

Using Choice and Preference to Promote Improved Behavior

HANDOUT

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Assess your environment

- ✓ Do the children know what choices are available?
- ✓ Are there multiple ways for children to make choices (real objects, photos, pictures, voice output devices)?
- ✓ Can the children choose an activity or order of events in the daily schedule?
- ✓ What choices are available during routines (e.g., snack, toileting, transitions)?



Assess the children's skill level

- ✓ What are all of the ways a child could indicate choice (eye gaze, nod, change in facial expression, body language, blink, reach, point, verbal approximation, verbal request)?
- ✓ Does the child know how to make a choice when given the opportunity?
- ✓ Have you identified the current communicative level of each child?



Make simple, effective changes

- ✓ Visual strategies: Use choice boards where child can see photos or drawings of choices.
- ✓ Forced Choice: Purposely set up the environment so that a child needs to make a choice.
- ✓ Peer selection: Allow students to choose a peer to sit next to, share with, or help with a chore.
- ✓ Group choice making: Allow the class to make decisions as a group.



Enjoy the results

- ✓ Increased motivation
- ✓ Increased attention/on-task behavior
- ✓ Increased learning
- ✓ Increased socialization
- ✓ Decreased challenging behavior



Examples of using choice and preference in the classroom

- ✓ Allow Sarah to choose her coat hook upon arrival.
- ✓ Ask David to choose a peer to help him pass out plates during snack by choosing the friend's picture off the friend chart.
- ✓ Tell Demetria that she can choose a friend to take the next turn in circle by giving the friend the "Your Turn" card.
- ✓ Ask the class to decide (as a group) whether they want to finger paint or play with clay.
- ✓ Ask Dylan to point to one of two juice boxes during snack.
- ✓ Allow Nia to choose between the bar soap and the pump soap in the bathroom.

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