Reinforcement

What is it?

Anything that increases the likelihood that the behavior will increase in the future

- Edibles
- Activities: coloring, jumping on trampoline, going for walk

Examples of reinforcers:

- Social: high fives, tickles, praise
- Toys

"What's in it for me?"

- Make sure your child knows what they are earning.
- Use first/then statements Ex: “First let’s touch the banana. Then, we can play with the ball.”

Be specific!

- Point out exactly what your child is doing correctly. Ex: “Great sitting down at the table!” “You touched the banana!” “Wow! I love how you’re trying the new food!”

Reinforcement is immediate

- Provide reinforcement as soon as the desired behavior occurs. Don’t ask your child to do the behavior again. Reinforce right away!

Reinforcement is contingent

- Your child only gets the reinforcement when they engage in the behavior you are trying to increase. Don’t give in!

Catch the good!

- Don’t wait to have to correct behaviors. Catch your child engaging in desirable behaviors.
## What is it?

Providing opportunities for children to make a choice to increase desirable behaviors such as engagement and compliance.

| Make it simple          | • Use visuals to supplement language (pictures or holding up objects)  
|                        | • Provide 2 or 3 choices                                           |
| Be specific!           | • Instead of asking an open-ended question ("what do you want to try?")
                         | • Provide specific choices ("Do you want to try the turkey or the cheese?") |
| Making a choice is a choice | • What if your child doesn’t choose? "Do you want to make a choice, or should I make it for you?" |
| Give easy choices for difficult tasks |
                         | • For a task that seems difficult to a child, break it down into smaller tasks that are simple. For example, instead of asking your child to take a bite of a new vegetable, ask "do you want to lick the broccoli or touch it?" |

### Examples of Choices for Mealtime:

- Which chair?
- Which utensil?
- How to interact with food?
- What to put on their plate?
- How many scoops?
What is it?
A form of assistance given to a child to help acquire or use a skill.

Types of Prompts to Use at Mealtime:

1. Physical prompt: physical contact to guide the child through the behavior
   Ex: You say “touch the pea” and then guide your child’s hand to touch the pea

2. Visual prompt: photograph, drawing, video to show the child what to do
   Ex: You say “touch the pea” and then show your child a photo of a hand touching food

3. Model: somebody demonstrates the behavior to the child
   Ex: You say “touch the pea” and then you touch the pea
What is it?
Reinforcing small steps towards a desired goal behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present small, achievable steps</th>
<th>• Break down an end goal into many small components (Ex: touching a new food, licking, taking a nibble, etc.)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce the baby steps!</td>
<td>• Don’t forget to reinforce each step towards the end goal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Only reinforce the best response</td>
<td>• Once one behavior is established, stop reinforcing it and move on to only reinforcing the next behavior (ex: stop reinforcing touching and only reinforce food to lips)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take a step back when necessary</td>
<td>• Be careful not to move through steps too fast! Each step needs to become well established before moving on to the next. It’s ok to take a step back!</td>
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Example of a shaping procedure:

End goal behavior: Eating a serving size of peas


**depending on each individual child, there may be more or less necessary steps to achieve the end goal behavior**

Procedure:
1. Start with the first step in the sequence and reinforce all occurrences of that step.
2. Once the first step is successfully achieved over multiple consecutive attempts, move onto the next step.
3. Continue this process, reinforcing each new step and discontinuing reinforcement for previous steps, until the end behavior is reached.