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PARENT CLASSES:
9/30 Are You Concerned About Autism?
9/30 Using Visual Supports to Prevent Problem Behaviors and Teach New Skills

*See last page for details regarding registration and logging in.

CREATING PREDICTABILITY AT HOME

The start of a new school year often means that our routines change. If you have kids in school, you have to get everyone ready and out the door by a certain time. If you don’t have kids in school yet, maybe your work schedule changed or maybe you want to have a better structure and flow to your days now that summer is over.

Building structure and rules into your day is important for all of us, but it's especially important for toddlers, two year olds, and preschoolers. When our routines and expectations are predictable and consistent it makes it easier for our kids to learn new skills. Learning how to talk, walk, eat new foods, play with toys, potty train, etc. are all easier for our kids to do when the things that happen around them in the home are predictable. They don’t have to worry about or think about what happens when they wake up or where they’re supposed to eat or play. It’s the same as yesterday. It will be the same tomorrow.

Routines, rules, and predictability are also very important in preventing and decreasing challenging behaviors. Tantrums, aggression, and other behaviors are much more common when rules and expectations change a lot. By setting predictable routines and rules, our kids know what to expect and what is expected of them. Yes -- even our toddlers can learn this!!!
Home Routines

Every day will not be exactly the same! However, having a fairly similar schedule will teach your child there is an order to their day and help them learn how to follow rules, learn new skills, and decrease problem behaviors.

1. **Identify Your Routines**
   -- What are your big activities for the day? What order do you want them to happen?
   -- What will your child be doing during each part of the day? What will other family members be doing?

2. **Teach / Explain the Routines**
   -- Simply explain what is going to happen right now. For instance, "bath time" or "brush teeth."
   -- Complete the first activity.
   -- Tell and show your child what happens next. Take them to that activity. For instance, "We're all done with teeth, now bath time."
   -- Use pictures of your major activities to help your child understand what is going to happen next.

3. **Follow the Routine**
   -- Everyone in the home should follow the routine.
   -- Depending on who is home, this might look different. For instance, older kids might be playing or watching a show while a parent gets lunch ready and the baby sleeps.
   -- Initially one parent will need to be with kids to teach them what is supposed to happen during each routine. For instance, mom will play with toys in the living room during play time to show what activities are allowed during "play time" and where "play time" occurs.

4. **Start Small and Praise Effort**
   -- Praise your child for staying at the activity and following the routine.
   -- If planning your whole day seems too much, start small. Plan your first hour or the morning. Then, when that feels comfortable, add on.
Family Rules

Creating family rules also helps with predictability and structure. Toddlers, two year olds, and preschoolers learn which behaviors are ok and which ones are not. Consistent rules with follow through will prevent your child getting mixed messages and know that the family rules apply all of the time.

Choose 2-3 specific rules.
Avoid vague rules such as "be nice." Instead, choose rules like "Food stays at the table" or "Use a quiet voice."

Praise effort.
Keep your expectations realistic!! No child follows a rule 100% of the time. Praise effort and help follow through if needed. For instance, if you're cleaning up toys and your child only puts 2 books away, say "Great job getting started. I'll help you finish."

Give frequent reminders.
Sometimes kids just forget the rules or get overly excited! They aren't always testing limits (though this can happen). Remind them of the rule, demonstrate it for them, and practice the rule when they are calm. STAY REALISTIC IN YOUR EXPECTATIONS!! WHAT IS YOUR CHILD ABLE TO DO RIGHT NOW?

Check for understanding.
Does your child understand the words you are using? Demonstrate the rule throughout the day.

Use visual cues.
Post pictures of the rules in your home. For young kids, use specific pictures. You can post a picture of you petting the dog softly or sitting on the couch. You could also post a picture of your child cleaning up toys. Refer back to these pictures a lot when teaching your child the rules and when they need extra help.
Using Visuals to Teach & Learn

Visual supports are a great strategy to use for our young kids that have language delays. Many of our kids respond better when our words are paired with a visual to remind them of routines, rules, and expectations.

*Our class on 9/30 will go over more of these in depth!

**Picture Schedules**

Take a picture of each activity in your day. Put them on a key ring or in a photo album so you can frequently show your child what they are doing now and what is going to happen next.

**First - Then Board**

Use this for rules or directions that your child understands but doesn't like to follow. "First clean up, then ipad."

**Stop Signs**

These are useful for activities that are sometimes available, but not always. You can put the stop sign (or red light) up when it's not available and flip it to green when your child can do that activity (TV, ipad, outside, park, etc).

**Containers**

Great for teaching "clean up" or when you want items to go in a certain place. Provide a basket or bin so your child knows where you want those items to go.

**Pictures of Rules**

Post pictures of your rules in your home. If your child is learning what "have a quiet mouth" means, pairing a picture with it can help them understand the words you are using.
Join Us!
Free Classes for Parents!

Date For All Classes:
- Thursday, September 30, 2021

Location:
- ZOOM
  - Meeting ID: 663 934 6024
  - Password: 589035

Are You Concerned About Autism?
- 9:30 - 10:30 OR 1:00 - 2:00

Using Visual Supports to Prevent Problem Behaviors and Teach New Skills
- 11:00am - 12:00pm

Please RSVP by emailing or calling:
- Lisa Cvetnich at lisa.cvetnich@jordandistrict.org
- 801-567-8510

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