



A HOW-TO GUIDE

Positive Reinforcement: Encouraging Good Behavior in Your Child



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ABOUT EMILY

Hello, I'm your coach, Emily Groben.

As a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and former special education teacher, I have had the privilege of working closely with children who have diverse learning needs and their caregivers for 13 years. Through my experiences, I have recognized the immense value and crucial role that parent coaching has on a child's development, growth, and overall wellbeing.

Parent coaching equips parents with the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to support their child's development and navigate behavioral challenges effectively. By investing in parent coaching, you are not only investing in the long-term success of the child but also bridging a stronger bond between parents and their children through improved communication and understanding.



As a passionate advocate for parents, my mission is to empower both parents and children, enabling them to thrive together and make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the families I serve

- *Emily Groben*

INTRODUCTION

Positive Reinforcement

As a parent, one of the best tools in your parenting toolbox is positive reinforcement. It's a simple, powerful strategy that can encourage your child to repeat desirable behaviors, making family life smoother and less stressful for everyone. In this guide, I'll give you an overview of how positive reinforcement works and why it's so effective. You'll also learn a few easy tips to get started. But remember—this is just the beginning!



Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool, and if you want more personalized guidance and a plan tailored to your child's unique needs, I'm here to help you every step of the way.



Your Questions, Answered

What is Positive Reinforcement?

Positive reinforcement is a technique in which you reward a behavior you want to see more of. When your child receives something they value after completing a desired behavior, they are more likely to repeat that behavior in the future. This could be verbal praise, a sticker, extra playtime, or anything your child finds motivating.

In short: What gets rewarded, gets repeated.

Why Does Positive Reinforcement Work?

Children love attention and rewards, and positive reinforcement taps into this. By providing a clear, consistent reward for good behavior, you can teach your child what is expected of them and reinforce their efforts. This is especially useful for encouraging things like following instructions, using kind words, or cleaning up after playtime.



How to Use Positive Reinforcement Effectively



1. Be Specific with Praise

Instead of just saying “Good job!” try to be specific about what exactly your child did well. This helps them understand what behavior is being reinforced. For example:

- Instead of “Good job!” say, “Great job putting your toys away!”
- Instead of “I like that!” say, “You did so well sharing your toys with your sister.”

The more specific you are, the better your child will understand which behaviors you’re reinforcing.



2. Choose Meaningful Rewards

It’s important that the reward you offer is something your child values. If the reward isn’t motivating, the positive reinforcement won’t be effective. Some rewards may be tangible (a small toy, a treat), while others may be intangible (praise, a favorite activity).



Try experimenting with different rewards to see what works best for your child. If you’re not sure what they enjoy, ask them directly—sometimes the smallest thing (like extra time on a favorite video game) can make a big difference!

3. Be Consistent

Consistency is key when using positive reinforcement. If your child earns a reward for a specific behavior one time but not the next, they may become confused and unsure of what is expected. Set clear guidelines for when and how your child can earn rewards, and stick to them.

For example, if you reward your child with extra play time for doing homework without being asked, make sure to consistently offer that reward each time they follow through.



4. Reinforce the Behavior Immediately

The sooner you provide reinforcement after the desired behavior, the more effective it will be. Timing is crucial! Reinforcing your child's behavior immediately helps them connect the reward with the specific action they just completed.



Common Mistakes to Avoid

To ensure that positive reinforcement works as intended, be aware of these common pitfalls:

- **Over-rewarding:** If you give too many rewards, your child might start to expect something for every small action. Keep rewards meaningful and not overly frequent by reducing the reward over time.
- **Reinforcing undesirable behavior:** Make sure that you are reinforcing the right behavior. Avoid unintentionally rewarding behaviors you don't want to see more of (e.g., giving attention to an attention-seeking tantrum or disruptive behavior).
- **Being inconsistent:** If you only occasionally give rewards for good behavior, your child may not understand the connection between their actions and the rewards. Consistency is key!



TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

This is the beginning of something good.

While this guide gives you a solid foundation for using positive reinforcement, every child is different. If you're finding that positive reinforcement isn't working as well as you'd hoped, or if your child has more complex needs, a more personalized approach might be needed.

I can develop a custom behavior plan that fits your child's unique needs.

Together, we can make positive reinforcement a powerful tool that brings about lasting, meaningful change in your child's behavior.

Next Steps:

If you're ready to dive deeper into positive reinforcement or if you need support with any other challenging behavior your child might be facing, I'm here to help!

Get in touch with me to schedule a free consultation and take the first step toward a calmer, more positive home environment.

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