

Making a Reward Chart with Tape and a Marker for trips in the community



A token economy (or, reward chart) uses positive reinforcement to change behavior. It can help kids manage their behavior by showing them progress toward something they want.

Before going into the store/library/etc.:

- **Prepare materials!** Have the tape and marker with you when you go out into the community. (Keep it in a coat pocket or purse. Make a few and keep some in the car, too.)
- **Explain it!** Prior to getting out of the car, tell your child what exactly what you expect them to do (e.g., staying seated in the cart, keeping their hands to themselves, walking beside you in the store) and what the reward is for (e.g., If you stay in your seat and keep your hands to yourself while we are in the store, you can have a _____ (e.g., cake pop before we leave Target/ sticker from my bag)!
- **Have the reward ready!** Identify the reward in advance. It can be something from the store (e.g., cake pop) or something you bring with you (e.g., make a bag of goodies – stickers, light up toys, etc. and keep it in your coat pocket, purse, or car, too)

During your time in the store/library/etc.:

- **Set up the materials!** Place a strip of tape on the cart handle. (If your child doesn't sit in the cart, you can place it somewhere visible to them- elsewhere on the cart or on your coat.) Add several boxes to the strip of tape.
- **Mark the boxes!** Remind your child of your expectations (e.g., walking beside you). When you see your child following your instructions, tell them! "Great job walking next to me!" and put an X (or checkmark or smiley face) in the box. Remind your child to keep it up and when the boxes are filled, they get _____.
*If your child does not follow your instruction, remind them of their chart and reward. When you catch them following your instruction again, mark the box.
- **Deliver the reward!** Once all the boxes are filled, give your child their expected item and lots and lots of praise!

After the store/library/etc.:

- **Evaluate.** Were there enough boxes during that trip? Next time should there be more, less? Did you mark the boxes frequently enough? Next time should you provide verbal praise more often? How motivating was the reward item? Are there different items to bring next time? What other changes need to be made?

*Idea adapted from an ABA Skill share page