COUNSELOR CORNER, ROBIN KLUGH
Stop Rewarding Negative Behavior!

By Brenna Hicks (The Kid Counselor) on February 8, 2019

Many parents don’t realize that the way they respond to their kids is actually REWARDING their NEGATIVE behavior! In this video, Dr. Hicks explains what this looks like, and how to implement a play therapy technique to prevent rewarding negative behavior. Dr. Hicks shares a tip with us, something she has noticed that many parents do. It’s very easy to not even realize that this is happening when we are interacting with our kids.

As we interact with our kids, there is a constant fluidity. There is a constant dynamic, back and forth conversation and relationship that continues and everything in the future is based on what has already happened in the past. So we learn the flow, and the back and forth exchange, based on interacting consistently. That’s true of every relationship in our lives, not just with our children. But children are very, very observant and they are aware of the dynamics. So as we give in once, they learn that when we say no it doesn’t necessarily mean no. They think: “Because last time I threw a fit and got what I wanted or last time I negotiated and I got her to meet me halfway.” So they learn that everything in the future hinges on what happens in the past.

When we are interacting, the more that we are inconsistent with our messages and the more that we are inconsistent with the consequence of behavior, the more confusing it is for the child to know what we expect of them.

Now that you know all of that, how do you fix it? To watch the video or to read the transcript on this article, go to The Kid Counselor Dr. Brenna Hicks, click the Home button, and you will find a list of her videos.

Meet the expert: Dr. Brenna Hicks ran a highly successful Child Therapy Private Practice before becoming a full-time mom. She has been blogging and writing articles on implementing Play Therapy in Parenting since 2006. Brenna finished her PhD from the University of South Florida in 2015, and re-opened her private practice in early 2016, seeing children from 3-14 and conducting parent training classes online and in-person.

Happy 2020! (A Message from Mrs. Klugh)

Wow! It is hard to believe that we are already half way through the school year! I hope you all had a wonderful winter break! This is my third edition for the Counselor Corner. In this edition I am introducing you to topics on Stop rewarding negative behavior, Stress Busters, A Parent’s Guide to Social Skills Strategies for children with ADHD, Autism or Both, and Rewards & Consequences; Easy, Friendly, and Effective: Behavior Tweaks That Really Work. I am also including some information on how to register for an upcoming training for parents, teachers and professionals on Puberty, Sexuality Intervention, Ethics and Medical Issues that can Appear as Inappropriate Sexual Behavior (for individuals with Developmental Disabilities, including ASD).

Some reminders in case of school cancellation due to weather, the condition of the city streets is the determining factor whether or not school will be in session. Local television and radio stations are notified only if school is cancelled. If Town and Country School is out due to inclement weather, you will be notified via our emergency system, TeacherEase emails and we will notify local channels 2, 6, 8 and 23.

Please remember our school is a "Nut Free Zone" (peanut butter, granola bars, candy with nuts, etc.).
It is important to empathize and not minimize what students are feeling. By providing students with practical solutions to overcome and calm the worried brain, we can teach them how to rewire their thoughts by acting with their smarts and not fears. —Barbara Truluck

Elementary/MS Suggested Book List
This list teaches listening, friendship, emotions, empathy, appreciating differences, and more.

Lacey Walker, Non Stop Talker by Christianne C. Jones
Little Blue Truck by Alice Schertle
Theo’s Mood by MaryAnne Coca-Leffler
The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade by Justin Roberts
I Think I Am: Teaching Kids the Power of Positive Affirmations by Louise L. Hay
Pig the Winner
Stone Soup by Marcia Brown
The Fabulous Friend Machine by Nick Bland
Millie, Jack, and the Dancing Cat by Stephen Michael King
Enemy Pie by Derek Munson
Twig by Aura Parker
The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig
Same Same But Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw
Zen Ties by Jon J. Muth
Sad, the Dog by Sandy Fussell
Red: A Crayon’s Story by Michael Hall

A PARENT’S GUIDE TO SOCIAL SKILLS STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN WITH ADHD, AUTISM OR BOTH

By Dr. Mark Bertin, M.D.

Strong friendships are a vital support for a child’s overall happiness and resilience. Both ADHD and autism affect peer relationships—and many children have symptoms of both. How can parents best support social skills growth and success?

Join expert Mark Bertin, M.D. in a webinar on this topic on Wednesday, January 22, 2020, from 12:00 pm-1:00pm CT (if you can’t attend the live webinar, register now and they will email you the replay link). Go to ADDitude Magazine Webinars to register for this webinar and many other topics of interest.

In this webinar, parents will learn:

- How ADHD and autism impact social emotional development
- Which clinical interventions best support social emotional abilities
- How to decide between the various interventions available for children with ADHD and autism
- How to support social emotional skills at home.

Meet the expert: Dr. Bertin is a developmental pediatrician in Pleasantville, New York, and author of “How Children Thrive and Mindful Parenting for ADHD.” He is an assistant professor of pediatrics at New York Medical College, on the faculty of the Windward Teacher Training Institute, and on the editorial advisory board of Common Sense Media.
STRESS BUSTERS/COPING WITH STUDENT ANXIETY (CONTINUED)

**Imagery:** When students create a detailed mental image of a safe and peaceful place, they redirect attention away from what is stressing them and toward an alternative focus.

**Progressive muscle relaxation:** This is the practice of tightening one muscle group at a time followed by a relaxation phase with release of the tension. Students tense and relax the muscle groups one at a time in a specific order, beginning with the lower extremities and ending with the face.

**Positive self-talk and affirmations:** This helps students challenge self-sabotaging and negative thoughts. Students can practice through journal writing, negative-thought stopping or snapping a rubber band during negative thoughts. You can help students select affirmations that speak to them. When students repeat the affirmations and believe them, they can start to make positive changes.

**Journaling:** Journaling helps students clarify their thoughts and feelings, gaining valuable self-knowledge. Students can process their anxiety by fully exploring and releasing the emotions involved.

**Desk yoga:** Neck rolls, cat-cow stretch, shoulder shrug, triceps stretch, seated twist and the seated pigeon pose are all exercises students can discretely practice at their desk.

Once students determine which techniques work for them, they can assemble a list with descriptions to keep in their agenda/notebook as a quick reference. Or, the student can keep their journal, list of affirmations or picture of their peaceful place where they can access it without classroom disruption. Having this survival kit available can bring a feeling of control over their anxiety.

**MS/HS Suggested Reading List**

- I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives by Caitlin Alifirenka
- Quiet Power: The Secret Strengths of Introverted Kids by Susan Cain
- The Mindful Teen by Dzung X. Vo
- How to Say No and Keep Your Friends: Peer Pressure Reversal for Pre-Teens and Teens by Sharon Scott
- Beyond Texting: The Fine Art of Face-to-Face Communication for Teenagers by Debra Fine
- Teens & Relationships by Roger E. Hernandex
- Jarvis Clutch Social Spy by Melvin D. Levine
- Middle School Confidential by Annie Fox M.Ed
- Wonder by R J Palacio
- Freak the Mighty by Rodman Philbrick
- Queenie Peavy by Robert Burch
- Don’t Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Teens by Sheri Van Dijk
- The Three Questions by Jon Muth
- This Side of Home by Renee Watson
- Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai
- Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper
REMINDERS

January
20th—Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO SCHOOL
23rd—Main Event Night
31st—1/2 Day—Free Dress Day

February
10th-21st—Jr. Sr. ACT Test Administration (for those who registered)
22nd—TCC Tulsa Achieves Blue Print @ NE Campus (register online)
27th—Different Strokes
28th 1/2 Day—Free Dress Day

March
3rd—PTL Luncheon
6th Lower School Bingo Night
11th—End of 3rd qtr.
16th – 20th—Spring Break
26th—Urban Air Night
27th—1/2 Day—Free Dress Day
28th—Sports Banquet

REWARDS & CONSEQUENCES

Easy, Friendly, and Effective: Behavior Tweaks That Really Work!

Bad behavior kicks emotions—yours and your child’s—into high gear. Keep cool and calm instead, with these low-stress strategies that will improve your child’s behavior.

When your children misbehave, you want to know how to stop the misbehavior as soon as possible. Whether your children are ignoring your instructions, whining or crying when they don’t get what they want, begging to buy something each time you go to the store, climbing on furniture, throwing things in anger, being aggressive with you or with siblings, or breaking some other rule, these “stop behaviors” can make parents frustrated.

There is much you can do to influence your children—to keep the misbehavior from escalating, to defuse an emotionally charged situation, and to help them stop misbehaving. You know that shouting, ignoring, giving in, or bribing and threatening a child are lost causes when it comes to turning around your kids’ behavior.

Here are some strategies that will help put a stop to those misbehaviors:

- **Keep It Friendly**—Practice speaking in a low, calm voice. Friendliness often calls forth willingness from our children, and they are likely to meet us halfway.

- **Find Something to Praise**—For example, “Those ornaments are so pretty and shiny, and you’re being so careful with them. Now it’s time to put them back.” Find some bits of OK behavior, or even a momentary pause in the misbehavior. If your child has spoken disrespectfully, wait a few seconds, until she pauses for breath, and say: “You’re not being rude or disrespectful now. I can hear that you’re upset, but now you’re controlling yourself. You’re using your words, not your body, to show how angry you are.”

- **Get Close**—If your child is still misbehaving after you have praised him, immediately stop whatever you are doing, go to where he is, and stand very close to him. You may find that your close presence is enough to get him behaving properly again.

- **Give Clues**—Instead of giving direct instruction to a child who seems unlikely to comply, you can give a clue to help your child figure out what to do.

- **Offer Alternatives**—When we need to stop our child’s fun, offer an alternative activity.

- **Make It a Rule for Everyone**—It can help to depersonalize our instruction by stating that the house rules apply to all family members.

- **Empathize**—Another effective way to help our children want to cooperate is to show them that we understand how frustrated and annoyed they feel when we interrupt their fun. Imagine how they might be feeling and reflect that feeling in words to the child: “You’ve got so much energy, and you love jumping. You wish you could jump on the sofa. What’s our rule about jumping? You can jump on the trampoline, not on the furniture.”

- **Put It In the Positive**—Your child may misbehave even after using all these techniques. In that case, you will need to tell him what he must do. It is more motivating for children to hear what they should do, rather than what they should not do. “Put the saltshaker down, please” is an easier instruction to follow than “Stop playing with that.” Talk quietly, please” is likely to get a better response than “Stop shouting.”

Because the ADHD brain habituates to stimuli very quickly, it can be difficult to maintain attention to repetitive tasks, like, say, practicing math facts.