



IES Grant #
R324A160086

Teaching Replacement Skills



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REPLACEMENT SKILLS

After determining the function of the challenging behavior, you can identify a **REPLACEMENT SKILL** to teach the child. This replacement skill is a more appropriate form of communication that will meet the child's wants and needs, rather than engaging in challenging behavior. Over time, through effective teaching and reinforcing of this replacement skill, the child's more useful communication will increase and their challenging behavior will decrease.

Check out "Choosing Strategies" to figure out what replacement skill to teach!

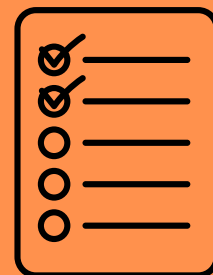
Setting up a teaching opportunity can feel unnatural at first, but it is an essential part in supporting a child to learn a new skill.

You may frequently prompt the child to use the replacement skill initially, but as the child learns the skill, they will begin to use it independently.

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

A **TEACHING OPPORTUNITY** is a time for you to help a child learn a new replacement skill(s) and practice using it. Initially, these opportunities will be purposefully set up by you so the child can practice the skill in an environment when challenging behavior is not likely to occur. After the child gains confidence and can reliably use the skill in low-stress situations, you can include these opportunities into routines and activities that may be more challenging for your child.

SETTING UP OPPORTUNITIES



PREPARE:

- Plan a situation that will motivate your child to use the skill.
- Gather necessary materials (ex: preferred items, visuals).
- Remind yourself of the goal for this time. Take a deep breath.

GET STARTED:

- **SAY SOMETHING** to **CUE** the child to a change in the current activity or routine (announcing the removal or presence of attention, an item, or activity). For example, "it's time to clean up toys" announces the removal of preferred items (toys).

PROVIDING SUPPORT: PROMPTS

WAIT, WATCH, & LISTEN for the child to independently use the replacement skill. Some children take longer to process what they want, so give them time (about 5s) to form their response.

- If the child does **NOT** use the skill independently, give a **PROMPT** (ex: "say 'no thank you'" or sign 'all done').

Consistently reinforcing a child's use of the replacement skill increases the likelihood they will use it to get what they want, rather than challenging behavior.



RESPONDING TO THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

- If the child **USES** the replacement skill (or a close attempt at the skill):
 - immediately give the child what they want (ex: allow them to escape the activity).
 - Provide positive descriptive feedback to increase the likelihood they will use it again in the future.
- If the child does **NOT** respond:
 - provide an additional **PROMPT** or **MODEL** the expected behavior.
- If the child **ENGAGES IN CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR**:
 - **REFER TO NEW RESPONSE** strategies according to function of the child's challenging behavior

See the planning sheet below to help prepare for and guide teaching opportunities.





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Planning a Teaching Opportunity

Below is a sheet you can use to plan what a teaching opportunity will look like. The table is filled out with an example of a teaching opportunity for teaching the replacement skill "Ask for More."
Use the blank table on page 4 to plan your own teaching opportunity.



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What does the child want to get or escape when they engage in challenging behavior? This is the FUNCTION of the child's challenging behavior (e.g., get a favorite toy, get a sibling to play, escape from bathtime).

Get more time on the iPad

What is a more appropriate or safer way for the child to get what they want? We'll call this the child's REPLACEMENT SKILL (e.g., say "Brother, please", say "All done", point to an item).

Say "more time please" or ask to keep the iPad

WHEN are you going teach the child this replacement skill?

Note: begin with a time when the child is LESS likely to engage in challenging behavior. After the child becomes more independent you can target more challenging times of day.

Play time after breakfast

What MATERIALS do you need? (e.g., an item the child likes, a timer)

iPad, timer

What is the CUE you are going to give that lets the child know they can get/escape something?

Note: challenging behavior may occur when you give this cue at first (ex: child may start screaming after you say "it's bath time", child may hit after you say "It's my turn for the iPad")

Okay, time for bath. I need the iPad now ; it's my turn with the iPad

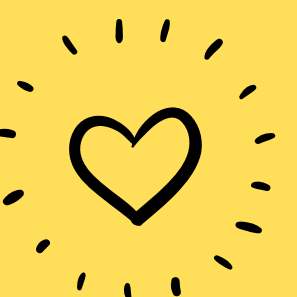
How can you HELP the child use the replacement skill after giving them the cue? This is called a PROMPT.

"You can say 'more iPad please'"

How will you RESPOND when they use the replacement skill?

Give them a few more minutes on the iPad when they ask

See the chart below to visualize the process for teaching a child a new replacement skill.





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Teaching Opportunity Flow Chart

Below is a flow chart you can use to help remember the process for teaching a child a new replacement skill. Use the blank flow chart to create a personalized version for yourself!

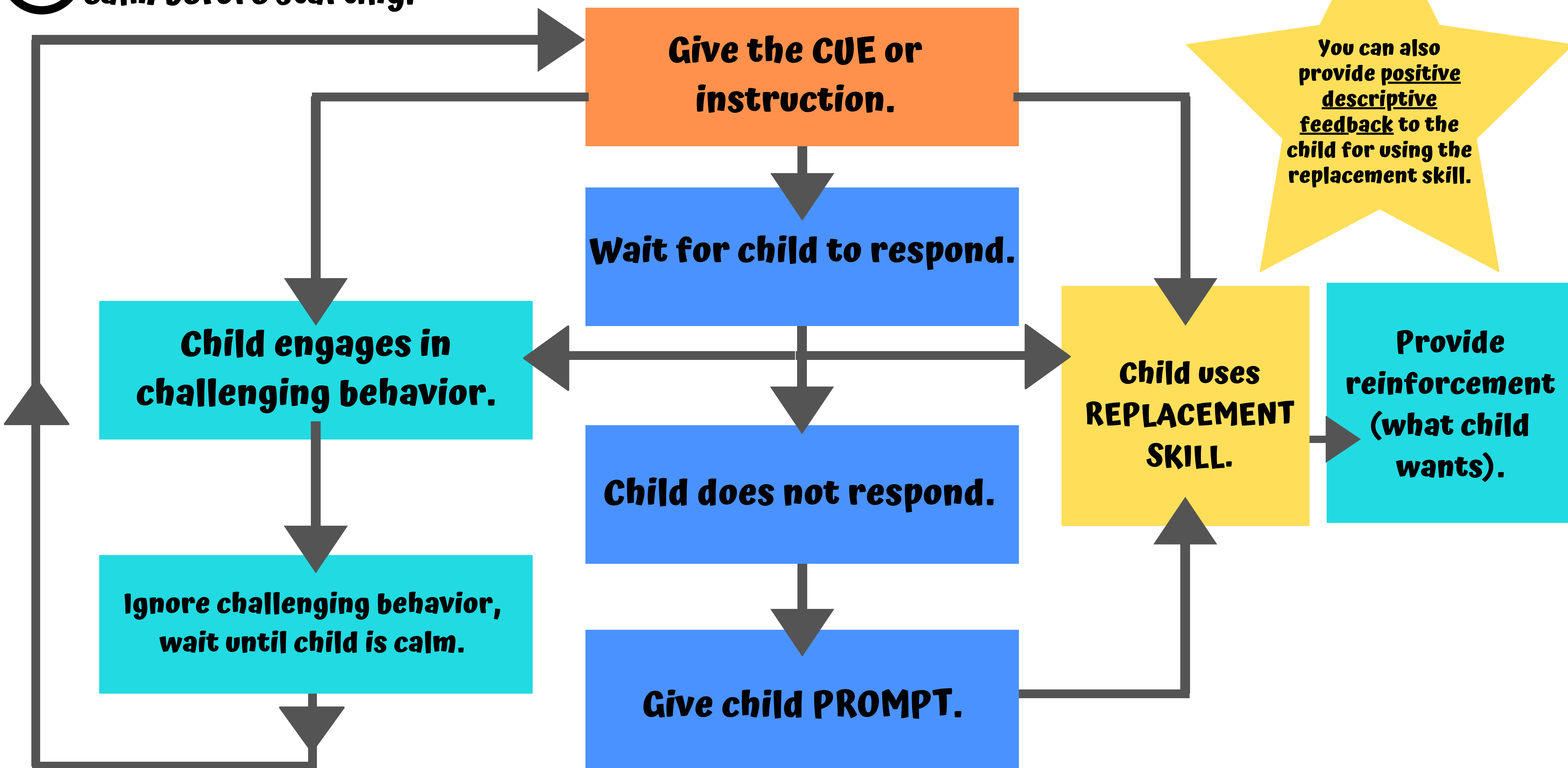


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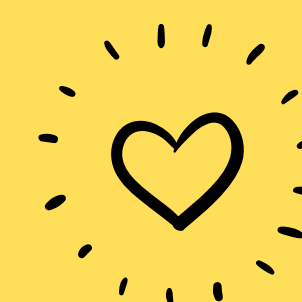
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! Make sure you and the child are calm before starting.



Use the blank planning sheet and flow chart on the next two pages to plan your own teaching opportunities.





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Planning a Teaching Opportunity



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What does the child want to get or escape when they engage in challenging behavior? This is the FUNCTION of the child's challenging behavior (e.g., get a favorite toy, get a sibling to play, escape from bathtime).

What is a more appropriate or safer way for the child to get what they want? We'll call this the child's REPLACEMENT SKILL (e.g., say "Brother, please", say "All done", point to an item).

WHEN are you going to teach the child this replacement skill? (Note: during what routine does the child usually engage in the challenging behavior?)

What MATERIALS do you need? (e.g., an item the child likes, a towel that signals it's bath time)

What is the "CUE" you are going to give that lets the child know they can get/escape something? (Note: challenging behavior usually happens when you give this cue; e.g., child may start screaming after you say "it's bath time", child may hit after you say "I have the iPad")

How can you HELP the child use the replacement skill after giving them the cue? This is called a PROMPT. (e.g., cue: "it's bathtime"; help: "you can say 'no, thank you'")

What will you give/let the child escape after they use the replacement skill? (e.g., if the child usually engages in challenging behavior to get an item, give them the item immediately after they say "iPad, please")



**Teaching opportunities will look different for different functions, challenging behaviors, and replacement skills.
Use one planning sheet per replacement skill for easier planning.**





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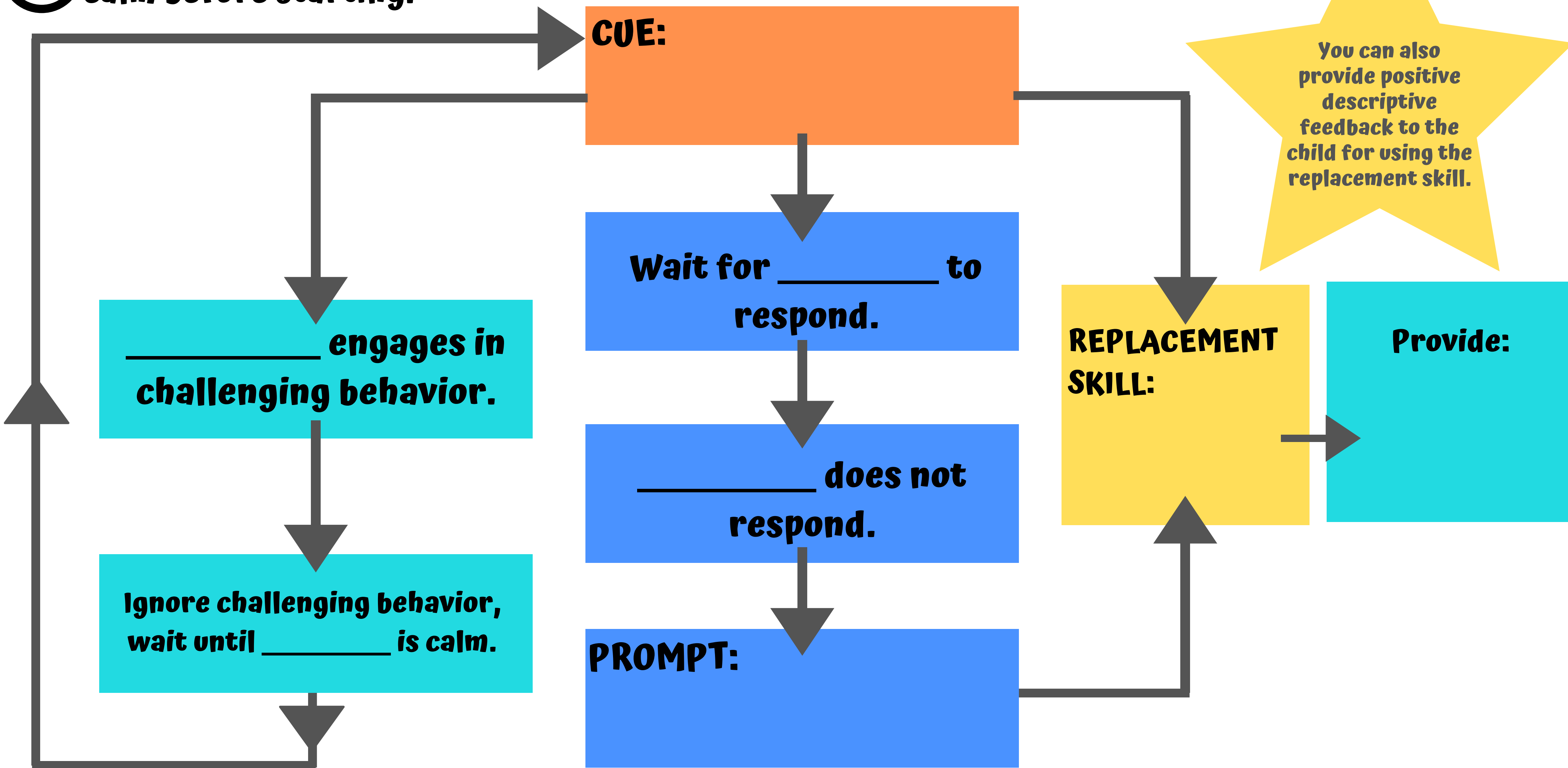


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Teaching Opportunity Flow Chart

! Make sure you and the child are calm before starting.



! Fill in the blanks on the decision tree with the responses on your planning sheet. **!**