Webinar 4

Rewards

<u>BRIBE or Reward?</u>

A **BRIBE** is a reward given <u>**before**</u> a child has displayed the appropriate behaviour.

- Once the child has received the reward, there is no longer an incentive to behave appropriately. They are therefore much less likely to do so.
- A bribe may reinforce inappropriate behaviour, as the child makes a connection between ignoring adult commands and receiving a reward.

A **REWARD** is given <u>**after**</u> a child has displayed the appropriate behaviour.

- ✓ A reward is an incentive for the child to behave appropriately. They are therefore more motivated to do so.
- ✓ A reward reinforces appropriate behaviour, as the child makes the connection between following adult commands and receiving a reward.
- ✓ They are therefore more likely to repeat this positive behaviour in the future.

Rewards

In Webinar 3 we talked about the importance of giving praise as a verbal reward for a child's appropriate behaviour. However, praise alone does not always work for some of the more challenging behaviours that young children can often present us with. Other types of reward that may be used to encourage a child to change more challenging behaviours include …

✓ **Physical Rewards**, such as a 'High 5'
✓ **Treats to Keep**, such as a funky sticker
✓ **Child's Choice**, such as which story you will read later

Try using 'When-Then' commands to tell the child what their reward will be and what they need to do to get it: *When you put your coat on, then I will give you a sticker.* When challenging behaviours become particularly problematic, you may wish to try using …

✓ **Reward Charts**, giving children an incentive to repeat an appropriate behaviour to earn a more substantial prize, such as a new colouring book

Be Consistent

In our busy daily lives, being consistent when using reward charts can be difficult. However, if a child displays the appropriate behaviour but does not receive the agreed incentive, such as a new sticker for their chart, this may feel unfair, reducing their self-esteem and trust that they will eventually achieve their reward. The child is therefore less motivated to repeat this appropriate behaviour again in the future. Remember that using a reward chart is like setting up a contract with the child. It is the adult's responsibility to ensure that the child clearly understands how the reward chart will work and that all incentives are remembered and awarded as soon as the appropriate behaviour is carried out. It is the child's responsibility to try their best to comply!

You can also ensure consistency by picking or giving the child a choice of rewards that are realistic. If the reward is going to a swimming lesson that you have already paid for, you are likely to take your child along anyway, even if they have not achieved what was agreed on their Reward Chart!

Using Reward Charts

For many adults, it can be easy to use reward charts *too often* with children, or for behaviour that they already do reasonably well. Over-use may result in the child expecting regular rewards, or rewards for behaviours that they do not find particularly challenging to change. Instead, reward charts should be saved and used only to encourage the child to change more problematic behaviours.

When selecting a behaviour to focus on, it is important to remember that young children do not yet have the same attention span as we do. Ensuring that a reward is achievable over a few days will help to maintain the child's motivation.

When using a chart, also try to remember to give the child instant and specific praise alongside their reward. This will help to reinforce the appropriate behaviour that they have shown, making them much more likely to do so again in the future.

Over time, the appropriate behaviour that you are focussing on with the child should become normal. It will then be important try to reduce rewards and replace them with other types of praise, such as physical rewards, treats to keep or 'Children's Choice.' Eventually, verbal praise, or only occasional praise, should be enough to reinforce the appropriate behaviour with the child.

To Do

Identify a behaviour you would like to see the child do more often and record this on their Reward Chart.

Try to use the chart to encourage this appropriate behaviour with the child. Don't worry if experiences are not positive to begin with. This is perfectly normal if you and the child are not used to using this sort of reward system. You will soon notice how your experiences change as you start to use the chart more consistently and your child begins to see the benefits of repeatedly carrying out the appropriate behaviour.

Top Tips

for Choosing and Using REWARD CHARTS

POSITIVE

Ensure that the reward chart is designed only to reward appropriate behaviour.

This keeps an element of fun and helps the child to stay motivated by the chart.

TIME

Ensure that the reward chart is not time-bound.

This helps the child to stay motivated, even if it takes a little longer to achieve their reward.

BEHAVIOUR

Ensure that you can write on or draw a picture of the appropriate behaviour.

This helps the child to understand exactly what you want them to do.

REWARD

Ensure that you can write on, draw a picture of or display the reward nearby.

This helps the child to stay motivated by the chart.

CHOICE

Give your child a choice from suitable reward charts that you have already picked out.

This gives them involvement in the process and helps the child to stay motivated.

TALK

Regularly talk to the child about how the reward chart works.

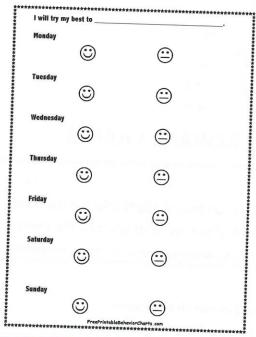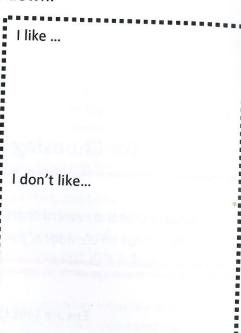*This helps them to understand exactly what you want them to do.*

DISPLAY

Display the chart at a level and in a place where it can be easily seen by the child.

This helps to remind them of the appropriate behaviour that you want to see.

Activities

Look at the three Reward Charts below. Think about what you like or dislike about each. Write these down.

I will try my best to _____.

Monday	☺	😐
Tuesday	☺	😐
Wednesday	☺	😐
Thursday	☺	😐
Friday	☺	😐
Saturday	☺	😐
Sunday	☺	😐

FreePrintableBehaviorCharts.com

www.RewardCharts4Kids.com

Fivel's Special Behaviour
Treat Sheet

_____'s special behaviour is _____.

I like …

I don't like…

I like …

I don't like…

I like …

I don't like…