

PICKY EATING

- Start Day With Breakfast Of Preferred Foods.
- Conduct Eating Trials At Table At Two Hour Intervals.
 - Try 10 mins. with timer
- Put Plate With Small Amount Of Target Food In Front Of Child
 - Could be food that is 8 or 9 on desirability scale. Safest to use a 10 on first day.
- Put Plate With Reinforcer (A 10) Farther Away From Child

PICKY EATING

- Explain That He Can Have Some Of The Reinforcer Once He Eats Some Of The Target Food
- He Does Not Have To Eat, But He Should Remain At The Table Until The Trial Is Over
- Target Plate Can Have More Than One Food On It And Child Can Choose Which One He Will Eat
- No Snacks Other Than Target Food Until Trial Is Successfully Completed
- If Child Asks For Food Outside Of Eating Trial And Hasn't Yet Consumed Target Food For That Day:
 - Offer opportunity for brief eating trial

PICKY EATING

- Graceful Failure: If No Success After Several Trials And It Is Late In The Day
 - Consider linking all major non-food reinforcers to completion of target.
- Otherwise You Will Have To Provide An Opportunity To Eat Something That The Child Will Agree To Eat.
 - Should be as late in day as possible
 - Should be long delay from last eating trial (1-2 hours)
 - Offer food at moment when child is not asking for food
 - Food offered should not be a 10 and should not be the item that was offered as reinforcer during eating trials



IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING REINFORCERS

- Provide with noncontingent access
- Observe to identify child's preferences
- Analyze for themes and common elements (e.g., sensory properties)
- Compare with other students
- Ask (but don't always believe)
- Test



IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING REINFORCERS

- Sell
- Expose to item/activity
- Teach how to use and enjoy
- Pair neutral items with strong reinforcers
- Force rotation to increase variety



IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING REINFORCERS

- Reinforcement should be reinforcing
- Must be contingent
- Make yourself part of the reinforcer
- Sell, sell, sell!!
- No bribery!!



REINFORCEMENT vs. BRIBERY

BRIBERY

- **Reactive:**
 - Child is disruptive and then is promised reinforcement if behavior stops
- **Heavy-handed**

REINFORCEMENT

- **Proactive:**
 - Child is exhibiting appropriate behavior and then receives reinforcement
- **Natural**



REINFORCEMENT VS. BRIBERY: What's The Problem?

- It usually works immediately! (This is a trap for parents and teachers.)
- It reinforces the disruptive behavior
- It maintains the child's inappropriate expectations
- It does not lead to development of the desired pattern of compliance

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN:

A WORK IN PROGRESS: Behavior Management Strategies and a Curriculum for Intensive Behavioral Treatment of Autism

Ron Leaf & John McEachin, Editors
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