

LESSON 6

Sitting Still

Getting Ready

1. Read through the lesson before working with the child.
2. Organize the materials you will need for the lesson:
 - Progress Chart
 - Items necessary for completing lesson activities
 - Pencil or pen for marking charts
 - Reward badge or other tangible reward
3. Arrange a work space that will best suit lesson activities.
4. Begin working with the child.

Note: Make sure you observe and chart the child's behavior for one week before you begin the lesson. You can then compare the first week's chart with those of the following weeks to determine progress. (For more information on charting, refer to "Monitoring Child Progress" on page 9.)

Directions

The child who is always moving about and acting restless can present a problem. Such behavior might occur because the child wants attention or because you fail to notice and comment on the times when he is quiet. To lengthen the time a child can sit still, you must become conscious of his behavior. This lesson will help you and the child work together to create times of peace and quiet:

1. When a child is being overly active, try to ignore him. This is difficult, but it is important not to give undue attention to such behavior.
2. When a child is paying attention and sitting still, or at least not jumping about, be sure you praise him. It is important to notice when a child is quiet. His overactive behavior may be a bid for your attention.
3. A timer may be used to help a child sit still for longer periods of time. Set the timer near him, but out of reach, and tell him that he is to sit still for a short period of time (one to three minutes at first). Be sure he has something to keep him busy. You can make this into a kind of game. Begin to chart how long the child sits still and show him how he is doing. When he manages to sit still for the desired length of time, reward him. Have the child set his own limits of how long he will sit still. He will try harder to meet self-imposed limits.
4. You can make a contract with a child. "If you can sit still for one minute and work with your picture cards, I'll give you some milk and cookies." If the child fails to keep the contract, he forgoes the treat. If he succeeds, he receives his reward.
5. Be sure to chart the child's behavior so that you can determine his progress. Use the Progress Chart on page 34.
6. Once the child has mastered the skills in this lesson, give him a reward badge or other tangible reward.

Remember:

1. Notice when the child is behaving.
2. Be specific in your praise.
3. Reinforce immediately.
4. Reinforce small steps.
5. Follow the three steps for teaching.
6. Be consistent.
7. Ignore misbehavior.
8. Create a "quiet area" and use it when necessary.
9. Set conditions.
10. Make effective demands.
11. Reason with the child only when he is behaving.

**Adult Dialogue**

The skills to be taught in this lesson will vary from child to child. For this reason specific adult dialogue is not included. A few examples, however, are provided which demonstrate adult interactions with children in a variety of situations:

Example 1: Praising the child for sitting still.

C: (Is sitting quietly and working on a puzzle.)

A: Thank you for working on your puzzle so

quietly. I really like to see you working hard on something. Would you like me to help you?

C: Yes, I'm having trouble with this piece.

Example 2: Setting conditions and praising.

C: (Is trying to work in his coloring book but is restless and cannot keep his mind on it.)

A: If you work in your coloring book for one minute, I'll go for a walk with you.

C: (Colors a picture quietly for one minute.)

A: You are really trying. You worked hard on that picture. Let's take a nice walk together.

Example 3: Using a timer.

A: (Shows timer to child.)

See this timer? I want to find out how long you can sit still and look at your storybook. How long do you think you can do that?

C: I don't know. Maybe a minute?

A: Okay. Let's set the timer for one minute. I'll put it where you can see it.

(Explains how to tell when time is up.)

C: (Looks at storybook for one minute.)

A: That's very good! You looked at your book for a whole minute. Let's keep a record of how long you can sit and work quietly.

(Keep track of how long the child can sit still. After the child has sat still for one minute three times in a row, increase the time.)

