

Summary: Shaping Behavior

Setting up for Success

The ABCs of Behavior

This week, we focus on how to influence behavior by targeting two key points:

1. Antecedents: what happens *before* the behavior
 - Helps set your teen up for success before challenges arise
 - Example: Establishing consistent sleep routines or setting limits on screen time
2. Consequences: what happens *after* the behavior
 - Reinforces desired behaviors through consistent and immediate feedback
 - We'll explore this more in next week's session

Targeting Antecedents to Encourage Positive Behavior

We discuss how to use antecedents to promote behaviors you'd like to see in your teen, with examples around:

Sleep

- Create a predictable bedtime routine.
- Remove distractions like screens from the bedroom.
- Encourage physical activity during the day to improve sleep quality.

Screens

- Establish screen-free zones (e.g., no screens during dinner or before bed).
- Set a family-wide screen curfew (e.g., all devices off by 9:00 PM).
- Model healthy screen habits as parents.

Practice: Setting up for Success

Choose a goal behavior; for example, completing homework on time.

Brainstorm antecedents:

- Create a dedicated, distraction-free study space.
- Set clear, manageable expectations (e.g., "Homework is from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM").
- Break tasks into smaller steps to reduce overwhelm.

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House Rules

House rules help establish clear expectations for your family.

- Limit rules to the most critical behaviors (around five total).
- Make rules specific, positively stated, and applicable to all family members.
- Involve your teen in creating these rules to increase buy-in.
- Consistently enforce immediate, pre-determined consequences for breaking rules.

Home Practice

Schedule a family meeting to set house rules

- Develop or revisit your house rules together.
- Focus on 2–3 behaviors you want to change, and set clear expectations and consequences.

Practice Antecedents

Choose a behavior you want to encourage. Reflect on ways to adjust antecedents to set your teen up for success.