

Praise/Recognition

What: Caregiver noticing and commenting on positive/wanted behavior by children and adolescents. Naming and praising/acknowledging positive behavior (versus only focusing on problematic/unwanted behavior).

Why? Praising positive behavior can increase its occurrence in the future. When there are behavior problems, there is normally more focus on the negatives.

Tell about praise; Use an **adult example to explain WHY praise is helpful.** Best boss/worst boss; receiving a compliment for something that is “your job” (e.g., making dinner)

Pick ONE child behavior: Opposite of a behavioral problem (e.g., listening the first time) AND/OR a positive behavior that already occurs... (put school things away) but caregiver wants to happen MORE. Behavior has to **HAPPEN already** to praise it...

Model It (Therapist as caregiver; parent as child); Have caregiver actually DO the positive behavior (up out of your chair!). **Discuss it:** *What did caregiver think? How would child respond? Any expected problems?*

CAREGIVER PRACTICES IT! (Therapist as child) Now YOU actually DO the behavior/realistically play the child. **Discuss it.**

PRAISE EFFORT. GIVE FEEDBACK/COACH RE: DOING IT EFFECTIVELY. PROBLEM SOLVE ANY DIFFICULTIES THAT COME UP.

Discuss and Assign First Weekly Practice. *When is this behavior most likely to occur? How will you make sure you praise/acknowledge it? What will you say?*

Weekly Practice Questions: *What will help you to remember to praise this behavior each time it happens? What might get in the way of using praise? (problem solve!). Remember, notice if it worked and report back. Note that the child might not respond right away.*

Points to Remember:

- Adult examples are critical for getting caregivers to buy in to this idea (so caregiver can see that praise/recognition feels good/is motivating for adult behavior too).
- Individualize praise/recognition—how does THIS child know the caregiver likes the behavior?
- Explain praise as a tool (that may be temporary) for changing behavior to get adult buy in.
- Best to start by focusing on ONE behavior—that is recognized EACH time, so the caregiver has a focus.