

Rewards

Rewards can really motivate a child to improve their behaviour. They work best if given soon after the behaviour not after a few days. After a couple of weeks, they may not work as well but by then you hope your child's behaviour has improved!

Reward charts are appropriate for children 3 years and over.

Setting up a reward system

1. Set up a chart:

- **Create it:** You can choose from lots of different styles of charts, or make one yourself. Older children might like to create their own chart, perhaps with a drawing or photo of the reward they're trying to earn. You can also download free charts from the internet. E.g. try searching for "reward charts to colour in"
- **Place it:** Put the chart where your child can see it. Keep in mind that your older child might prefer a spot that's private – for example, their bedroom, instead of on the fridge.

2. Rewards:

- **Decide which stickers or tokens to use:** star stickers work well for younger children, whereas older kids might like points or other markers.
- **Keep rewards small and cheap** e.g. stickers, stamps. It is not necessary for rewards to be or expensive, but rather a small symbol that you are happy with your child's behaviour.
- **Choose short-term rewards:** Most children start by liking the idea of collecting stickers or tokens, but the novelty can wear off quite quickly.

When this happens, swapping the stickers or tokens for some short-term rewards can help them keep their eyes on the main prize. You could let your child choose from a range of objects, events and activities – for example, getting to choose an activity for special time with mum or dad, e.g. a trip to the park, a family bike ride, going to the swimming pool, or watching a favourite movie (but not just before bed!).

- Try not to make food the reward
- You can build on rewards e.g. 4 stickers = a lucky dip (remember to keep the prizes small and cheap) or a trip to the park or a choice of DVD after dinner.

Rewarding your child

1. **Choose the behaviour you want to encourage:** Use clear and positive descriptions of the behaviour, and talk with your child about the behaviour you want to see.
2. **Increase your child's chance of success to begin with:** Make sure your child has a chance to get a few rewards over the first few days e.g. at first you may reward them for staying in their room at the start of the night. Once they can do this, you may then reward them only if they stay in their room the whole night.
3. **Give the reward as soon as possible after the good behaviour:** e.g. first thing in the morning. Some specific praise reminds your child why they're getting a sticker or token. For example, "I really like the way you stayed in your room the whole night. Here is a star for your chart".
4. **NEVER take away a reward:** If your child has earned it, they keep it! If your child doesn't earn a star, just move on. Focus on encouraging your child to try again.



Name

is going to try to remember to...



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday