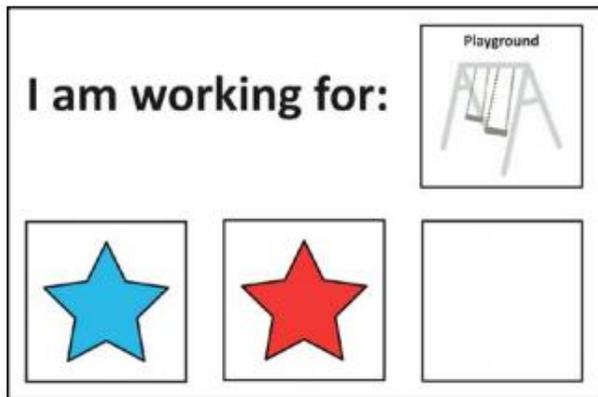


Token Economy



What is a token economy?

- A system based in ABA, that emphasizes the use of positive reinforcement to target behavior change
- Token economies help students to visualize progress, accept and work for delayed reinforcement, learn to self-monitor, and learn to regulate behavior.
- Token economies help provide a visual representation of the passage of time.

Developing a token economy

1. Identify & Define the target behavior (the behavior you want to see increase)
2. Determine what activities will be motivating to the child. These will be known as “Backup Reinforcers.”
3. Determine how many tokens need to be earned before gaining access to the backup reinforcer. Start with a small number, and then gradually increase that number when appropriate.
4. Decide what to use for tokens. You can ask your child what kind of picture or item they want!

Token economies can take on a wide variety of forms. They can range from very simple, short-lived systems to more complex systems that require the student to work for days or even weeks before earning his reward, but this may require a significant amount of time. These

systems should grow and develop as the student learns.

Teaching & Implementing a token economy

- In the early stages of teaching the token economy, pair social praise with the tokens by giving a high five, a pat on the back, or tickles while at the same time labeling the behavior with “good sitting!” or “awesome reading!”
- Everyone who will be distributing tokens to the child should be consistent in their distribution of the tokens, and exchange for backup reinforcers
- When introducing a token board for the first time, access to reinforcement should be frequent!
- Once the child learns that earning tokens leads to a backup reinforcer, you can slowly start to increase the time between giving tokens and/or the number of tokens required before earning a backup reinforcer.
- When a child earns all his/her tokens, reinforcement should be provided immediately.

Fading a token economy

The goal of the token economy is to teach appropriate behaviors that will generalize to use in the natural environment.

- As a child becomes more successful in responding to the token economy, you can begin fading the system.
- Fade by placing tokens on the board in an increasingly random and intermittent fashion.
- Begin offering/selecting backup reinforcers that are more readily available in the natural environment.
- When appropriate, control of distributing tokens can be placed on the child, rather than the adult.