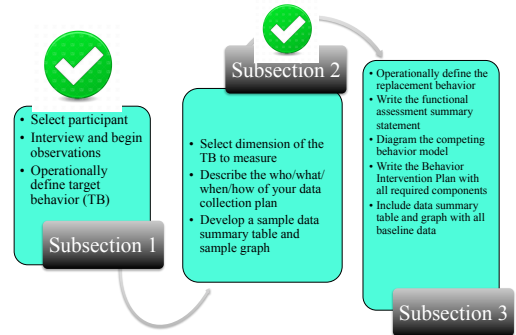


How to Effectively Use Reinforcement to Increase Academic and Social Behaviors

SPCD 519
Week 8



Overview of the three subsections of the Functional Assessment Project



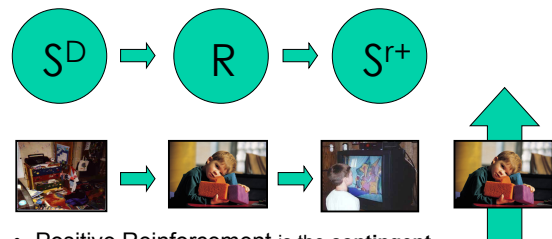
Three-Term Contingency

Antecedent (S^D) Behavior (R) Consequence (S^r)



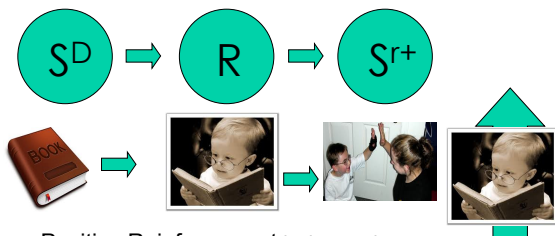
Contingencies of reinforcement are the relations between behaviors and the environmental events that influence behavior.

Positive Reinforcement



- Positive Reinforcement is the **contingent presentation** of a stimulus immediately following a response, which **strengthens** that response.
 - Positive reinforcement strengthens a behavior.

Positive Reinforcement



- Positive Reinforcement is the contingent **presentation** of a stimulus immediately following a response, which **strengthens** that response.
 - Positive reinforcement strengthens a behavior.

A *reward* is not necessarily a reinforcer.

A reward is an arbitrarily selected item used to recompense performance of a behavior. It does NOT act as a reinforcer unless it **increases/ sustains the future occurrence** of the behavior.



- **Primary Reinforcers** are unconditioned; they don't rely on previous learning to acquire reinforcing value.



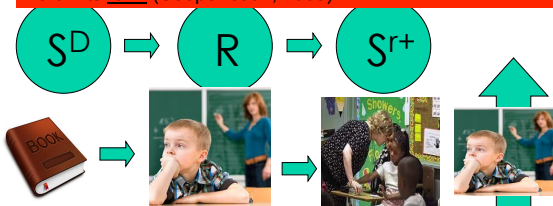
- Unconditioned stimuli can be pleasant **or** aversive.

Secondary Reinforcers are conditioned (learned). They acquire their reinforcing properties by being paired repeatedly and contingently with another stimulus that is already reinforcing.



Positive Reinforcement

The function of a behavior is more important for intervention than its form (Cooper et al., 2008).



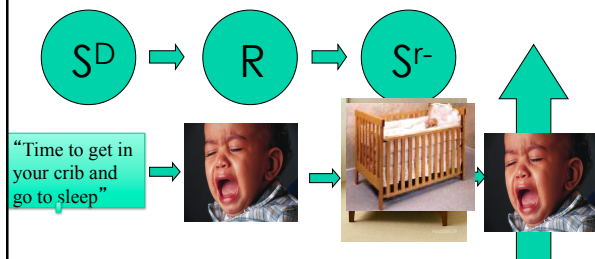
- Positive Reinforcement is the contingent **presentation** of a stimulus immediately following a response, which **strengthens** that response.
 - Positive reinforcement strengthens a behavior.

Effective Selection of Reinforcers

- Match the reinforcer to the individual
 - Consider the individual's age, social context, preferences, etc.
- Only use external reinforcers when needed and thin them as soon as is feasible or replace with intrinsic, naturally occurring reinforcers
- Monitor reinforcer use and vary them frequently

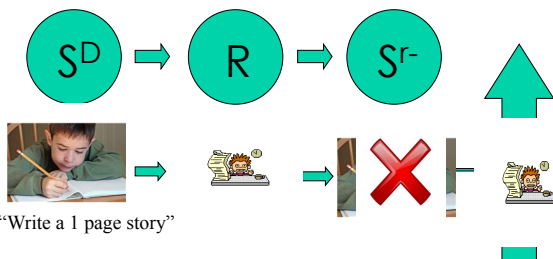


Negative Reinforcement: e.g., Crying



- The **contingent removal** of a stimulus immediately following a response, which **increases** the future probability and/or rate of that response.

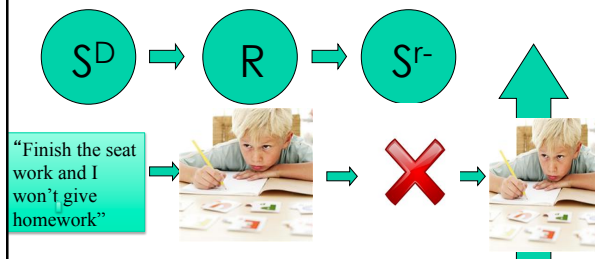
Negative Reinforcement: Screaming



"Write a 1 page story"

- The **contingent removal** of a stimulus immediately following a response, which **increases** the future probability and/or rate of that response.

Negative Reinforcement: Completing Classwork



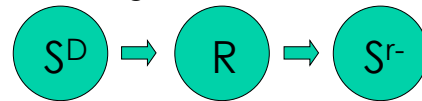
"Finish the seat work and I won't give homework"

- The **contingent removal** of a stimulus immediately following a response, which **increases** the future probability and/or rate of that response.

Related Terms

- Avoidance = cases of negative reinforcement in which the individual engages in a behavior to avoid or postpone an aversive stimulus
- Escape = behavior that removes or reduces an aversive stimulus

Negative Reinforcement



Escape and avoidance behaviors are maintained by negative reinforcement. Keep this in mind when teaching a replacement behavior that has the function of escape or avoidance.

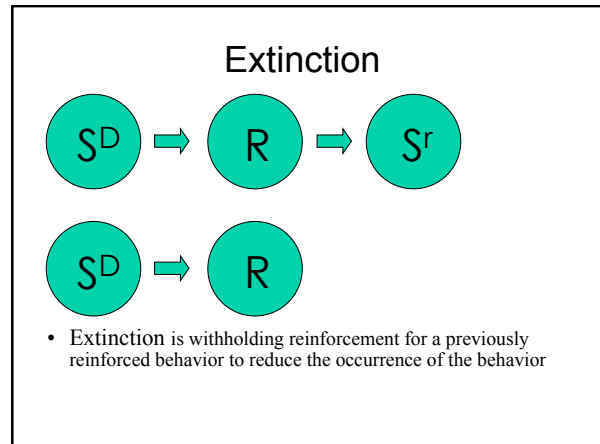
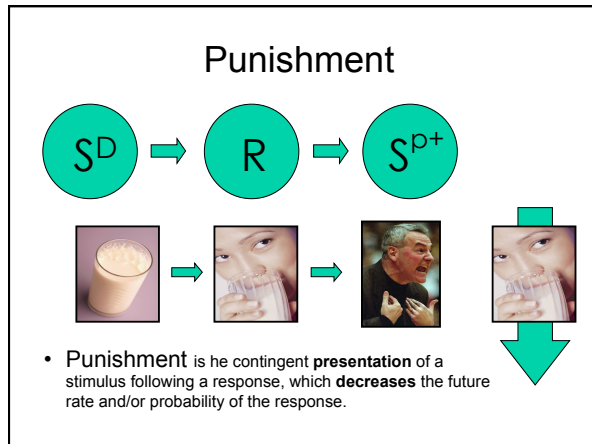
“Every teacher makes a decision to run a classroom in such a way that students behave appropriately to avoid unpleasantness from the teacher or in such a way that they behave appropriately because the teacher provides many opportunities for positive reinforcement.”

(Alberto & Troutman, p. 331, 2003 emphasis added)



Potentially Confusing Concepts:

- **Negative reinforcement**
 - Removes aversive consequence so that a behavior is strengthened (e.g., frequency increases)
- **Punishment**
 - Applies* an aversive consequence so that behavior decreases
- **Extinction**
 - Discontinuation of reinforcement to decrease a behavior



Another way to think about it . . .

	Increase Behavior	Decrease Behavior	Add a consequence	Remove a consequence	Discontinue consequence
Negative Reinforcement	X			X	
Positive Reinforcement	X		X		
Extinction		X			X
Punishment		X	X		