

Please Clean Your Room!

Practical Parenting Strategies for Life's Difficult Moments

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VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES
AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY



Objectives

- Review considerations to keep in mind when working with your child
- Learn about strategies to avoid, as well as strategies that work well to teach lagging skills
- Learn about specific teaching strategies

Basic Principles and Considerations

- Small things matter
 - Fundamental units of behavioral influence; foundational
 - Be a better parent vs. stopping to kiss your child on the head
- Everything interacts
 - Focus on broad areas of influence (e.g., sleep)
 - Do not lift it all at once
- Patterns matter
 - Long-term consequences of patterns less salient than immediate effect
- Kids do well if they can

(Coyne, Gould, Grimaldi, et al., 2020; Green, 2005)

Beware the Coercive Cycle

- Reliance on punishment to alter behavior
 - Works in the short-term
 - If parents punish, often misbehavior ends quickly
 - If a child engages in oppositional behavior, parent may “give in”
- Doesn't work in long-term; can lead to unwanted behavior (Smith et al., 2013), academic failure, and peer rejection
- Coercion promotes the continuation of behaviors parents would like to stop
 - Families may continue to develop and maintain this style of interacting
 - Short term consequences are more salient and powerful

Mini assessment – what is happening here?



Skills! (or skill deficits...)

Thinking!

- Working Memory
- Planning/prioritization
- Organization
- Time management
- Metacognition

Doing!

- Response inhibition
- Emotional control
- Sustained attention
- Task initiation
- Goal-directed persistence
- Flexibility

Be success focused

- Focus on what we want the child to learn and what the child and/or what you deem success will look like (Layng, 2009)
 - When is the problem not a problem?
 - What skill deficits are leading to difficulties?
- Consider the child's perspective
 - Collaborate on solutions when possible
 - Plan B Conversation (Greene & Winkler, 2019)

Behavioral Skills Teaching (BST)

- Tell
 - Review the steps of the skill you are teaching
- Show
 - Model the steps of the skill
- Do
 - Learner roleplays the skill with the teacher
 - Teacher provides performance feedback

Proactive Strategies - Communication

- Modify instructions
 - Use short, concise language
 - Break tasks down in smaller steps
 - Think about pairing something difficult (e.g., pick up your dirty laundry) with something preferred (e.g., listening to a favorite song)
- Give choices
- Be mindful of triggers (but do not consistently remove them)
 - Use supportive statements
 - “I know this is difficult for you, but I know you can handle it.”
 - “I hear you that you don’t want _____, but I know we can work through it.”
(Lebowitz et al., 2019)

Support Consistency

- Visual aides
- Self-monitoring (Ivy & Kern, 2021)



Behaviour Self-Assessment- Frequency Chart

Please put an X if you do not behave and a tick if there have been no problems.

Name: _____

Form/Class: _____

Behaviour to be observed: _____

Time/Lesson	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Period 1					
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Teacher: _____

Behaviour Self-Assessment- Frequency Chart

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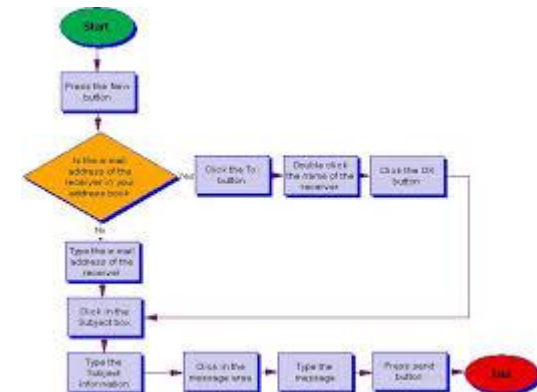
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Form/Class: _____

Behaviour to be observed: _____

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Teacher: _____



Create routines & checklists



My Morning Checklist

	 eat breakfast
	 put dishes in sink
	 use the bathroom
	 brush teeth
	 wash face
	 get dressed
	 make bed
	 gather things for school
	 put on shoes

Cleaning Your Bedroom



Put any trash into the trash can.



Take any dirty dishes to the kitchen sink.



Put all the shoes/boots where they belong.



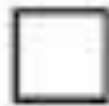
Put away clean clothes.



Room Cleaning



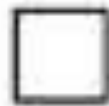
Pick up LEGOs



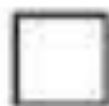
Books on shelves



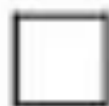
Put away puzzles



Clothes in hamper

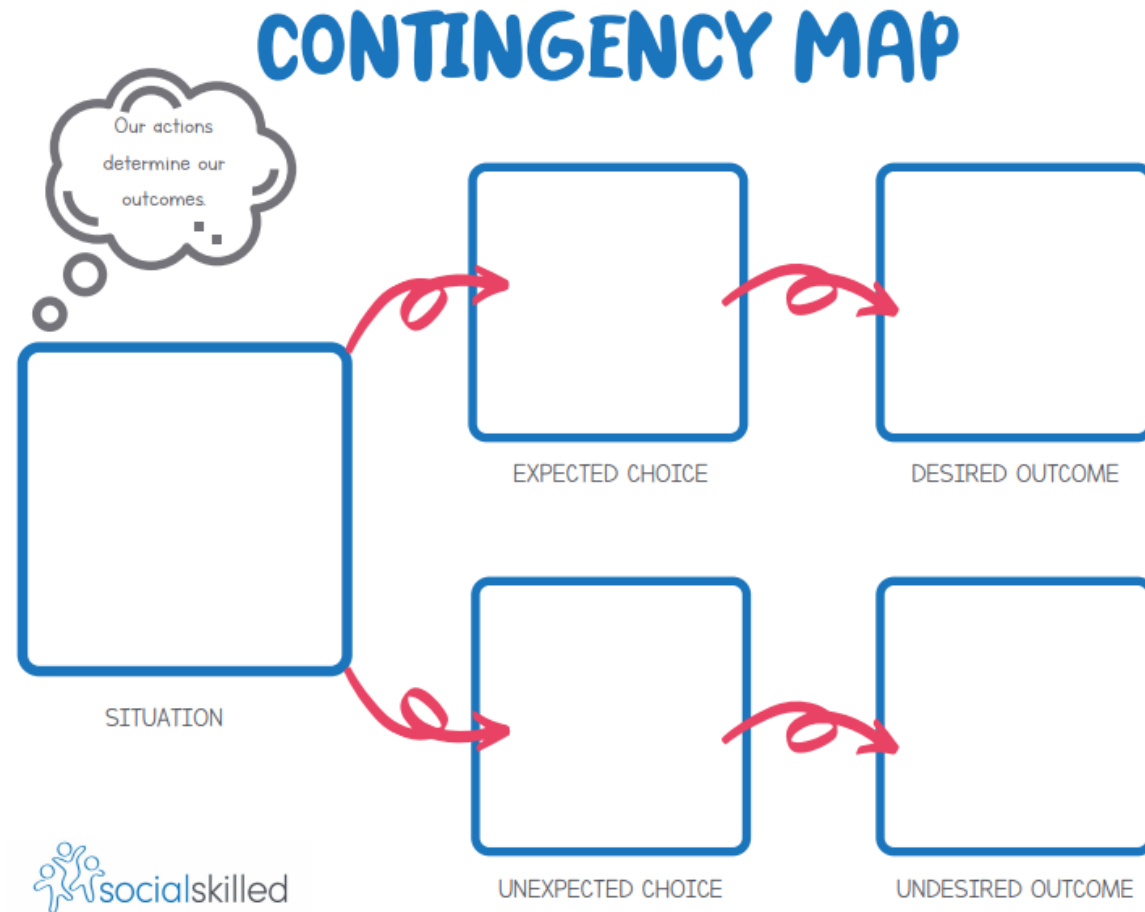


Pick up trash



Make bed

Teach problem-solving



Reinforcement (not Bribery!)



(Rodriguez, Tarbox, & Tarbox, 2023)

Plan for Hiccups!

- Come back to compassion (for yourself and your child!)
- If the plan is too difficult – consider shaping
 - What is one step that would bring you closer to feeling successful?
- Consider additional support
 - Reaching out to a psychologist, psychiatrist, etc.

Conclusion

- Have - and teach - compassion
- Focus on antecedent strategies and **teaching skills**
- Engage in collaboration with your child when appropriate
- Increase motivation through rewards
- Remember that kids do well if they can!

References

- Coyne, L.W., Gould, E.R., Grimaldi, M., Wilson, K.G., Baffuto, G., & Biglan, A. (2020). First things first: Parent psychological flexibility and self-compassion during COVID-19. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 14(4), 1092–1098. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-020-00435-w>
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