Positive Behavior Support for Distance Learning:
Token Economy

What is a token economy?

A token economy involves delivering a token to your child following a desired behavior. Your child can then exchange earned tokens for preferred items or activities.

How does a token economy support distance learning?

When a behavior is rewarded it is likely to continue occurring. Using a token economy increases, or strengthens, the desired behaviors necessary for success during distance learning.

How do I use a token economy?

Be sure to teach your expectations and procedures **before** introducing a token economy!

1. Figure out Logistics

When? Determine when your child will be able to earn tokens. Will you implement the token economy during all distance learning activities? Or will it only be in place during certain activities? When will your child be able to exchange their tokens for a reward (e.g., whenever they've earned enough tokens, daily, weekly, etc.)?

Who? If your child has siblings, will each child have their own token economy? Or will the siblings work together as a group to earn a shared reward such as a special dessert, family game night, a later bedtime, etc.?

2. Determine Token Format

Your format of token delivery should be accessible and easy to deliver following desired behaviors. One option is a token board. A token board has spaces for tokens and a picture/words of what your child wants to earn. When your child engages in a desired behavior, you add a token to their token board and use behavior-specific praise to tell them why they earned the token. Once the token board is filled, your child earns the reward.

I'M WORKING FOR: IPAD TIME

3. Select Rewards

A great way to come up with motivating rewards is to ask your child what they want to work for. You can create a "menu" of available reward choices. Different categories of reward choices include:

accessing attention (e.g., video chat with friends)

accessing activities (e.g., iPad, video games)

escape from tasks (e.g., taking a break)