

Management of socially unacceptable behavior (behavior modification, encouragement system)

Aim: To introduce strategies for problem behavior management, use of incentives for managing bad behavior.

The problematic behavior of autistic children is often developed as an effective means of communication - a way to get what they want. Children, who do not speak, often use problematic behavior as communication, for example: child's screaming, shaking is a way to say that a break is needed, so we have to teach how to say it with the help of picture, symbol or gesture. It is important to understand that children with autism spectrum disorders can use only the tools by which they are trained to use it. I will not be able to influence the child's misbehavior because he is not able to read facial expressions. It is not necessary to preach, morale, or ask rhetorically: "Who's doing this?","Why are you acting like this?" Instead, we need to give as many tools as possible to help understand, calm down. Verbal instructions are not enough because most of them visualize information is better and understand the images, so even a speaking child may not understand what to do. Visual instructions will help a child to understand the links more quickly. Pictures, symbols will complement and give more complete picture of the desired behavior.

Every behavior has reason. It does not come from nowhere - there will always be an event before it and after the behavior will be a consequence. Collect data and analyze.

- How often do the behaviors occur, for what reason?
- What was before the occurrence of problematic behavior?
- When did it begin?
- In what environment?
- How long did it take?
- What was after?
- What did the child get in the result?

Behavioral analysis - ABC: antecedent - behavior – consequence

Antecedent, that causes unwanted behavior (what happened before experiencing problematic behavior?)

Behavior (observed target behavior)

Consequence (good/bad consequences)

Problematic behavior may be due to the following reasons:

- ✓ to achieve the object, activity;
- ✓ if he does not get what he wants;
- ✓ to avoid the task;
- ✓ when he doesn't want to do what is said;
- ✓ when he doesn't want to engage in the proposed activity;
- ✓ if he needs to wait;
- ✓ overload of sensations (too much sound, too bright light, etc.).

Changing misbehavior to right

Autistic people are very demanding for attention. When the baby cries, we calm him, we take on our hands. Such behavior is completely inappropriate for autistic children. They use their crying as an expression of attention. We will increase the unwanted behavior if we pay attention to crying. Without attention, we will reduce unwanted behavior. Let's react with calm or no reaction at all. Often we pay attention to bad behavior of the child, and not to good. Always notice when child's behavior is good, praise, give a reward. Awarding for good behavior, the child will want to repeat good behavior because it is useful for him.

The aim is to teach, not punish, to change, not stop

- Create situations; provide help to get the right behavior.
- Give rewards for good behavior.
- Observe the child's good behavior and absolutely necessary to praise and give rewards
- Avoid negative shapes, for example: shout - say "speak silently" and show the symbol.
- Allow to choose. Most misbehavior situations can be resolved or reduced by choosing the option: "Now we can't play with computer, but we can watch TV or read book." Let the child to choose what he wants.



Use encouragement to manage misbehavior

Autistic child, like any other child, will respond to a reward or, as the specialists call it, to an encouragement. **Rewards are the most effective tool in the training process.**

Find out who motivates the child. The child must be aware that his efforts, activities will be rewarded, it will give the result - he will get what he wants, for example: if a child receives a reward for work, he will write faster because he knows he will get an encouragement. Younger children can be rewarded with food, toys, if the child likes - to take pleasure. It is necessary to find out or talk with parents about what their child really likes. Do not forget that attention and hugs will be also rewarded. Older children are encouraged by social awards - „well done", tokens.

Reactions to the child's misbehavior:

- Ignoring (ignore shouting, screaming. Do not ignore when the child and others are at risk).
- Verbal diversion.
- Environment or task diversion.
- Help offer.
- Strong child hugging, compression.
- Sensory break (soothing music).
- Removal of the reward.
- Physical support.
- Physical retention in a particular situation.
- Social isolation, if it puts at risk others.
- Give the other child a reward of good behavior (he will know how he could get a reward).

In order to improve the child's behavior, be sure to notice the child behaving well. When he does what you want, will give a reward. Will give the encouragement very quickly, because a second or two may distract the child and he will not understand what was awarded. In this case, it may happen that you will encourage another behavior. Firstly, award often, but later only occasionally.

Token Economy is used as a reward for acquiring new skills as means of changing behavior. The amount of stars, stickers or tokens child collects, he will get a reward.

The act that is rewarded will be repeated more often.



