

# Miss Motsko's 2016 October Newsletter!

## Important Dates:

October 7<sup>th</sup>: Family Fun Night 6:30pm, Movie at 7pm  
October 10<sup>th</sup>: No School  
October 10-17: Book Fair  
October 19<sup>th</sup>: 6-6:30pm Watch Dog Night & Book Fair  
Family Night 6:30-8pm  
October 24<sup>th</sup>: Red, White, & Blue Spirit Day  
October 31<sup>st</sup>: Fall Parties & Early Dismissal at 11:45am



## Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement: something is added after a behavior that increases the probability of that behavior occurring again under similar circumstances. Positive reinforcement is used when teaching a student a new skill or a more appropriate response. There are three types of positive reinforcement: social rewards, tangible rewards, and activity rewards. Social rewards can include a smile, hug, verbal praise, pat on the back. Tangible rewards can include a sticker, token, a toy, an edible, etc. Activity rewards can include a favorite activity that the child likes to engage in such as swinging. A child can be given a social reinforcement along with other types of reinforcement.

### Guidelines for implementing positive reinforcement:

- \*\*It is essential that the reinforcers that are selected are **motivating** to the child
- \*\*Positive reinforcement needs to be given **immediately** following the target behavior that you want to see increase
- \*\*Reinforcement should be **faded** so that the child does not become dependent on the reinforcement for the behavior to occur. Be careful not to fade the reinforcement too quickly.

*Information taken from [Autism Encyclopedia](#) by Amanda Boutot and Matt Tincani*



## Thorndike's Law of Effect:

A response followed by a pleasant consequence will tend to be repeated and a response followed by an unpleasant consequence will tend to decrease in frequency.





# Miss Motsko's Newsletter

Welcome January 2017!!

## Preparing for Outings:

As a parent, you know your child best. You also know, probably all too well, that public outings can sometimes be stressful on everyone! Below are some helpful tips to ease with the transition to new places.

1. **Prepare Your Child** - Try to give your child as much advance notice as possible to let him know what to expect. What will be happening?
  - Show some pictures of where you will be and what, specifically, you will be doing.
  - Repeat the information as much as possible—just before setting off, on the way there, and upon arrival.
  - You can make a visual schedule with simple pictures that represent, for instance, suitcase, car, grandma's house, cousins, dinner, and home again.
2. **Pack Your Bags** - Like many children, your child might have a favorite toy or blanket that is soothing to him. Take it with you to help him feel comforted.
3. **Really Research** - Many venues have special passes for children with autism or other special needs. Call ahead to find out how you might be accommodated. If possible, look for quiet places in which your child can decompress and recharge, so you can all stay longer—and have more fun!
4. **Time to Go** - In an event at which you'll be seated, plan to be on an aisle, in the back, or somewhere where there's an easy exit, in case your child needs to take a break or leave early. If you're driving, park as close to your destination as you can.

## Taking Care of the Caregiver:

Take care of yourself, so you can better take care of your children. Try to maintain healthy routines. Are you drinking enough water or eating healthy foods? Do simple activities that you enjoy and that help you feel calm. No matter what your situation is, try to:

- Let someone know you need a hug
- Cut out a picture that makes you feel good and keep it close at hand
- Exercise to reduce stress
- Take deep breaths
- Listen to your favorite song
- Stretch

**Connect with family members.** Feeling isolated is very common for parents, particularly during complicated times. You don't have to do this on your own. You can find support for yourself and for your family. Share your emotions with trusted friends and family and involve them with logistics. Is there anyone who can pick up one of your children after school or can help prepare food once in a while?

## Important Dates:

January 16<sup>th</sup> – No School, Martin Luther King  
January 19<sup>th</sup> – Quarter 2 Ends  
January 26<sup>th</sup> – Early Dismissal at 11:45am  
January 27<sup>th</sup> – No School





# Miss Motsko's March 2017 Newsletter!



## What is a mand?

Manding is one type of verbal behavior which can also be referred to as a request. Often times, manding is overlooked in children's programs; however, it is one of the basic skills that a child needs to have. The main purpose of a mand is for the child to get their wants and needs met. With that being said, in order for the child to mand or request for an item they need to have motivation. Without motivation, there is no mand!

For example, it is 80 degrees and humid outside and you just completed a 5K. As you cross the finish line you most likely are motivated for water or Gatorade. At this point, you may ask someone where you can get something to drink. By you asking someone where you can get a drink, you are manding (requesting). We often times take it for granted that we request for things we want or need when we cannot access them ourselves. It just comes naturally for us.

On the other hand, if it is 25 degrees and windy outside, you would be more motivated for something hot to drink such as hot chocolate. In this situation, you would be more inclined to mand for a hot drink because you are cold and have motivation to get warm.

## Why do we want our kids to be able to mand?

Manding is a crucial skill that is one of the first programs typically started for early learners. By teaching children how to mand, it will result in their lives getting better. Manding can be taught with any type of response form. A student can emit a mand through a vocalization, sign, or picture. Additionally, manding does not just stop at requesting for a single item or action. Manding becomes complex in manding for information, manding to remove aversive stimuli, and manding for missing items.

## Take Home – What can you do?

It is important for children to be able to mand in a variety of environments since that is a functional skill. At home, you may notice your child likes a particular toy, food, drink, activity, or action. When you see your child have motivation for something rather than providing them with it right away we can teach them the mand if they don't already know it. For example, your child is reaching for his juice, you identify that motivation is present so you pick up the cup and prompt your child "juice". When they emit the mand "juice", you provide them with a little bit of juice. You can then run a second trial with more juice in the cup, but this time instead of prompting them with "juice", you can say "ju" or "j" or nothing. If your child emits the mand of "juice" with less prompting reinforce them with more juice than what they received the first time. It is important to remember that if your child is learning how to mand we are not requiring him to say "please" or "thank you" when they do not understand what it means to be polite. "Please" and "thank you" are just extra words that make it harder for them to get what they are motivated for. Additionally, we teach our children to say "juice" versus "have juice", or "want juice". We know when they said "juice" what they want and again by adding extra words it makes it harder for them to get what they want; thus, it is an added response which is not necessary.

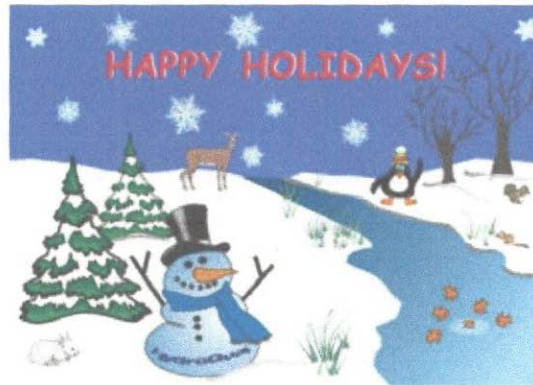


### Important Dates:

March 13<sup>th</sup> – SR Night at the Museum 5:30-8:30 at Reading Public Museum

March 29<sup>th</sup> – End of Quarter 3 & Early Dismissal 11:45am

March 31<sup>st</sup> – HSA Movie Night at SR 6:30-8:00pm



## The Training Topic this month is Listener Responding

**Listener Responding (LR) or Receptive Skills:** When a child responds to a direction as a listener. This skill usually involves selecting an item or following instructions. The child is not required to give a vocal response for this skill.

## Different types of Listener Responding Skills:

**Following Directions:** When an adult gives a direction and the child responds.

Ex. Adult says “Stand up” “raise your hand” “come here”

**Selecting items from a field:** Given an array, the child will select the correct item.

Ex. Adult says “Touch shoe” “Show me the cat”

**Performing Ongoing Actions:** The child will independently perform motor actions with or without objects.

Ex. Adult says “Show me tapping” “Show me rolling”

**Following Multi-Step Instructions:** When an adult gives oral directions, the child will respond.

Ex. Adult says (and provides necessary materials)

“Write your name on the paper, flip paper over”

“Put the \_\_\_\_ in the sink, and the \_\_\_\_ in the trash can”

“Put crayons in box, wash hands, line up”

## **What can I do at home?**

- Please continue to check your child’s daily communication sheet for any mastered targets. Opportunities for LR skills should be built into your child’s everyday life.
- You can help your child generalize the mastered LR skills by asking them to select items or follow directions in their natural environment (home, restaurants, playgrounds, stores, etc.).
- Try to vary the way you present the direction:
  - Touch the \_\_\_\_
  - Show me \_\_\_\_\_
  - Find the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Give me the \_\_\_\_\_
- If your child makes an error, be sure to provide him with the correct response. Ideally, re-present the direction so the child can respond correctly and independently.
- Remember to REINFORCE your child for correct responses!!

## **Reminders:**

Winter Break December 24 through January 4