

LEARNING TOGETHER



Specialized Services At Your Fingertips

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Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome back to another edition of Learning Together. This week the team behind the newsletter have an exciting announcement! There will now be more ways for you to connect with the Learning Together team. We will offer online content in the form of recorded videos and webinars.

This week's issue will focus on reinforcement again. We just can't get enough! As guidelines and procedures pertaining to COVID-19 change, we have some reinforcement techniques and tools that might be helpful for you and the people you love or support.

If there is a topic, you would like to see more of or learn about please reach out to the team!

Click below to meet the face behind the Learning Together Newsletter:



Reinforcement

Reinforcement is how people learn and change their behaviour. In learning what reinforcement is and how to use it, we can become better at helping our individuals improve skills in their settings.

For more information on reinforcement you can view the [2nd edition](#) of the Learning Together newsletter, watch this [video on reinforcement](#), or visit [ConnectAbility](#).

Please join us for a live information session on reinforcement on May 27th, 2020 at 1:30 pm. [Click here to register!](#)

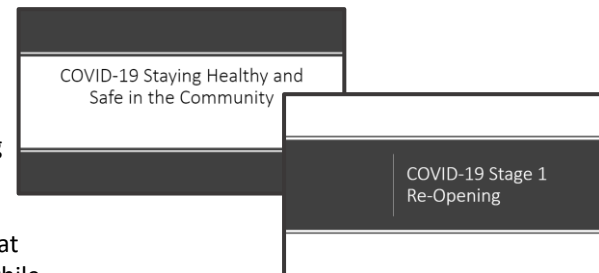
Here are some ways you can use reinforcement to increase appropriate community behaviours that align with the government's framework for re-opening the province:

- Provide positive praise and access to preferred items while supporting an individual to wear a mask in the community. For example, Johnny puts on the mask and staff say "great job putting on the mask Johnny!" while giving him his favourite kind of cookie. Staff continue to praise Johnny for keeping the mask on throughout the community outing.
- Provide positive praise and access to preferred items while an individual is waiting in line and maintaining a minimum of 6 feet apart from others. For example, Diana is waiting in line at the grocery store. She is standing on the indicated floor markers and only moves forward as the person in front of her moves to the next marker. Staff say "wow you're doing a great job following the rules!" and let Diana pick out a snack to purchase.

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Changes with Restrictions Lifted

Check out these new social stories that cover Ontario's government Stage 1 of re-opening and how to stay healthy and safe in the community. Click the title pages below to download the social story directly from ConnectAbility to your computer



Activities at Home

Here are some more ideas of things you can do to keep busy when you are at home:

Enjoy some familiar faces such as Daniel Radcliffe and Eddie Redmayne reading Harry Potter and the Philosopher Stone [here](#).

Visit TVO at [TVO.org](#) for some really interesting documentaries about everything you can imagine, from the Amazon rainforest to Ontario history to zebra migrations.

To exercise your body and mind visit Love Your Brain. You can enjoy their online [meditation classes](#) or [yoga classes](#) for free.

Token Economy

What is a token economy?

Token economies are a great tool for delivering reinforcement. In a token economy, the “teacher” contingently delivers a learned reinforcer in the form of a ticket or token which is exchangeable at a later time for a highly preferred item or activity. A token board is often used to track the progress of the individual and indicate how many tokens must be earned to exchange for the reinforcer.

Why are they effective?

Token economies are a more efficient way of delivering reinforcement. Tokens can be delivered with greater ease than giving an edible or preferred item after each occurrence of the target behaviour. Token economies can also be used with an individual or a group setting, such as a classroom. Delaying the item or activity that the individual wants (backup reinforcer), but contingently delivering the token (learned reinforcer) can teach waiting and maintain motivation during teaching. A token economy can also help prevent an individual from becoming satiated with a reinforcer. Delivery of the reinforcer, like with all other reinforcement methods, must be done frequently and immediately after the target behaviour occurs. The token can be paired with praise or another backup reinforcer.

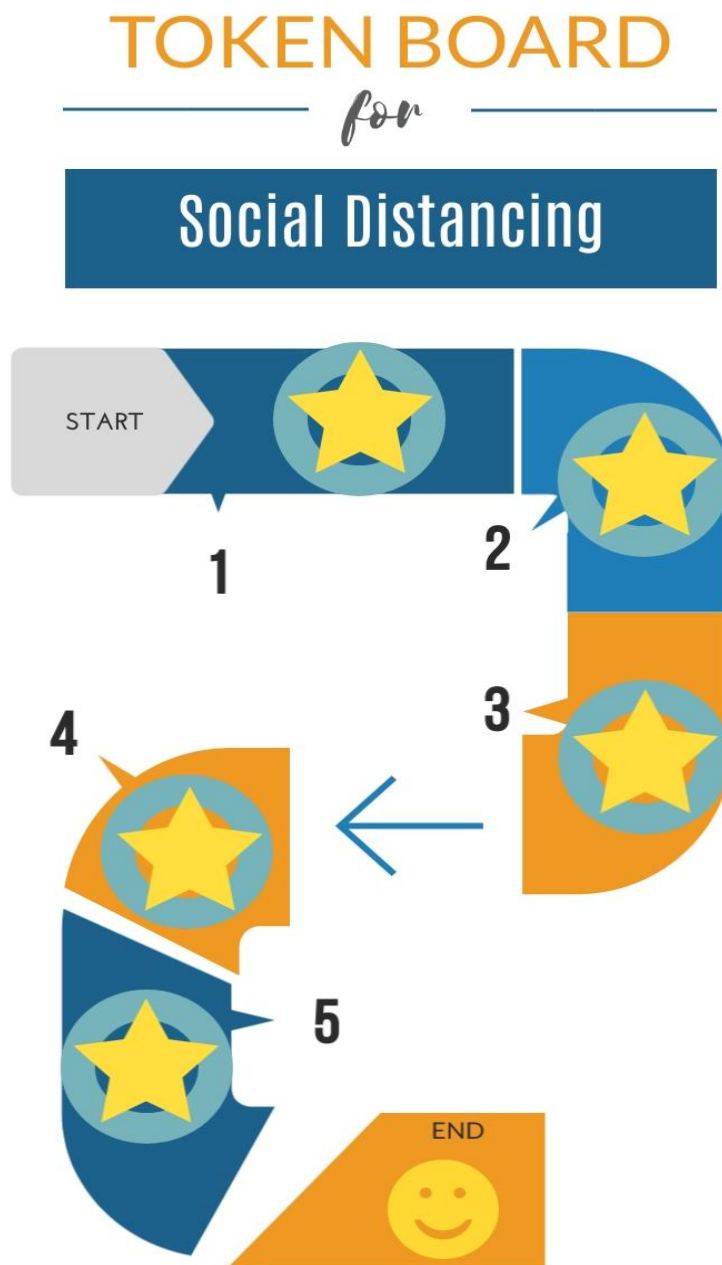
What type of token/token board should be used?

Choosing the type of tokens and token board to be used is important. The token itself should have some reinforcing value to the individual you are teaching. If the individual is interested in the Ninja Turtles, for instance, each token could be a character from the show and the token board could be in the form of a slice of pizza. It is beneficial to have tokens that are easy to deliver, are durable and can be easily carried from one activity to another.

[Click here for more information on token economies.](#)

Social distancing, or physical distancing, can sometimes be hard to teach. A token economy can be used to reinforce such behaviours as keeping distance, waving instead of giving a hug, or elbow touches instead of handshakes while out in the community.

Here is an example of a token board that could be used on outings with an individual. Please feel free to print it out and use it:



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