



SLEEP

Getting a child to sleep is a process, it is not a single event. Think of it as preparing a family meal (and we don't mean delivered pizza!). In preparing a family meal, you have to select ingredients, prepare them in advance, mix them together, set the table and serve. Getting a young child to bed is in a sense, not too different from this.

Here is one recipe that you can use to serve up a quiet good-night:

Step 1: Determine what time your child should be ASLEEP (not put to bed)!

Step 2: Start the sleep process at least 30-45 minutes prior to Asleep time.@

Step 3: Establish a routine that you will follow every night.

Step 4: Stack the deck in your favor. No chocolate or any caffeinated drinks or food. Drastically reduce liquids at least an hour before starting the going to bed routine.

Step 5: Calm your child down a least a half-hour before sleep. No Pillow fights!!!

Step 6: Routinize the bathing, teeth and toileting.

Step 6: Have some private nurturant time with your child.

Step 7: Tuck your child in, read her a story, sit with her briefly, kiss her goodnight and then leave BEFORE she falls asleep. Do NOT sit or lie with her until she falls asleep. This way you are teaching her that she needs YOU to fall asleep. We need to teach her that she needs herself to fall asleep.

Step 8: Leave a night-light or very weak light in her room that does not compete with sleep. The eyes are very sensitive to light even when they are closed. There are studies that show that even the glow from clock radios disrupts the onset of sleep.

Step 9: Tell her that you will keep the door to her room slightly ajar SO LONG AS SHE STAYS IN HER BED. If she comes out of her room, you will escort her back to bed and then CLOSE THE DOOR. Repeat this process all night long until she is quiet for at least a minute, then open the door slightly (like when you started). If that sets her off again, immediately close the door again and repeat. You may have to get a small lock (hook and eye) or door knob sleeve.

Step 10: Go on with your own life.

EATING

Step 1: Start with ONE new food.

Step 2: Choose it carefully. Try to find a food that is ONLY novel. Ex: child likes pudding, child likes

chocolate, but not Chocolate Pudding.

Step 3: Use Judo when possible (key word Apossible@). Have child help. Create game. Start Friday dinner.

Step 4: Set a limit of 3-5 bites of the new food.

Step 5: Offer THE DEAL: 1 bite of novel for 1 bite of preferred.

Step 6: If, refusal: Go to ACTIVE MODE: Refusal now equals non-compliance remove child from table, time out, etc.

Step 7: Continue 10 times.

Step 8: If still no success, go to PASSIVE MODE: Child is offered the same deal (AND NOTHING ELSE) but refusal is not punished. Eat it or not, but nothing else is offered

Step 9: After dinner, no other opportunity to eat except the target food which is kept available.

Step 10: YES, SHE WILL GO TO BED HUNGRY. NO BEDTIME SNACKS!!

Step 11: Next morning, give a MINIMAL, VAPID, and uninspiring breakfast. One serving only.

Step 12: LUNCH: Restart program. Active to Passive mode.

Step 13: Maintain availability of target food throughout the day. NO OTHER SNACKS/FOOD.

Step 14: DINNER: repeat program

Step 15: At bedtime of the second night (after 24 hours) give minimal, uninteresting snack.

Step 16: Next morning, same drill.

Step 17: Lunch, same as before.

Step 18: Dinner, same drill

Step 19: Bedtime of 3rd day, give more substantial (but neutral) snack.

Step 20: Next morning, normal breakfast. Go into pause mode and restart next weekend.

PERSEVERATIONS

Violation of routines is a stressor, produces anxiety, perseveration reduces anxiety, & therefore is a negative reinforcer

TYOLOGY OF PERSEVERATIVE BEHAVIORS: Objects vs. Activities

The general rule of intervention is to reduce in TIME & SPACE.

Step 1: Identify perseverative behavior carefully. Avoid neurologically maintained stereotypies, extremely frequent behaviors (e.g., flapping, rocking, jumping, mouthing, etc.)

Step 2: Good examples: Verbal perseverations (Are we going to dinner at McDonald's?, 50 times a minute); special blanket carried everywhere; door has to be closed, driving route restrictions, etc, etc.

Step 3: Set up opportunities for perseverative behaviors to occur.

Step 4: Warn BEFORE perseveration occurs NEVER after.

Step 5: Establish a criterion interval in which you will reinforce the NON-OCCURRENCE of the perseverative behavior (e.g., 5 minutes).

Step 6: At first perseverative event, consequent immediately by interrupting behavior and removing something desirable from child (e.g., a Pokemon card, etc.). KEEP THE CONSEQUENCE SMALL (because you are going to use it a lot!)

Step 7: DRO: for every criterion interval (e.g., 5 min), deliver a reinforcer (e.g., A part of a POKEMON card, verbal praise, an extra minute of computer time, etc.)

Step 8: If, after 5 punishments, the perseverative behavior does not decrease, introduce a cool-down time-off (not A Time-Out). Separate yourself from your child. Change the psychological landscape for a few minutes and then repeat process.

Step 9: Maintain a Ateaching attitude toward the perseverative behavior for the whole day while taking periodic breaks for your sanity.

Step 10: Keep in mind, perseverative behaviors usually have long histories (A reinforcement inertia). They will not go away willingly because you are competing against something that is reinforcing.

NON-COMPLIANCE

The A Ur-Problem of Behavior Management

NC is the ultimate A rubber clause in parenting. When in doubt turn any inappropriate behavior that you observe, into a case of non-compliance.

For many ASD kids, one of the first interventions along with imitation drills is A compliance training - so that they are available to learn. A non-compliant child is paying attention to himself and not the teaching environment.

ROAD RULES:

1. Turn the continuous into the discrete.

Instead of one long enduring act of non-compliance, turn it into dozens of individual acts.

2. Clean up your language. Use the Imperative (ADo X=@ or ADon=t do Y;@ not AI wish you would for once just do what I ask you the first time @).

3. Don=t center on the ultimate compliance, center on the resistance.

4. Do not confuse information with punishment.

EXAMPLE INTERVENTION:

Step 1: Establish PROXIMITY

Step 2: Issue clear directive: Do X or Don=t do Y. Wait 3 seconds.

Step 3: Escort to restrictive time-out (e.g., bathroom)

Step 4: Wait for a pause in the protest (30 seconds to a min.)

Step 5: Release. Ask (if verbal child): AWhy are you here?@

Step 6: Answer:Abecause you did x or didn=t do y.@ Now go do it. Adjust language accordingly

Step 7. Repeat demand

Step 8: Repeat process 10 times.

Step 9: If after 10 times, no compliance, compel compliance and verbally reinforce compliance and change situation (redirect).

Step 10: Repeat program several times during the day

LANGUAGE:

ROAD RULES:

1. Make language (or communication) instrumental.

2. Whatever language level your child is at, require his current BEST performance to be the LEAST you will accept.

AGood, better, best; never let it rest

Till the good is better and the better=s best.@

3. Stop paying the rates at the all-inclusive resort.

4. Don't let language evolve into being LESS important.
5. Make your home a language-based economy. @ Language becomes the currency by which EVERYTHING your child wants is bought.
6. Don't be afraid to walk away from a communicative attempt.
7. Let your child fail 3 times before lowering the bar.
8. Don't let your child ride the >Prompt Train=@ because it never stops!
9. Don't obsess over vocabulary. It is not the amount of words (signs) your child knows. It is how effortlessly s/he puts together the words s/he knows.
10. Care about communication density (words or communication units per unit time).
11. Model and reinforce commenting once requesting is mastered.
12. Break out of the one word - one situation box.

CONCLUSIONS:

Assume competence

rather than assume child can't and needs to be slowly taught, assume child can and only conclude he can't when he proves it to you. Competence always exceeds Performance.

Challenge every accommodation

Reasons are not excuses

Stack the deck in your favor

Increase opportunities to learn

Goal is not behavior management, goal is management of developmental potential

If you always do what you've always done

You'll always get what you've always got @

Never give up