the adult.

#5

**There is no negotiation happening.**

- negotiation comes with bribery
- with bribery you are both trying to get the "best deal"



**Negotiation is Reinforced**

- when negotiations happen frequently this behavior is then reinforced.
- when child asks for more and gets more (even if it wasn't the initial ask) he learns to continue to do that



**Negotiating isn't ALWAYS Bad**

-  this isn't necessarily a bad skill
-  but it can escalate
-  we don't want it happening constantly

### Negotiating & Reinforcement

- Negotiating doesn't tend to accompany reinforcement because
  - if it's truly reinforcement you picked a preferred item or activity that is reinforcing
  - the behavior is something the individual CAN do
  - they are more focused on completing the desired behavior than negotiating the terms

### What should you do?

- Make a plan for using reinforcement over bribery.
- Practice identifying when bribery is occurring and when reinforcement is occurring.
- Work with your teams to do the same.

*action steps*

### Download the Handout

- Download the handout to use as a reminder for your action items!



## Thank you!

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