

Choosing rewards/reinforcers for positive behaviour: Checklist of possibilities

Social

- Being smiled at.
- Attention from adult.
- Peer attention (getting other children to notice).
- Being hugged.
- Praise – “Well done”, “Good work”, high five (if the person understands/enjoys it, thumbs up).
- Clapping.
- Pat on head/back/hand.
- Back rub.
- Being tickled.



Food/beverages

(Small items that can be easily and frequently given)

- Raisins.
- Pieces of cereal, cookies or crackers.
- Snacks.
- Chocolate buttons.
- Sips of juice, pop, chocolate milk.
- If the person is able to wait, making something special to eat.



Toys/games

- Stickers and stars.
- Stamper pens.
- Special posting box and favourite items (eg. treasure).
- Slinky toy.
- Cars.
- Dolls.
- Puppets.
- Pictures and books.
- Board games.
- Games on iPad/tablet/Playstation/Wii.



Visual

- Mirrors.
- Shiny or glittery objects.
- Mobiles.
- Watching traffic through the window.
- Looking at a lava lamp, aquarium, overhead fan (real or video)



Physical sensations

- Feeling different textures, ribbed, furry etc.
- Sensory toys to squeeze.
- Applying hand lotion.
- Wrapping up tightly in a blanket.
- Vibration – through a toy/cushion or even a washing machine.
- Swings, trampolines.
- Tunnel or pop-up tent.
- Being “blown” by a hairdryer.



These are very much dependent on the person, but can be useful where the child or adult does not show interest in social reinforcement or charts/stickers etc. They are useful for rewarding alternatives where the unwanted behaviour is serving a sensory need.

Other possible rewards

- Watching TV/DVDs (special/favourite films).
- Outings to parks, shops, cafe.
- Going to watch/play football.
- Having a special/favourite meal.
- “Helping” with jobs in the house/garden.
- Chill out time – bath/aromatherapy/relaxing music.



It is important to identify the positive behaviour that you want/are going to reward and to help the person link it to the reward.

This can be done using visual cues.