

BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD

GOAL

You might already feel like you have a strong relationship with your child, but in this lesson you'll take this a step further.

Learn how to create a collaborative relationship with your child.

BACKGROUND

As a parent you have many roles when interacting with your child. At any given point you may be a nurse, a chef, a taxi driver, or even a teacher. This lesson primarily focuses on this role of a teacher, but you won't necessarily learn strategies that classroom teachers use. You will learn to identify what motivates your child and how he learns best.

BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP

As you begin your journey to learn how to teach your child, the first step is to help your child view your teaching as something positive. Even if your child doesn't speak or know how to interact with those around him yet, you can build a collaborative relationship with him.

This empowers your child and puts him in the driver's seat of his own learning.

CREATING A PLAN

CREATE A NEW RELATIONSHIP

When starting out with a plan to teach your child, the first step is to shift your relationship with him.

Even if you already have a positive, loving relationship with your child, as you step into the role of teacher, you want your child to see you as the giver of all good things. You want him running to you, excited to learn what you have to teach. You might hear ABA professionals use terms like rapport, instructional control or pairing.

These terms just mean that your child associates you, and learning, with the things that he likes best. This is the beginning of your collaborative relationship with your child. Together you will work toward a life of happiness and independence for your child.

CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT

To begin building a collaborative relationship, you must make some adjustments to the environment.

Collect your child's favorite items and go to where he likes to play. Make sure there aren't other things in the environment he will want to play with. The goal is to get him to come over to you to get access to the things you have, rather than simply finding them around the room.

When he shows interest in any of the items you have, give him the item. Don't ask him to do anything at all, just hand it over. Model language by saying the word as you hand it over, but don't ask him to repeat it. He can have any of the items as long as he gets it from you and stays near you while he has it. If he starts to move away, gently remove the item and allow him to go.

WHERE DOES YOUR CHILD LIKE TO PLAY?

LET YOUR CHILD COME TO YOU

Spend as much time as you can hanging out with your child's favorite things, waiting for him to approach you. When he approaches you, engage with him in any way that he likes while handing over the object he wants. Do this in different places and continue until he runs up to you rather than the toys.

When you're ready to begin teaching, go to a place he enjoys and just play with him for several minutes. Be silly and engage with him in any way that he enjoys. Do this any time you want to teach new skills or when you need to ask him to do something he might see as hard. Remind him that you are the one who gives him all the things he likes and you're the one who makes things fun. Enjoy your collaborative relationship, but don't take it for granted. Keep being the source of fun and excitement for your child as you work together to help him develop into an independent, happy adult.

LIST THE ITEMS AND ACTIVITIES YOUR CHILD ENJOYS:

