



Leisure Skills-Secondary

Supporting Leisure Skills

Setting a daily schedule that includes a designated time for teaching leisure activities, followed by reinforcement, can support your child in expanding their repertoire of activities they enjoy and build new skills!

Identifying Preferred Activities

1. Ask your child that they like and get them to tell you verbally or by pointing or reaching for an item
2. Offer your child choice
3. Provide several options and make note of the items they choose most often
4. Continue to introduce new items
5. Pay attention to items that motivate your child and include those as preferred activities

Teaching Strategies

1. Set up the environment with minimal distractions
2. Break down the leisure task into smaller parts and teach each step (e.g., set up the board game, selecting a character, deciding who goes first, etc.)
3. Use visuals when possible to outline the expectation or model the skill so your child can imitate
4. Use hand-over-hand prompting to show them how to do it
5. Reinforce with praise and/or access to the highly preferred activity
6. Gradually, increase the expectations by removing your prompts or adding new steps

Sample Activities

Art activities, jewelry making, listening to music, yoga, biking, puzzles, looking at books, clay building, playing a game or baking.

How to Break Down a Leisure Activity

1. Identify the skill you want to teach (e.g. doing a puzzle)
2. Write down the steps involved from start to finish (e.g. select puzzle, place on the table, dump out the pieces, etc.)
3. Use visuals to outline the steps
4. Prompt using gentle physical guidance, gestures to the pictures and by modelling the skill
5. Once all the steps are completed, provide access to a preferred activity (reward)

Show it Visually

Use a visual schedule or first-then board to show leisure time and indicate when it is time for reinforcement (reward).

See reinforcement, first-then, and visual schedule handout for more information

How to Prompt

1. Show the visual of the activity.
2. Provide gentle physical guidance or gestures to support the student in selecting the activity.
3. Model the use of the activity.

References:

ErinoakKids. (2012). 'First-then' board. <https://www.erinoakkids.ca/ErinoakKids/files/f9/f9e82917-4dc7-40ca-901e-3a27591b2c0a.pdf>



