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Take your time and enjoy the process of learning.

The side bar information is used by many therapists to add "color" and warmth to their therapy sessions. You will not be tested on the side bar information unless it is a highlight of information from the text.

When you are done with the course, take the posttest. When you pass the posttest (70% or higher) and pay the course fee (\$10 per unit), you will be issued a CEU Certificate of Completion.

Enjoy!

<b>Course Name:</b>	Teaching Parents How to Deal With Uncooperative Behavior In School (age 4-12)
<b>Course Number:</b>	B6C5-UB4-12
<b>CEU:</b>	2.0
<b>Instructor:</b>	Philip Copitch, Ph.D.

### Course material based on:

## Basic Parenting 101: THE MANUAL YOUR CHILD SHOULD HAVE BEEN BORN WITH

ISBN 0-9675870-6-9

*How-2 Parenting Series*

This book is available to therapists from CEUforTherapists.com at wholesale pricing.

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“Why don’t I get it back till I’m 18...  
Does it take you that long to read it.”

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. You will study a cognitive-behavioral technique for helping parents teach cooperative behavior to their children.
2. You will read real life examples of how children learn.
3. You will study ways to teach a complicated subject to parents who are coming to you for help with their children.
4. You will experience the power of story as a cognitive-behavioral therapeutic tool.
5. You will see ways to demystify psychotherapy for your patients.

**Tell me, I forget.**

**Show me, I remember.**

**Involve me, I understand.**

## **SUGGESTED PREREQUISITE COURSES**

I am assuming that the student has a solid understanding of learning theory and cognitive behavioral techniques. This course is based on and refers back to:

- B6C1 Teaching Parents About How Their Children Learn
- B6C2 Teaching Parents How To Build Their Child's Self Esteem
- B6C3 Teaching Parents About How To Use Time Out Effectively
- B6C4 Teaching Parents About Family Rules

In this course we will look at how a therapist teaches parents how to deal with a complex family problem. The above course materials are available, free of charge, from [CEUforTherapists.com](http://CEUforTherapists.com).

The sections in red are for your information. The sections in black are how I explain the process to the parent. Please note that I use a cognitive behavioral approach.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this CEU course we are going to look at how to teach parents the process of dealing with uncooperative behavior in their children. The following process has been used with children suffering from mild to extreme behavior problems. In this situation we will discuss a typical family that may come for help at your practice or agency.

### **UNCOOPERATIVE BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOL (4-12 YEAR OLD)**

The following information was documented during the initial treatment session with a mother concerned about her son's poor school performance.

My son, Tony, is eight years old. To tell you the truth, he has always been a handful. He is very active and often rude. He is now in second grade. Kindergarten and first grade were a mess. I kept hearing from the teachers that my son was "hyperactive" and that he needed medication. I put him on medication and he is still a handful. The principal and the teacher have worked it out that if my son gets his name on the board three times he is sent home. At least once a week I am called to come pick him up from school. I take him home and put him on room restrictions. The principal told me that if I keep him in his room he will choose to act better in class so he doesn't have to go to his room.

I am very concerned that my son is learning very little in school. I dread the phone ringing. The school secretary told me that my son was troubled and I should seek help. The school isn't helping ... they just send him home.

The story above is very common. Parents and the school in conflict and worry about a youngster. This isn't the forum for me to discuss this problem from the institutional level. But, suffice to say, I believe that the school is there to help your child learn. Sometimes, before a child can learn, we have to help her get control over herself.

For some children medication can go a long way in helping them to control themselves. But,

for most children a behavior modification program is all that is needed. Most of the children I see do not need medication. In fact, many of the children I work with need to be weaned off the medication program they are on so that they can start to practice their new found interpersonal skills.

Please note, I am not anti-medication. Some children really need it. But, I do advocate caution. Over the years I have seen many more children on medication who didn't need it, than children not getting the medication that they did need. I am always surprised when a parent tells me that "Johnny can't do such and such because he is hyper." Some parents use the fact that their child is on medication as a sign, "I'm still a good parent, my son is diagnosed with ADHD!" Personally, it is much more interesting to me to see what a child *can do* versus what they can't do.

Also, medication does not solve the acting out behavior for most children. It simply allows the child to notice his interactions with the world. It allows his cognition to work better for him. I am concerned when medication is prescribed for attention deficit and hyperactive disorders without behavioral management follow-up and evaluation.

Let's get down to the task at hand. Little Tony is having problems staying in school. We all know that it is best for Tony to stay in class, but his behavior is so disruptive that he is often asked to leave.

The first thing we must do is find out how often Tony is kicked out of class. This is our **baseline study**. This is the starting point. It lets us see where we are and if what we are doing is helping the situation.

We checked the school records (most schools keep very good records) and found that over the last month (20 school days) Tony was sent home 11 times. He was also sent to the office, then returned to class, 26 times. So our baseline number is 37. Thirty-seven times in 20 days that Tony was removed from his class. This has to be a big problem for the classroom teacher. The teacher is there to teach and almost twice a day she needs to stop her class to deal with Tony to the point where he is sent out of the room. This level of distraction is very hard on the whole class.

Once we have the baseline, the starting point, we need to develop a treatment program to decrease this baseline number. This tends to be a bone of contention for most teachers and parents. They want the number to become zero as soon as possible. Unfortunately, this seldom happens. It took a long time (usually weeks) for the negative behavior to escalate to its present level. As we discussed in the prerequisite course B6C1: Teaching Parents About How Their Children Learn: SHAPING, you can't get a dolphin to jump out of the ocean by yelling "Jump" over a boat's P.A. system.

The way we solve this problem is also by using successive approximation, shaping. The nice thing is that we tend to see positive change from day one.

You may often find that parents are feeling overwhelmed by the power and presentation of the school system. Helping parents work with, and not fight with, the individuals at the school is somewhat trying. I suggest that you empower parents with the fact that the school system indirectly works for them, but not at their beckoned call. Parents hold a lot of power within the school system. The school is legally obligated to meet the needs of the student. It is important that parents learn the procedure necessary to access the school's obligatory help. Parents need to work within the system and not alienate the individuals that work at the school.

Unfortunately, I have experienced school personnel that did not completely disclose the parental rights to the parent. In these situations, I have called the principal and asked her to meet with the parents and me. I have found that this non-judgmental meeting has quickly set things back on track.

## A BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TEAM FOR TONY

The adults involved with Tony's education met at the school. The participants were:

Teacher: Mrs. Cramer

Classroom aide: Mrs. Cohan

Principal: Mrs. Bloom

School psychologist: Mr. Delman

Mom: Mrs. Diaz

Tony's therapist: Dr. Phil (I asked for this meeting and also asked for permission, from the principal, to facilitate it.)

At first there was a little tension in the room. The school personnel were frustrated about the escalation of Tony's behavior. Mom was down right upset. She really wanted to blame the school for wasting her child's first 2 1/2 years of education. I changed the tone by explaining:

I am happy to see everyone here. I appreciate that you are all taking your time to help Tony. I am sure there are many demands on your after school time and I think it is wonderful that you have chosen to stay after school to help Tony.




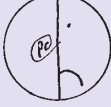

I am concerned that the problem of Tony's outbursts will get worse. I have been invited here by Mrs. Bloom and Mrs. Diaz to help organize a treatment program for Tony.

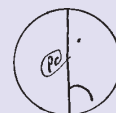
My goal is to take the burden of controlling Tony's behavior off of your shoulders and to place this burden back where it belongs ... on Tony. Tony needs to control himself. Tony has to let you all teach him. Tony has to let his mother parent him.

To get Tony back on track I am going to need your help. But, only a little bit of help, in the way of a minute here and a minute there. From what I have been told, Tony demands huge chunks of time, distracting the whole class.

It is important to note that teachers choose teaching as a profession because they wish to teach. I can only imagine the personal discomfort and frustrations Tony's behavior must be imposing on the school staff.

In all my years, I have never had a teaching team refuse to help children like Tony. What usually happens is that the team learns how to help Tony. Then they copy Tony's treat-

<u>Smiley</u>	<u>Point Value</u>	<u>Name</u>
	+2	A full smiley
	+1	A half a smiley
	+0	A flat smiley
	-1	A half a yucky face
	-2	A full yucky face



ment plan to help Sally, Randy, and George. I have had numerous schools invite me in to teach all their teachers at the same time how to defuse the classroom blowups and re-spark learning in a child that is seriously acting out.

Tony's teaching team wanted to help. We set up a positive /negative token economy to shape Tony's behaviors. Our goal was to help Tony deal with his outburst before he exploded and to help him win his teacher's attention and his mother's attention by staying on target throughout his school day. A token economy, by definition, is a behavior modification system that uses a token as a conditioned reinforcer. In a token economy behavior is shaped towards becoming more socially acceptable. (See B6C1 Teaching Parents About How Their Children Learn: THE POWER OF THE TOKEN ECONOMY)

Most token economies are what I call "positive token economies." This means that the child only earns tokens. Personally I prefer a Positive/Negative Token Economy. In this more sophisticated system, the child can earn (reward) as well as lose tokens (punishment). (Please note that this is much more work for the adults.) This behavior modification system is a lot of work for the teacher because the child's academic and personal needs must always be factored into the equation. A Positive/Negative Token Economy tends to be a warm learning environment that encourages personal responsibility.

## A SMILEY CHART FOR TONY

We used a Smiley Chart to keep track of the positive and negative token economy. Checkers, paper "money" and stickers are often used, but I have found that for young acting out children, a stationary chart seems to last throughout the day or week. It keeps the problem of "I lost my ..." or "He stole my token," from occurring.

Tony, like most children, seemed to do quite well when the teacher or the aide was supporting him 100% of the time. But, as you know, Tony has to support himself most of the time and allow teachers and aides to help him on an as need basis.

We wanted to give Tony constant, but reasonable reinforcement. Constant meaning, Tony could win his teacher's attention for positive behaviors. Reasonable meaning Mrs. Cramer could support Tony in just a few moments of actual one-on-one time. (She had 26 other children who also need her attention.)

The Smiley Chart which follows was used. Each symbol has its own name. The "nose" initials have two purposes. First it informs the parent who filled out that time period. Second, it keeps the children from filling in their own Smiley Chart.

On the following pages you will find a single day Smiley Chart. Tony got a new Smiley Chart taped to his desk every school morning. The Smiley Chart is broken down into segments.

From the teaching team discussion the following segments were devised: Morning Calendar/Reading, Recess, Lunch, Math, Recess, Group (Science, Language Arts, Study Skills by skill level)

The teaching team's goal was to give Tony information about his behavior many times throughout his day. The feedback points of the day were based on Tony's individual needs. Some areas were only 20 minutes while others were as long as 90 minutes. The team thought that the transition time from just before recess until just after recess was very difficult for Tony, so extra attention was placed on that 20 minute time period. For the same reason the team was comfortable with Group time being one segment, even though the time was 1 and 1/2 hours. Tony seemed to do quite well in a small group of three or four others and the aide.

At the appointed moment Mrs. Cramer would draw the appropriate Smiley on Tony's chart. This ritual only took a moment, but it was very formalized. With Tony sitting at his desk Mrs. Cramer would say, "Let's see how you have done this period." Then she would draw in the appropriate Smiley. Whatever the "score," Mrs. Cramer would take a moment to talk about choices and how happy she was that Tony was in her class. Her time commitment was usually less than a minute. For Tony it was the invaluable feedback that he so desperately needed to help him monitor his own behavior.

## WHAT THE SMILES "EARNED" TONY

It was possible for Tony to earn a total of 12 points. (2 per time period) When the teaching team filled out, from memory, the smiley sheet for the last three days, it was estimated that Tony would have earned 4 points on one day and less than 3 points on each of the other two days. I suggested that we start the shaping at 5 points. (You start the rope under the waterline to teach a dolphin to jump. With Tony I advocated starting at 5 because with just a little positive reinforcement he was able to get to 4 points.)

At the end of each day, Tony's mother came to school to pick him up. The new Must Rule was:

**If** Tony earns 5 or more Smiley points **Then** he gets to play for 15 minutes with mom after school at the playground. This is to be one-on-one time.

Mom was the reward. Tony got to *win* mom. And, mom was happy to be won. It was the teaching team's responsibility to "talk this up" (centered around mom and Tony's relationship)

The form is titled "Tony's Daily Smiley Sheet" and includes a date field for "Monday 9/14". It features a legend at the top with five smiley faces representing scores: +2 (happy), +1 (neutral), 0 (neutral), -1 (neutral), and -2 (sad). Below the legend is a table with two columns for "Time Period" and "Smiley". The rows are labeled "Calendar/Reading", "Math", "Recess", and "Group". A "Note:" field is at the bottom left, and a "See Back" checkbox is at the bottom right. The copyright notice "© 1995 Philip Copitch, Ph.D." is at the bottom.

throughout the day.

Wow, you earned 1 smiley point, that's great ... you're getting really close to taking your mom to the park.

That's rough, a half a yucky face ... Well, I guess you'll have to turn that around.

Children quickly learn (in one or two days) that if you get a -2 it takes a +2 to get back to zero. With this information, their outbursts tend to be of a shorter duration. If a child has a very bad period the teacher can remind him, when he gets his Smiley Chart filled out, that this period is now history and the next time period is a brand new slate. This compartmentalization with suggestive feedback helps the child to look at his choices. This is the beginning of making better choices. When the child realizes he has the choice to act positively he starts to understand how he impacts his world. He learns that he is an individual who can control himself. This is an important notion. For a lot of children it *feels* safer to be out of control than in control of their behaviors. When out of control they are just reacting. For them it is easier to react than it is to understand their environment.

If Tony had a truly bad day his mother was to focus on her hope that he would do better tomorrow. "I'm really looking forward to playing on the swing with you tomorrow." The goal was for mom to talk about how she lost her fun if Tony didn't get to take her to the park.

If Tony had a wonderful day, the goal was for Mrs. Diaz to outwardly enjoy going to the park, and throughout the rest of the day she was to tell people that her son took her to the park because he was doing so well in school. Mrs. Diaz noted, "When I told people that Tony took me to the park, Tony would stand tall and smile ear to ear. It was great ... he was getting talked about instead of getting yelled at."

In individual therapy Tony and I talked a lot about how to make choices. We explored the situation by asking Tony, "What could you do differently?" and followed up with If/Then statements. (See B6C3 Teaching Parents About How To Use Time Out Effectively: **ADVOCATING FOR GOOD CHOICES**) Mrs. Cramer and Mrs. Bloom started asking the same supportive type questions during the second week of the behavior modification program.

The following shows Tony's progress over the first two weeks (10 school days).

<u>Day</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
1	7	Went to park. Great evening at home.
2	4	Did not earn trip to park. Destroyed own room in anger.
3	6	Went to park. Great evening at home.
4	8	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
5	8	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
6	9	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
7	5	Went to park. Great evening at home.
8	9	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
9	11	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
10	10	Went to park. Normal evening at home.

The classroom teacher reported that "a different kid" came to school starting the third day. On the afternoon of the tenth day I met with the teacher and the mother to reevaluate the behavior

modification program. We made one minor change. Tony had to earn 9 points to win mom. This change was explained to Tony.

The following shows Tony's progress over the next two weeks (10 school days.)

<u>Day</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
11	11	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
12	11	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
13	11	Mom couldn't go to park due to a dental appointment. Tony got to pick menu for family dinner from three choices.
14	4	Tony was sent home.
15	7	Tony spent 2 hours in office.
16	11	Went to park. Great evening at home.
17	12	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
18	12	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
19	11	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
20	11	Went to park. Normal evening at home.

As you can see, when mom broke the rule (**If** Tony earns nine or more Smileys **Then** he gets to play for 15 minutes with mom after school at the playground. This is to be one-on-one time.), Tony's security fell apart.

On day twenty I met again with the teacher and mom. At this meeting we decided to make the "rope" a little higher. Up to this point Tony had been judged on what the teacher expected out of Tony. (Tony the problem child.) Starting day twenty-one I asked the teacher to judge Tony based on what she expected out of the average child in her class. This mind set change was not told to Tony. It had always been our goal to help Tony fit into an average second grade class by using successive approximation. That had not changed. It was now time for Tony to elicit more appropriate behavior to earn his reward (mom).

On day twenty-three I met with Tony and his mother. At that time I told Tony that the teacher, mom, and I were very proud that he was letting his teacher teach him. Now he had earned a chance to win more than just the park. The Must Rule was changed to:

**If** Tony earns 10 or more Smiley points **Then** he gets to play with mom 2 minutes for each smiley he earned. This is to be one-on-one time. Tony can pick:

- Play at park
- Go on a bike ride
- Have story time at home

The following shows Tony's progress over the next two weeks (9 school days. Teacher training, one day, no school.)

<u>Day</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
21	10	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
22	11	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
23	10	Went to park. Normal evening at home.
24	11	Bike ride. Great evening at home.
25	11	Bike ride. Great evening at home.
26	12	Story. (Rainy day) Normal evening at home.

27	12	Bike ride. Normal evening at home.
28	12	Bike ride. Normal evening at home.
29	11	Bike ride. Normal evening at home.

This was a vast improvement in the course of about five weeks. And, please note that the teacher also increased her expectations over the time period. At first Mrs. Cramer was happy to get Tony not to push other kids and to semi stay in his seat. By the third week she expected him to be doing his work and raising his hand if he needed her assistance. By the fifth week she told the principal (who told me), “Tony isn’t a problem, but Ashley and Marla need a Smiley Chart.”

It is also interesting that during week six of Tony’s treatment, Tony was invited to his first birthday party at the Mecca of birthdays, Chuck E. Cheese Pizza. I point this out because it is significant. Tony was starting to make friends. He wasn’t seen by the other students as the “bad boy,” as he told me. Now Tony was seen as one of the kids in class.

Five months after the smiley sheet had started, mom and the teacher went to a weekly progress report. As mom put it, “Tony really wants to play with his friends after school, not his mom. But we still plan on bike riding every Saturday afternoon.”

During the summer we took Tony off all his medication. Third grade is going well. His mother is now complaining about “...all the parties kids get invited to these days.” As Tony internalized his new skills, the behavior modification system became obsolete.

**A note about rewards. I very seldom use anything other than parental one-on-one time as the reward for appropriate school behavior. I find that it is by far the best reward for helping a child to develop appropriate social skills.**

See:

**B6C1 Teaching Parents About How Their Children Learn**






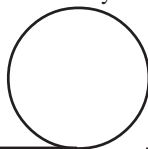
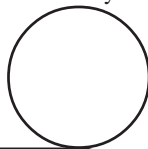
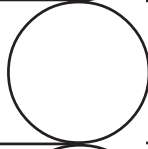
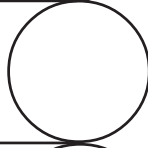
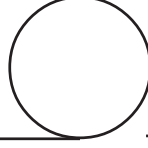
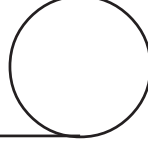
**B6C2 Teaching Parents How To Build Their Child’s Self Esteem**

**B6C3 Teaching Parents About How To Use Time Out Effectively**

**B6C4 Teaching Parents About Family Rules**

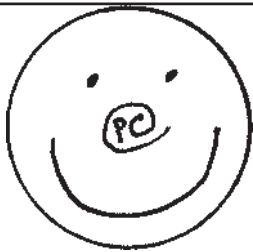
On the following pages you will find daily and weekly smiley charts that I use in my practice. You can obtain a master copy, for you to use freely, in Basic Parenting 101: The manual your child should have been born with. It is available to therapists from CEUforTherapists.com at wholesale pricing.

# SMILEY SHEET MASTERS

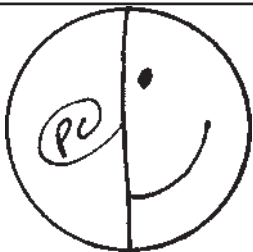
				
+2	+1	0	-1	-2
_____ 's Daily Smiley Sheet				
Day/Date: _____				
Time Period	Smiley	Time Period	Smiley	
				
				
				
Note:				
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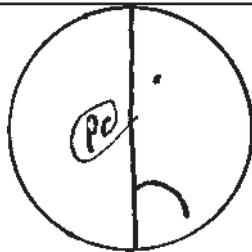
+2



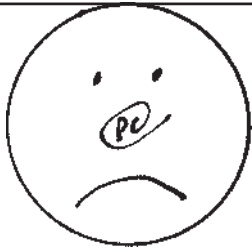
+1



0



-1



-2

# \_\_\_\_\_ 's Weekly Smiley Sheet

Week Of: \_\_\_\_\_

Time / Date  
Period \


Point Total:

See Back

See Back

See Back

See Back

See Back

See Back

See Back

## POSTTEST

When you're ready, take the posttest to obtain your CEU certificate. Your test consists of 5 multiple choice or true/false questions per Continuing Education Unit (3 CEU = 15 questions).



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