<div style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">

Balance:
A Home-Based Program Addressing Emerging Problem Behavior

Materials for Professionals

</div>

Program Mission: Preempt the development of chronic and severe problem behavior in children with autism

Program Process: Link parents of young children with autism with professionals, who will work together to teach the child life skills to prevent the emergence of problem behavior

Program Goals:

Initial goals
- Strengthen trust in the parent-child relationship
- Allow the child some control of their experiences via functional communication
- Teach children that problem behavior is unnecessary

Ultimate goals
- Create balance between child-led and adult-led interactions
- Allow for some shared control of the daily activities and interactions
- Teach both parent and child to be present and available to each other
- Prepare the child for inevitable daily disappointments and ambiguities
- Provide the child with hope that all drudgery eventually ends and the understanding that good things follow expected behavior
- Develop and refine the life skills repertoire of play, communication, toleration, cooperation, and persistence

Audience:

This program is designed for young children, approximately 3-6 years old, recently diagnosed with autism. Children may be reported to engage in high levels of uncooperative behavior and/or some disruptive behavior (e.g., tantrums), especially when they cannot have their way. This program is not designed for children who engage in dangerous problem behavior (e.g., self-injury, severe aggression).

Process Overview:

   Step 1: Promote Play
   Step 2: Teach Child to Respond to His/Her Name
   Step 3: Teach Child to Use Words (Part 1)
   Step 4: Teach Child to Use Words (Part 2)
   Step 5: Teach Child to Accept Disappointment
   Step 6: Teach Child to Cooperate (A Little)
   Step 7: Teach Child to Cooperate More (Find the Balance)
   Step 8: Teach Child to Cooperate with Different Instructions
   Step 9: Teach Child to Cooperate without the Bins
   Step 10: Teach Child to Cooperate During Natural Routines

<div align="center">**Detailed Sequence of Activity**</div>

First Visit:

- If both parents are involved in caring for the child, encourage both to attend, even if only one will participate in the program. Solicit questions from both parents throughout meeting.

- Describe program process to parent(s) and provide rationale for the approach.
  a. Ask about parent priorities and explain how the program can address them. (Or provide referral to other services as needed. The existence of severe or dangerous problem behavior might suggest the need for a more intensive program.)
  b. Highlight the gentle, gradual nature of the program; the goal is to challenge the child, but in a way in which the child can be successful. Discuss parent's willingness to expose the child to challenging situations within this supportive context.

- Confirm availability twice per week, as well as ability to do about 20 min of practice per day. Both parents are encouraged to participate, but not required. Discuss the importance of consistent practice to producing outcomes.

- Conduct InFORM

- Provide instructions on what to gather for next visit (i.e., the specific fun and task materials)

- Discuss where in the home the visits will take place: this should be a space that will be consistently available for each visit, preferably away from non-participating family members' activities.

Second Visit:

- Distribute the fun and task materials around the practice space

- Conduct the *Natural Baseline*:
  - Ask the parent to show you what it looks like when s/he spends time with his/her child for about 5 min
  - Don't provide any feedback or prompting
  - Consider videotaping and collecting data later

- Ask parent to complete the initial social validity assessment

- Conduct the *Prompted Baseline*:
  - Ask the parent to play with the child about half of the time and to try to have the child do things s/he typically does not like to do about half of the time, for about 5 min
  - Don't provide any feedback or prompting
  - Consider videotaping and collecting data later

  If asking the child to do things s/he doesn't like to do evokes severe or dangerous problem behavior, discuss whether this program is likely to meet the family's needs and provide referrals as needed.

- Discuss and come to agreement on the prompting approach to be used (see p. 9)

- Debrief with parent regarding the visit. Consider discussing the view that problem behavior develops from skill deficits and can therefore be made less likely with skill acquisition intervention.

Teaching Process Visits:

<u>First 5 min</u>
- Warmly greet the parent and child
- Move to teaching location
- Check that materials from InFORM are available in the fun and task bins (at least 5 things per bin)
- Collect the practice log
- Give a general overview of the visit's agenda (review step learned last time, introduce new step)

<u>Next 20 min</u>
- Ask if parent has any questions
- Ask parent to show you 5 trials (or, in Step 1, 5 min) of what they have been practicing
  -Don't provide feedback or prompts during this time
- Afterwards, provide feedback to the parent. Emphasize what the parent did correctly, focusing especially on prompting and differential reinforcement. Then, point out any areas that could be improved, again focusing on prompting and differential reinforcement. Finally, ask if the parent has any questions. Refer to the relevant sheet(s) as you go.

<u>Next 30 min</u>
- If child performance does not meet criteria described on the relevant step sheet, recommend that the parent continue to practice this step during the remainder of the visit. Offer modeling, role play, feedback.
- If child performance meets or nearly meets criteria, provide the parent with the sheet describing the next step.
  -Allow parent time to read the sheet
  -Review rationale for the step
  -Make any decisions prompted by the step sheet
  -Model
  -Role play as needed
  -Coach parent to practice with child, using the least intrusive support needed and fading out support as possible. The goal is to achieve as much skill acquisition as possible in this visit, so that "homework" consists mainly of practice and refinement.

<u>Final 5 min</u>
- Remind the parent to practice in 5-trial sessions at least twice per day and to log their practice
- Confirm the date, day, and time of the next visit

Final Step 10 Visit:

- Ask parent to complete the social validity survey
- Schedule booster and follow up visit. Ask parents to continue using the skills and to call you if they need advice between now and the next visit.

Booster Visit:

- Observe parent and child practicing the skills as a part of natural routines (as in Step 10)—no data collection
- Provide feedback and assist with practice as needed
- Schedule follow up for that same week

Follow Up Visit:

- Ask parent to demonstrate two, 5-trial sessions under Step 10 conditions
  -Consider videotaping and collecting data later
  -If performance is no longer robust, offer additional follow up visits
- Ask parent to complete social validity survey

Individualized Features of Reinforcement Meeting (InFORM) Notes

Date of Interview: _____   Child/Client: _____
Respondent: _____   Interviewer: _____
Relationship to child/client: _____

1. **Date of birth and current age: ____-_____-_____   ____yrs ____mos   Male/Female**
    Diagnoses: _____
2. **Who is the primary caregiver?** _____
3. **Describe general language abilities. How does he/she request to get/do things or to not do things?**

4. **What are the things your child likes least to do, but you think may be important for him/her to do?**
5. **What are the things that you have the most trouble having your child do (or doing with your child) because whenever you try to have your child do them (or do them with your child), he/she is highly uncooperative?** (e.g., cleaning up, getting dressed, academics, hygiene tasks, medical check-ups, chores, non-electronic interactive games)
6. **Besides being uncooperative with these things, what other problematic behaviors does your child engage in when you try to accomplish these things?**
    From this information, note the activities and materials for the task bin here:

7. **How do you and others respond to uncooperative or problematic behavior? What do you do to calm him/her down? Is there anything that once denied inevitably leads to problematic behavior?**
8. **If she/he could only do one thing for the next hour, what do you think it would be?**
9. **Describe his/her play skills. What are his/her favorite toys, activities, and interactions?** (e.g., particular objects, toy themes, electronics, books, photo albums, particular furniture, music, videos, massagers, social interactions or availability, snacks, to run, roam/meander, particular conversation topics, access to rituals or stereotypy)
10. **Does he/she prefer to (a) play alone, (b) have someone watch but not interact too much, or (c) play with others? What does the play look like when she is playing with others?**
    From this information, note the materials for the fun bin here along with preferred interactions:

Updated 2.2020, K. Ruppel & G. Hanley

Balance Program Observations

Child's Name: _____   Date: _____   *(Circle one)* Pre / Process / Post / Follow Up

Data Collector: _____   Primary ☐   IOA ☐   *(Circle one)* Steps Covered: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Conduct one (treatment) or three (pre/post/follow up observations) 5-min sessions each visit.

	0:00-0:20	0:21-0:40	0:41-1:00	1:01-1:20	1:21-1:40	1:41-2:00	2:01-2:20	2:21-2:40	2:41-3:00	3:01-3:20	3:21-3:40	3:41-4:00	4:01-4:20	4:21-4:40	4:41-5:00
Adult Teaching Integ.															
Emerging PB															
Child-led Play Permitted/Observed	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Response to Name															
Functional Communication															
Tolerance Response															
Cooperation Requested/Observed															

Topographies of emerging PB observed:

Adult Teaching Integrity: Mark "+" if adult performance was 100% correct (see guidelines on p. 10); mark "-" if any errors occurred.

Emerging Problem Behavior: <u>Tally</u> each occurrence.

Child-led Play Permitted: Place a tally to the left of the slash if there is child-led time. [Child-led time begins when parent allows access to fun items the child's way and ends when parent calls the child's name or indicates that the fun is over.] Place a tally to the right of the slash if there is adult-led time. [Begins when parent calls child's name/indicates fun is over; ends when parent allows access to fun items the child's way.]

Child-led Play Observed: Circle the tally to the left of the slash if the child engages in contextually appropriate behavior for the entire child-led time (e.g., engages with fun items, talks with parent; non-examples: engages in problem behavior while playing, wanders around).

Response to Name:
<u>Opportunity:</u> Tally the <u>first time</u> the parent calls the child's name until the child complies or the parent moves on.
<u>Response:</u> Circle the tally if the child responds by stopping, looking towards parent, and saying "yes" within 5 s of the name call.

Functional Communication:
<u>Opportunity:</u> Each time the fun is over, tally the <u>first time</u> the parent indicates this (until re-access to fun)
<u>Response:</u> Circle the tally if child emits a functional communication response.

Tolerance Response:
<u>Opportunity:</u> Tally each time the parent denies a request.
<u>Response:</u> Circle the tally each time the child makes an explicit and calm response to the denial (e.g., "Okay," "No problem," "All good").

Cooperation Requested: Place a tally if an expectation for cooperation is in place at any time during the interval (e.g., an actionable verbal direction is given; does not include RtN, FCR, TR exchanges). Each interval contains either one or zero tallies—don't tally every direction given.

Cooperation Observed: Circle the tally if the child engages in cooperation for the entire opportunity that interval (e.g., follows instructions; non-examples: argues, refuses, negotiates, requires physical prompting for independent task).

Child's Name: Date: *(Circle one)* Pre / Process / Post / Follow Up

Data Collector: Primary ☐   IOA ☐   *(Circle one)* Steps Covered: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Conduct one (treatment) or three (pre/post/follow up observations) 5-min sessions each visit.

Analysis

Adult Teaching Integ.	% of intervals:	*Instructions:* *Divide the number of intervals marked with "+" by the total number of intervals scored.*
Emerging PB	**EPB per minute:**	*Divide the total occurrences of emerging problem behavior by the total number of minutes in the session.*
CLP Permitted	**% of intervals:**	*If an interval contains only a child-led tally, the tally counts as 1. If an interval contains tallies for both child- and adult-led time, the child-led tally counts as ½. Divide the total number of child-led tallies by the total number of intervals. Multiply by 100.*
CLP Observed	**% of intervals:**	*Divide the number of circled child-led time tallies by the total number of intervals. Multiply by 100.*
Response to Name	**% of opportunities:**	*Divide the circled tallies by the total number of tallies. Multiply by 100.*
Functional Communication	**% of opportunities:**	*Divide the circled tallies by the total number of tallies. Multiply by 100.*
Tolerance Response	**% of opportunities:**	*Divide the circled tallies by the total number of tallies. Multiply by 100.*
Coop. Requested	**% of intervals:**	*Divide the number of intervals with tallies by the total number of intervals. Multiply by 100.*
Coop. Observed	**% of intervals:**	*Divide the circled tallies by the total number of intervals. Multiply by 100.*

Updated 2.2020, K. Ruppel & G. Hanley

Parent/Caregiver Teaching Integrity

Context	**Do**	**Don't**
Child-led time	1. Make many of the child's "fun" items/activities available 2. Be available to and engaged with the child (close in proximity, not distracted) 3. Honor all reasonable requests, vocal or via indicating response 4. Deny unreasonable requests and redirect to available activities/items	5. Refrain from placing any demands (giving instructions, prompting language, attempting to teach, asking questions) 6. Refrain from correcting the child or the way they are engaging with an item/activity 7. Refrain from manipulating child's toys, unless following the child's lead 8. Refrain from reacting to inappropriate behavior. (Don't redirect, offer choices, or offer other toys.)
Adult-led time	1. Terminate child-led time when the child has been happy, relaxed, and engaged for at least 1 min 2. Deliver an instruction when terminating child-led time 3. Deliver clear, concise instructions 4. As needed, use prompts agreed upon 5. Only allow access to materials relevant to what the child is expected to do 6. Only provide attention relevant to what the child is expected to do (agreed-upon prompts; praise for compliance)	7. Do not *negotiate, argue, rationalize* or *cajole* 8. Do not comply with child attempts to lead instruction (e.g., "I want to clean up before I sit at the table") 9. Do not present demands as questions/options 10. Minimize reactions to inappropriate behavior (continue with prompting) 11. Do not change the demand contingent on uncooperative or problematic behavior
Transition (adult to child-led time)	1. Move from adult-led time to child-led time only following response to name, FCR, TR, or cooperation 2. Reward response to name, FCR, TR some of the time, even when they are not the current target 3. Sometimes reward *very small chains* of cooperation following a denial (e.g., 1-3 instructions) 4. Prompt the communication or toleration skills as needed	5. Do not foreshadow which skills will be reinforced or how many demands will need to be completed prior to earning child-led time (i.e., keep it unpredictable)

Please make note of any participant-specific adjustments to these expectations.

<div style="text-align:center">**Prompting Options**</div>

	Step 1	Step 2 (if no cooperation at Step 1)	Step 3 (if no cooperation at Step 2)
3-Step Prompting **("Tell them, show them, help them")**	Verbal direction	Verbal direction + model + "you do it"	Physical prompt
2-Step Prompting **("Tell them, help them")**	Verbal direction	Physical prompt	
Wait Out	Verbal direction	Verbal direction + model + "you do it"	Remove all preferred items and wait for child to follow the direction. Repeat the direction in a neutral tone of voice every 30 seconds or so. Do not engage in conversation or try to convince your child to follow the direction.

Tips

- At the outset of the program, come to an agreement with the parent as to which option will be used.

- Explain that it is best to choose one option and be consistent, so this decision deserves careful reflection.
  Questions to consider:
  How willing/able are you to use physical prompts?
  How willing/able are you to wait for your child to cooperate? Will you probably have to wait a long time and, if so, is that still preferable to using physical prompts?

  If both options seem contraindicated (e.g., parent cannot physically prompt and child engages in highly disruptive behavior during wait out), consider referral to a more intensive program.

Professional Support Checklist

During Teaching Process	Yes	No	N/A
1. Fun and task materials are set up according to current step			
2. Parent conducts 5 min or 5 trial session, without prompts or concurrent feedback Note: If the parent asks a question, the professional should encourage parent to keep going and do his/her best and remind parent that they'll talk more after.			
3. Afterwards, professional discusses what parent did correctly, with focus on prompting and differential reinforcement Note: This may be presented as a conversation, in which the professional encourages the parent to state what went well and the professional confirms/elaborates.			
4. Professional describes what could be improved, if applicable (focus on prompting and differential reinforcement)			
5. Professional orients parent to agenda for rest of session (continue practicing current step or begin new step)			
6. If beginning new step, professional orients parent to new step sheet			
7. Professional provides rationale for new step			
8. Professional provides models			
9. Professional role plays with parent as needed			
10. Professional guides parent and child to practice new step, with prompts as needed and feedback focusing on prompting, differential reinforcement			
11. Professional provides opportunities for parent to ask questions throughout			
	Total: __/__		

Baseline/Follow Up	Yes	No
1. Both fun and task materials are present		
2. Professional does not prompt the parent or child or provide feedback during the 5-min/5-trial observation		
	Total: ___/___	

Parent Social Validity Survey

Please answer these questions at Baseline (Visit 2)

These questions are about the **goals** of the Balance program. We want to know if the goals of the program line up with your personal goals for yourself and your child.

1) A goal of the program is to create balance between child-led activities and parent-led activities. Is this important to you?

  Not at all   Not Sure   Very much

     1   2   3   4   5   6   7

2) Another goal is to teach children to accept inevitable daily disappointments and ambiguities. Do you consider this an important goal for your child?

  Not at all   Not Sure   Very much

     1   2   3   4   5   6   7

3) A third goal is to increase how often your child cooperates with your requests without displaying problem behavior. Is this an important goal for you and your child?

  Not at all   Not Sure   Very much

     1   2   3   4   5   6   7

4) Are there other goals that you hope the program will meet?

Please answer these questions after Step 10

These questions are about the **approach** we used in the program. We want to know how comfortable you were with the teaching activities.

5) I considered the activities I was asked to do with my child to be acceptable.

  Strongly Disagree   Not Sure   Strongly Agree

        1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6) The level of professional support was enough to make me feel comfortable teaching the skills.

  Strongly Disagree   Not Sure   Strongly Agree

        1   2   3   4   5   6   7

7) Do you have any other comments about the process?

Please answer these questions after Step 10 and again at Follow Up

These questions are about the **results** of the program. Please consider your typical daily interactions with your child, **outside of BCBA visits**.

8) Consider your regular everyday activities. Are you satisfied with the amount of time you and your child spend on child-led vs. parent-led activities?

  Not at all   Not sure   Very satisfied

        1   2   3   4   5   6   7

9) Are you satisfied with your child's current level of cooperation and appropriate behavior?

  Not at all   Not sure   Very satisfied

        1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Updated 2.2020, K. Ruppel & G. Hanley

10) How positive are your everyday interactions with your child?

Not nearly as positive as I would like			Somewhat positive			Very positive
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11) Do you feel comfortable implementing the strategies you learned in the program when the professional is not there?

Not at all			Not Sure			Very much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12) Do you have any other comments about the results of the program?
Is there anything else you'd like us to help you with?

Step 1: Promote Play

Talk about the below rationale with the parent. The parent's handout contains a brief version under a section called "Purpose," and some parents may appreciate the more detailed explanation.

This step lays the foundation for the rest of the program. In this step, you encourage your child to play by allowing him/her to lead the activity while you show interest and compliment his/her play. You also encourage your child's play by making only comments, rather than asking questions or giving directions. Questions and directions can make playtime feel like work to children. When you avoid questions and directions, you are showing your child that when you allow him/her to play, it is really playtime and there will be no "surprise" work. You show respect for his/her time, and later s/he will learn to respect your time (when you want or need him/her to do something).

In this play context, your child is unlikely to engage in problem behavior, because s/he has access to many of his/her favorite items, s/he can interact with the items and with you the way that s/he wants, and s/he is not asked to do things s/he dislikes. Learning how to create this context, in which problem behavior is unlikely, can be a valuable tool for you. In the future, when you want or need to avoid problem behavior, you can re-create this context. You will also come back to this context throughout the program—it will be a pleasant surprise you give your child when s/he works hard at new or difficult skills.

Parent Objective:
Parent will provide continuous and uninterrupted access to fun bin materials, respond to 100% of child's social bids, not attempt to teach at any time, and provide at least 2 compliments of the child's activity per 5 min-session.

Child Objective:
Child will engage materials in fun bin for over 80% of observed intervals without any instances of problem behavior.

Procedures:
Parent allows child continuous access to fun bin and stereotypy. Teach parent how to:

- Provide access to bin of toys (not just one item)

- Be present and available to the child (i.e., not attending to other tasks or people)

- Follow the child's lead by responding to social bids or requests to look or play.

- Be complimentary of the child's appropriate actions while being and non-instructive and non-directive.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">

**Step 2: Teach Child to Respond to
His/Her Name**

</div>

At the end of this visit or start of the next, reflect. Does calling the child's name or attempting to prompt a response evoke intolerable problem behavior? If so, discuss whether referral to a different intervention model might be appropriate.

Rationale: Children learn to *not* respond to their names because name calls often signal an impending worsening in their situation (e.g., they will have to stop doing what they want and do something the parent wants). Children can learn to attend well to their name if they experience some improvements (i.e., rewards or welcome surprises) following their name being called. This step also prepares children to be more cooperative with parental instructions following a name call.

Parent Objectives:
1. Parent will interrupt child's play on 5 separate occasions within a 5 min period by calling the child's name. Parent will prompt the desired response and reinforce with immediate return to child-led time.

2. If the child refuses to follow the parent's prompts to respond to his/her name, the parent will present an actionable task from the task bin and follow through on its completion using agreed-upon prompts. The parent will then allow a return to child-led time.

Child Objective: Upon hearing his/her name, the child will stop what s/he is doing, look towards parent and say "yes" on 80% of trials.

Procedures:
*   Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of happy, relaxed, and engaged child-led time.

*   Parent prompts the child to *stop what s/he is doing, look up towards parent, and say "yes."*

*   Parent compliments child for stopping, looking, and saying "yes," and then allows child to go back to playing with the fun bin materials.

*   Once the child has demonstrated independent responding, anytime prompts are required the parent should provide another practice opportunity in quick succession.

*   If the child refuses to follow prompts to respond, have parent remove the fun bin, prompt an actionable response using materials from the task bin, follow through using agreed-upon prompts, and then return the fun bin to the child.

Notes:

Rationale: Teaching a child to communicate to get the things s/he wants is an important step in decreasing existing problem behavior and in preventing the development of problem behavior. In this step, we teach your child just part of the request. We will build it into a full request in the next step. We break the request up like this so that your child can be successful without much effort, which teaches your child that using words is valuable and easier than resorting to challenging behavior.

Parent Objective: On 2 to 3 of 5 trials, the parent will signal that fun is over and a task is about to begin, prompt child through just a part of the request, and then provide immediate access to fun bin materials and interactions.

Child Objective: Child will independently make part of the request to re-access playtime on all relevant occasions in a single session.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin about half the time.

- The other half of the time, parent calls the child's name and signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.
  - e.g., "Okay, time to clean up"

- Parent prompts the child to retain the fun by emitting part of the request.

- Parent allows child to quickly re-access the fun when s/he emits the desired response.

- If the child refuses to follow prompts to respond to name or communicate, have parent remove fun bin, prompt an actionable response using materials from the task bin, follow through using agreed-upon prompts, then return the fun bin to the child.

Notes:

Rationale: In this step, we teach the rest of the request we started in Step 3. The complete request might include a social nicety, such as "excuse me," followed by a request that yields access to the entire child-led play context. As we've already established, playtime involves many items your child likes, the freedom to engage with them as s/he wants, and attention from you. By teaching your child a simple request to obtain all of these desirable outcomes at the same time, s/he will be maximally motivated and will learn to use words quickly, even in challenging situations.

A long-term goal for most children is to learn specific requests for various items and activities. However, it can be difficult for many young children with autism to learn these specific requests. In order to teach specific requests, an adult must identify what the child wants. A child may become easily frustrated if the adult guesses incorrectly. This frustration is avoided with the use of a single, general request that produces child-led time. Once your child has learned the skills in this program, including how to cope with delays and how to tolerate frustration, then your child will be ready to practice specific requests.

Parent Objective: On 2 to 3 of 5 trials, the parent will signal that fun is over and a task is about to begin, prompt child to engage in a full social exchange/request, and then provide immediate access to fun bin materials and interactions.

Child Objective: Child will independently engage in a full social exchange/request to re-access playtime on all relevant occasions in a single session.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin half the time.

- The other half of the time, parent calls the child's name and signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent prompts the child to retain the fun by communicating via a full request (e.g., "Excuse me? … My way, please").

- Parent allows child to quickly re-access the fun when s/he communicates.

- If the child refuses to follow prompts to respond to name or communicate, have parent remove fun bin, prompt an actionable response using materials from the task bin, follow through, then return the fun bin to the child.

Notes:

Rationale: Problem behavior often starts as an emotional response to disappointment. Other people respond to emotional outbursts, and so emotional outbursts become an effective way for a child to influence other people's behavior. Adults may come to avoid disappointing the child so as to avoid an outburst. In this lesson, your child learns a more mature way to respond to disappointment. With practice and with rewards and welcome surprises, your child will get in the habit of responding maturely to disappointment, and emotional outbursts and other problem behavior will be less likely to occur.

Parent Objective: On 2 of 5 trials, the parent will not provide access to the fun bin following the request and instead will deny the request, prompt a tolerance response, and then provide immediate access to fun bin materials and interactions.

Child Objective: Child will independently engage in a tolerance response to reinforcement denial on both occasions in a single session.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin on 1 of every 5 trials.

- On the other times, parent signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent allows child to retain the fun when s/he requests half the time (2 trials).

- Parent denies the communication bid the other half of the time (by saying, for example, "No, not right now"). Parent prompts child to engage in tolerance responses ("Okay," "No problem," "It's cool") in response to the denial.

- Parent provides access to the fun bin following the tolerance response by saying something like, "Nice job handling disappointment, let's play."

- If the child refuses to follow prompts to respond to name, communicate, or tolerate, have parent remove fun, prompt an actionable response using materials from the task bin, follow through, then return the fun bin to the child.

Notes:

Rationale: Children can learn to do new things (and do old things well) by following instructions provided by their parents. Now that access to child-led playtime has been used to strengthen the child's attending to name, communication, and toleration, the next step is to sometimes require that your child follow a few adult instructions.

Parent Objective: On 2 of 5 trials, the parent will not provide access to the fun bin following tolerance responses and will instead require cooperation with one to three instructions to access the fun bin materials and interactions.

Child Objective: Child will cooperate with one to three adult instructions without problem behavior.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin on 1 of every 5 trials.

- On the other times, parent signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent allows child to retain the fun when s/he requests on one of these remaining 4 trials.

- Parent denies the communication bid the other three trials (by saying, for example, "No, not now") and provides access to the fun bin following a tolerance response on one of these three trials.

- Following the other two tolerance responses, parent provides an actionable instruction to complete 1 to 3 instructions from an activity in the task bin, using agreed-upon prompts.

- Parent provides access to the fun bin following cooperation by saying something like, "Nice job doing that quickly, let's play your way."

Tip: At this step, it is helpful to have parents give very specific instructions (e.g., "Put [specific item] in [specific place]"). A preschool-aged child may not know where to start when given a general direction such as "clean up." In addition, some children attempt to subtly direct interactions by doing *almost* what the adult asked but not quite. This can develop into escalating power struggles between parent and child, and so it is best to address it now by teaching children to follow directions precisely when they come from trusted adults. Giving very specific instructions makes it obvious if the child is not following them precisely, and it allows the parent to correct it (via the agreed-upon prompting procedures).

<div style="text-align:center; border:1px solid black; display:inline-block;">

**Step 7: Teach Child to Cooperate
More (Find the Balance)**

</div>

Rationale: Now that you have taught some initial cooperation, the next step is to stretch the amount of parent-led activity to something that more closely approximates parent-led time during regular activities in the home.

Parent Objective: On 2 of 5 trials, the parent will require the child to follow instructions. On 1 of these trials, the parent will require the child to follow a few instructions. On the other trial, the parent will require the child to follow all of the instructions to complete an activity.

Child Objective: Child will cooperate with a range of instructions without problem behavior.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin on 1 of every 5 trials.

- On the other trials, parent signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent allows child to retain the fun when s/he requests on one of these remaining 4 trials

- Parent denies the communication bid the other three trials and provides access to the fun bin following a tolerance response on one of these three trials.

- Following the other two tolerance responses, parent provides actionable instructions to complete either a few or many steps to task(s) from the task bin.

- Parent provides access to the fun bin following cooperation by saying something like, "Nice job doing that quickly, let's now play your way."

Tip: On this step, parents should continue to give specific instructions. They should simply string them together to guide their children through completing longer tasks some of the time. For example, to have the child change into school clothes, the parent could start by saying, "Take off your pajama top." Once the child does, the parent could then say, "Put on your t-shirt." This could be followed by any number of other specific instructions, one by one. This helps keep it unpredictable to the child how much work will be required on adult-led time, and unpredictability is key to developing cooperation with longer tasks.

<div style="border:1px solid black; text-align:center;">

**Step 8: Teach Child to Cooperate
with Different Instructions**

</div>

Check in before this step. Re-interview parent to determine if s/he has thought of any tasks that weren't initially included in the task bin. Add these and, if needed, talk with the parent about how s/he might break these down into manageable instructions for the child.

Rationale: Now that the access to child-led playtime has been used to strengthen the life skills repertoire and to create balance between parent- and child-led time in sessions, the next step is to introduce new activities into the task bin to ensure that the child cooperates with lots of different activities.

Parent Objective: On 2 of 5 trials, the parent will require cooperation with a few or many instructions relevant to new activities in the task bin.

Child Objective: Child will cooperate with new tasks without problem behavior.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin on 1 of every 5 trials.

- On the other times, parent signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent allows child to retain the fun when s/he requests on one of these remaining 4 trials.

- Parent denies the communication bid the other three trials and provides access to the fun bin following a tolerance response on one of these three trials.

- Following the other two tolerance responses, parent provides actionable instructions to complete a few steps or all the steps to a new activity.

- Parent provides access to the fun bin following cooperation by saying something like, "Nice job doing that quickly, let's now play your way."

Notes:

Rationale: The next step is to remove the bins and practice under slightly more natural conditions. Sometimes people wonder why we didn't start more naturally from the beginning. This is a good question. It helps children learn to behave in new ways more quickly if something is different about the environment at first, to signal to them that we're doing something new. So, we used the bins to signal to your child that we were doing things a bit differently. Each time your child came to practice, s/he had a little reminder of how s/he was expected to behave—that reminder was the bins. But now that your child is so good with these skills, s/he doesn't need the reminder anymore. In fact, s/he needs to practice using his/her skills without any reminder, because most of the world doesn't contain reminders.

Parent Objective: With materials distributed around the room, the parent practices the Balance Program of unpredictable and intermittent reinforcement of communication, toleration, cooperation, and persistence.

Child Objective: Child will engage in play, communication, toleration, cooperation, and persistence without problem behavior when the materials are distributed around the room.

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name after about 30 to 60 s of play and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin on 1 of every 5 trials.

- On the other times, parent signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent allows child to retain the fun when s/he requests on one of these remaining 4 trials.

- Parent denies the communication bid on the other three trials and provides access to the child's way following a tolerance response on one of these three trials.

- Following the other two tolerance responses, parent provides a few or many actionable instructions.

- Parent provides access to the child's way following cooperation by saying something like, "Nice job doing that quickly, let's now play your way."

Tip: At this point, parents can give both specific and more general (but still consistent with age expectations) instructions. For example, parents could sometimes say "Put [specific item] in [specific place]" and sometimes "put those blocks away." Be careful that it is not predictable whether the work will be long or short based on the way the instruction is given. General instructions can begin long or short tasks (e.g., parent can reinforce after child puts away one item following instruction "put those blocks away"). Specific instructions can be chained together to create long or short tasks, too.

Rationale: The final step is to extend the program to natural timelines and routines in the home so that the skills persist when the visits by the professional end.

Parent Objective: During natural routines and on natural timelines, the parent practices the Balance Program of unpredictable and intermittent reinforcement of communication, toleration, cooperation, and persistence.

Child Objective: During natural routines and on natural timelines, the child will engage in the life skills of play, communication, toleration, cooperation, and persistence without problem behavior across two sessions (on two consecutive visits).

Procedures:
- Parent calls the child's name periodically and rewards the name response with quick re-access to fun bin some of the time.

- On the other times, parent signals that the fun is over and a task is about to begin.

- Parent allows child to retain the fun when s/he requests some of the time.

- Parent denies the communication bid some of the time and provides access to the child's way following a tolerance response some of the time.

- Some of the time, the parent provides actionable instructions to complete various numbers of tasks.

- Parent provides access to the child's way following various amounts of cooperation.

Tip: Stay on Step 10 until both child and parent performance is robust. Children should emit the skills on all or nearly all opportunities, without prompting. Parents should appear and report feeling confident (this, and child performance, is more important than any particular parent teaching integrity score, although persistent differential reinforcement errors might also be a reason to stay on Step 10).

After the family has completed the program, consider working on these "extra challenging" scenarios—if they have not already been addressed.

- Changing your mind:
  e.g., Parent gives an instruction. When the child begins to cooperate, parent "changes his/her mind" and gives a different instruction.
  → Teach the child to cooperate (without arguing, negotiating, or attempting to first complete the original task)

- Broken routines:
  e.g., Parent gives child an instruction to do a familiar task in a different way than s/he normally does it.
  → Teach the child to cooperate (without arguing, negotiating, or attempting to complete it in the familiar way)

- Responding to vague instructions:
  e.g., Parent gives an instruction that does not specify a clear action and that is unfamiliar to the child.
  → Teach the child to ask for help

Updated 2.2020, K. Ruppel & G. Hanley