

# [Positive and negative reinforcement](https://assignbuster.com/positive-and-negative-reinforcement/)

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Positive and Negative Reinforcement Reinforcement is an essential part in identifying and encouraging a certain behavior. In the most classic definition, positive reinforcement is a method of identifying to children which behaviors are acceptable and appropriate and which are not (Sigler, E. & Aamidor, S, 2005). Reinforcement is often given as praise for doing a certain task. As educators, saying “ great job” or a simple word like “ fantastic” are expressed towards students as praise. However, when a student is struggling and praise is given such as “ you are doing so well”, the negative aspects of praise present themselves.

The child is aware of the empty praise therefore it may work against theteacherif it is taken as a false praise. So, as educators, we must determine what reinforcements will work with each individual child through experimentation. Also, building a relationship with not just the child, but the parents and all those involved with the child will be instrumental in developing the proper use of reinforcements and can be helpful in gaining knowledge of certain behaviors. The stronger reinforcements for most children are usuallyfood, candy, or drinks.

The durability and effectiveness of a reinforcer can usually be determined best by reinforcing the behavior intermittently or by providing a strong alternative which could interfere with the behavior in question (Ferster, C, 1961). Positive reinforcement is not just about the behaviors of the child but the reaction of the teacher and the adults to certain behaviors. Although a child may attempt to test the boundaries of one’s attention, positive attention does not make a child behave inappropriately (Sigler & Aamidor, 2005). The reinforcing comes from the teacher or adults actions and words.

For example, Joshua is an eight-year-old autistic boy who begins to whine and cry every single time the teacher tries to get him to begin a task that he dislikes. Most of the time Josh only wants to play on the computer, participate in gym, or eat. Each and every time Josh began to break down the staff usually asked him what he wanted or just gave in to what he wanted to do, not even trying to redirect him to the actual task at hand, which his classmates were doing. Joshua would get rewarded with chocolate, potato chips, and even some sympathy hugs from the staff.

The behavior became more frequent and the result was the same. By now Joshua knew what he was going to get when he acted out, which was whatever he wanted. However, to change his behavior the staff began to ignore Josh and his outbursts. After a short time of whining and crying Josh threw himself on the floor but the staff still ignored the behavior. He then realized that he was not going to get the same results as he was getting by whining and crying when things didn’t go his way. The teacher then got his attention with another activity and Josh began to take part in the activity.

A couple weeks later, after the same lesson, Josh’s behavior was almost extinguished and slowly that behavior was no longer happening in the classroom. On the other hand, negative reinforcement is the removal of an aversive stimulus to increase a certain behavior. For example, when a student is distracted from his work due to loudmusicplaying, however his work improves when the music is off, then the music being turned off is the reinforce. The difference between positive and negative can sometimes be difficult to acknowledge when there are several consequences and the need of the distinction is debated.

The main purpose of giving punishments and rewards is to decrease or increase the behavior of the learner (Dad, Ali, Qadeer Janjua, Shazad, and Khan, 2010). Raul is a student with an emotional disorder and requires a great deal of support to help with hisacademicgoals. Raul is extremely sensitive and becomes very overwhelmed when things don’t go his way. He whines, cries, and loses control when he feels exhausted from taking instruction. Raul is very intelligent and needs to get verbal praise throughout his day to stay on task. His triggers are usually when he is asked to sit down within the circle during circle time.

The behavior is him pulling away, crying, and hitting, trying to escape the actual activity. The maintaining consequence is that the adults let Raul leave the circle. There is not much fight with Raul because all those involved do not want the other students to become distracted. The first prevention is to give Raul some type of choice to coincide with circle time. A visual activity schedule could give him a more clear idea of what he should be doing and what the daily lessons and activities are. Raul will know exactly where he needs to be and what he needs to be doing at that particular time.

Also, manipulatives and intermittent praise are other preventions that the teacher can use. Intermittent praise is praised use throughout the activity but not regularly. This type of praise is given to become persistent. The new skills that can be developed are a part of the plan and may be implemented accordingly. Raul may have increased time of engagement, such as a longer duration of sitting within the circle. Raul will say “ all done” when he has completed a task so praise can be given. This will help the adults notice him if he is not given the correct amount of attention.

The responses to Raul for sitting longer will also be all positive praise toward Positive reinforcement is something that rewards the individual for an action taken. When students do or exhibit the correct or desired behaviors in school, then rewarding them for this action is what is known as positive reinforcement. There are many examples for these actions. Students that hand in homework on time may be given time near the end of class to put their books away and work on or do something they want to do within the rules of the school.

Putting stickers on work well done so the student knows they did the right thing. Giving the class a free day or having fun activities planned for them to do instead of working on a certain day. Giving a weekly or reward to the student who has the best attendance or best behavior in the class. There are many ways to reward students or show them that by using good behavior, they can be rewarded for their actions and this will cause the student to want to do the right thing versus misbehaving in the classroom.

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