

Using Rewards Effectively

Be creative when choosing rewards



If your child doesn't seem motivated to earn new rewards, turn something they already get "for free" into something they have to earn. Make what they already get a bit better when it becomes something they have to earn (e.g., instead of getting 10 minutes of screen time, they can earn 15).

Keep it positive, even when they don't earn their reward



Remind them that they have another chance to try again tomorrow and point out the goals they were able to achieve. You can also remind them to practice using accepting when they don't earn their reward. Avoid lecturing.

Give rewards right away



If you're using a point system, research shows it is most beneficial when points are given consistently and right after the behavior occurs. Rewards should be given as soon as your child earns enough points.

Only give rewards that have been earned



If your child gets a reward they haven't earned, the reward will no longer motivate them to learn new behaviors and skills.

Pair rewards with praise



Be enthusiastic! For example, "Great job getting ready for school on time this morning!" You will eventually be able to stop giving the tangible reward because praise will be motivating enough.

Post up the rewards menu and change rewards as needed



Increase motivation by visually reminding your child what they're earning. Maintain their interest by including a menu of reward options and update it frequently.