



Thank you for your interest in CPRT! This handout is designed to describe the components of CPRT and provide examples of how to implement CPRT at home. When you use CPRT at home, learning can occur in your child's natural environment and in a wider variety of activities and settings. Using strategies consistent with how your child learns at school will help your child learn new skills faster, use skills more consistently, and better maintain skills over time. CPRT utilizes naturally occurring opportunities centered on your child's motivation to teach new skills. Since you know your child best, you are well on your way to being a CPRT expert!

The basic structure of CPRT follows an Antecedent–Behavior–Consequence pattern:

1. **Antecedent:** You present your child with an opportunity to respond.
2. **Behavior:** Your child acts in response to that opportunity.
3. **Consequence:** You provide a response to your child's behavior.

CPRT PROCEDURE

CPRT can be used within many daily activities and routines that you already do with your child! The first step is to identify motivating activities and materials. For example, if your child is particularly motivated to play a computer game, you can teach skills around asking to play this game, commenting on the events of the game, or taking turns on the computer with siblings. CPRT may be less appropriate for times when your child cannot be motivated by any aspect of the activity, as sometimes happens with self-help skills like toothbrushing or toilet training.

CPRT starts with presenting a cue for your child to respond. There are many types of cues you can use to indicate you are expecting a response. It is important to vary the type of cue you use, so that your child will learn to respond to the variety of cues presented naturally in the environment. The table below lists several different types of cues you may use in CPRT:

LANGUAGE CUES	OTHER CUES
Verbal model—Model exactly what you want your child to say (“Ball”), or start a known phrase for your child to finish (“Ready, set . . .”).	Gesture or play action—Model the action you want your child to complete (roll a car or point to an item out of reach).
Instruction—Make a clear, direct statement of what you want your child to do (“Put your shoes on” or “Sit down”).	Facial expression—Give an expectant look while you wait for a response (raise your eyebrows while holding a snack).
Question—Ask a brief question, either between two choices (“Red or yellow?”) or open-ended (“Which movie?”).	Situational—Naturally block or control access to reinforcing items (fill a drink only a little, or put a toy on a high shelf).
Comment—Make a leading statement to draw attention toward something (“Your shoes are in the kitchen”).	

No matter what type of cue you use, each opportunity to respond should follow the specific components of CPRT. The components of CPRT can be broken down into antecedent and consequence components. Antecedent components occur when you present an opportunity to respond. Consequence components occur when you respond to your child's behavior. All these strategies are designed to maximize your child's motivation to participate in the interaction and minimize frustration while learning new skills.

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ANTECEDENT → BEHAVIOR ←→ CONSEQUENCE

ANTECEDENT STRATEGIES	BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCE STRATEGIES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ATTENTION—Before presenting an instruction or cue, get your child’s attention. You can gain attention by controlling access to favorite items, being animated, or joining your child’s play. 2. CLEAR AND APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTION—Provide instructions that are at or slightly above your child’s current level of communication. Speak slowly and use direct language to improve responding. 3. EASY AND DIFFICULT TASKS—Mix in easy, already mastered tasks (maintenance) with newer, difficult skills (acquisition) to promote continued use of learned skills and keep your child’s feelings of success high while learning. 4. SHARED CONTROL—Allow your child to choose materials or the activity (as long as it is not dangerous). Follow your child’s interest to ensure that your child is motivated to respond. Also, take your own turns within the activity to model new actions, as well as gain access to the materials. 	<p>CHILD’S RESPONSE</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DIRECT REWARDS—Provide natural rewards to your child that relate to the activity. That is, reward with the preferred item or activity you and your child are talking about or playing with. 2. CONTINGENT CONSEQUENCES—Respond to your child based on their behavior. If your child responds positively, follow with a desired consequence. However, if your child does not respond positively, withhold the positive consequence and have the child try again. 3. REWARD ATTEMPTS—Reward your child for a good try, even if the behavior isn’t perfect or the best your child can do. Following good attempts with desired consequences makes trying more likely in the future.

Responding to Your Child

Once you present an opportunity to respond and observe your child’s response, you must react to that response by providing a consequence. CPRT uses direct, naturally occurring rewards, such as receiving a requested item or being allowed to continue with a favorite activity. The consequences you provide to your child’s response determines how likely that response is to occur in the future. Behaviors followed by desired consequences will occur more often in the future, while behaviors followed by undesired consequences will decrease in the future.

As you can see, the basics of CPRT are probably not very different from the way you already interact with your child. Things that may be different, however, are being deliberate about providing opportunities to respond with clear expectations, and presenting direct consequences based on your child’s behavior.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME

You can incorporate CPRT in many activities that you already do with your child. Below are some suggested activities to get you started generating ideas, but this list is far from complete. CPRT can be used in any activity where your child is motivated by some aspect (even if it is flushing the toilet!). Be creative and have fun!

Snack Time

- Serve your child’s favorite snacks and drinks in small portions, requiring him/her to request the snack items several times. Repeated practice helps support skill growth!
- Give your child snacks still in the packaging. This will require him/her to initiate and communicate with you to get the snack open.
- Serve favorite snacks without the necessary utensils (such as ice cream without a spoon) to help your child make requests.
- Be silly in the way you serve meals or snacks, so your child has to tell you each step of the process. For example, put a jar of peanut butter on a piece of bread and give it to your child!

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Play Time

- Keep favorite toys on a high shelf or in clear plastic containers where your child can see them but not access them without your help.
- Watch a video with your child for a few minutes. Occasionally pause the video to give your child an opportunity to request that the video continue to play.
- Take a turn playing your child's favorite computer game. Do the wrong thing in the game and have your child communicate to correct you.
- Join your child while he/she is playing with a favorite toy. Model a new action with the toy and help the child complete that action, and then join in playing his/her way as a reward.

Bath Time

- Find fun water toys that require winding to operate. Your child will probably need your help to activate the toy repeatedly.
- If possible, use bath crayons to draw on the walls. You can take turns drawing with your child, have your child request items for you to draw, or draw things for your child to label.

Folding Laundry

- Your child may enjoy being covered in a warm pile of laundry. Have your child help you carry laundry from the dryer, and then bury him/her in the clothes as a reward.

Homework

- Provide your child choices during homework time, such as where to complete homework, in what order to do the problems, or what writing utensil to use. Mix easy problems with more difficult ones to keep motivation high, and reward a good try on a difficult section. You can also take turns by completing a few of the problems or sections yourself.

MORE INFORMATION

- www.autismspeaks.org/video/glossary.php
- education.ucsb.edu/autism
- Koegel, Robert L., & Koegel, Lynn Kern. (2006). *Pivotal Response Treatments for Autism: Communication, Social, and Academic Development*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.