



“For individuals with special needs, structure and routine can be key to preventing tantrums or other problem behaviors. By creating structure and teaching them to follow a schedule and complete activities, you are helping your kiddos develop overall skills while decreasing problem behaviors.”

– Juli Augustin, Board-Certified Behavior Analyst Supervisor at ABA Behavioral Specialists

Tips to Promote Learning This Summer For Your Child With Special Needs

Summer is a time for children to have fun and play and not be bound by the confines of school. However, for children with special needs, the less-structured environment can be challenging to navigate – and it can cause unnecessary stress for their parents. It can increase problem behaviors, such as tantrums, aggression, property destruction, self-injury, elopement, lack of safety and awareness.

ABA Behavioral Specialists put together a couple of tips to help you successfully navigate summer behavior problems.

Create a Visual Schedule:

Nearly 80% of all learning done by children happens visually. For children on the autism spectrum or who have attention deficits, hyperactivity, learning disabilities or other behavior challenges, that number can be even larger. With a visual schedule, a child can see where he or she is supposed to be and at what time. Even if the child doesn't understand times, it gives them an understanding of sequence and they can determine when to do or when an activity needs to be done. Be sure to match your visual schedules to the learning needs of each child, so they may vary in length and form.



Implement a Token Board:

Token boards teach children that they are rewarded after they complete what is expected of them. The directives can be as simple as they need to be to promote success. For example, if your child has trouble stacking blocks, you may give him a token for each block he stacks. After receiving a preset number of tokens, the child earns a highly sought after reward activity – something specific to each child that would be enticing and motivational. For example, iPad time, favorite snack, watching a favorite cartoon or playing a favorite game.



For the reward to be as effective as possible, it is best to make sure your child does not

receive the item or activity throughout the entire day. To achieve maximum success with a token board, children must know exactly what it takes to earn the reward activity, and parents must not sway from that number – even on the most difficult days.

The common themes with both the visual schedule and the token board is to ensure that structure is added to the day and rewarding your child when they complete directives/ activities.

The professionals at ABA Behavioral Specialists can help children of all abilities to change socially significant behavior to a meaningful degree through the application of ABA therapy.

Contact ABA Behavioral Specialists to learn more!