

# Escape Maintained Behaviour *Workbook*



A workbook designed to help you understand your child's  
behaviour and use strategies that actually work

Nicole Plumridge

# The Basics



## What is escape behaviour?

*ACTION: identify behaviours that your child engages in to access escape*

- All behaviour occurs for a reason.
- Escape maintained behaviour is behaviour your child engages in to escape or avoid doing activities that are perceived to be aversive.



## What's the reinforcer?

*ACTION: if the reinforcer is escape, identify acceptable alternative responses your child can engage in to access escape.*

- Ensure escape is the reinforcer for the behaviour in question.
- Work with your child to come up with alternative responses your child can engage in to access escape.



## Use strategies that work

*ACTION: test out some of the strategies in this workbook and see what works for you and your child*

- It is not always possible to escape demands and/or get out of doing tasks.
- Involve your child in deciding which strategies to try out when managing escape related behaviours.



## How can this workbook help?

*ACTION: this workbook offers tried and tested strategies to help manage challenging behaviour. Take a moment to reflect on what worked and what didn't.*

- This workbook is designed to help bring clarity to certain behaviours.
- Which strategies worked? Why do you think certain strategies worked better than others?

# Strategies

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES	PREFERENCE ASSESSMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When moving from a high preferred activity (ex. iPad) to a low preferred activity (ex. homework), include a transition activity, such as a somewhat preferred activity (ex. coloring at the homework table).</li> <li>• You will have to establish/rank activities beforehand so that you know whether an activity is low/medium/high preferred.</li> <li>• Keep in mind that preferences change often.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As we just mentioned, preferences are always changing.</li> <li>• Before starting a task, you can show your child different items they can earn after they do their work. You can also simply ask them what they want to earn.</li> <li>• The way you identify their preferences will vary depending on their level of understanding.</li> <li>• Once you have run your assessment and established what is highly preferred, establish a contingency.</li> </ul>
REMINDERS	ALTERNATIVE RESPONSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here is where you discuss the contingency with your child, ex. "Once you finish your homework, you can have 20 minutes of iPad time."</li> <li>• If your child gets distracted or off-task while completing the homework assignment, remind them of what they are earning once they finish.</li> <li>• You can do this based on the behaviour they are exhibiting, at a fixed time interval or randomly as they work on the task.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on your child's level of need/support, they may not understand the contingency or you may find that following through on it is difficult for them.</li> <li>• It is important to teach your child an appropriate alternative response that will give them the same consequence as the challenging behavior.</li> <li>• This could be as simple as teaching your child to say, "break," as opposed to hitting you to access a break.</li> </ul>

# Strategies

VISUALS	TIMERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In order to support your child and assist them with understanding the contingency, you could use visuals.</i></li> <li>• <i>This will look different depending on your child's level of understanding.</i></li> <li>• <i>It could be a picture of what they have to do first (ex. picture of doing work at the table) and next to that a picture of what they are earning (ex. iPad)</i></li> <li>• <i>Alternatively, the schedule could be written out in text form, on the iPad etc.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Time is an abstract concept and a difficult one to grasp for many children.</i></li> <li>• <i>In order to make time more tangible and understandable, you can try using a timer.</i></li> <li>• <i>Instead of telling your child they have to sit and do homework, tell them they have to do homework for 20 minutes and set the timer. It is important to supervise them to ensure they are not getting distracted during that time. If they are prompt them to ask for a break (and stop the timer).</i></li> </ul>
CHOICE	REINFORCEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This is a simple strategy which really works!</i></li> <li>• <i>If there is something your child does not enjoy doing, try and find something within the activity that they have control over and allow them to choose between different alternatives.</i></li> <li>• <i>Let them decide their schedule, the order in which they complete homework, the materials they use etc.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT!!!!</i></li> <li>• <i>Once your child completes the required task, ensure they are rewarded for it!</i></li> <li>• <i>It is now your job to follow through with the contingency and deliver the reward.</i></li> <li>• <i>This is NOT bribing. If your child completed a task which is aversive to them for whatever reason, they deserve a reward.</i></li> <li>• <i>Think about it... You wouldn't go to work without paycheck at the end of the month... It's not bribing, it's reinforcing. You get more of what you reinforce!</i></li> </ul>

# INVOLVE YOUR CHILD



## INCLUDE YOUR CHILD IN THE DECISIONS THAT INVOLVE THEM

- *Talk to your child about what's important to them*
- *Find balance between your child's needs and the needs of the external world (ex. parents, siblings, teachers etc.)*
- *Check in regularly with your child to see if interventions/plans are working from their perspective*

List some of your child's priorities	How to balance your child's priorities & others
<p><i>What is important to your child? Either have you or your child list some activities/hobbies etc. that are important to them.</i></p>	<p><i>Brainstorm 3-5 ideas/strategies on how to balance your child's needs with those of the external world.</i></p>
1. ....	..... ..... .....
2. ....	..... ..... .....
3. ....	..... ..... .....

# CONCLUSION

If you found this workbook helpful, subscribe to Psychminds Podcast so that you can stay updated and be the first to know when new content is available

- *I hope this workbook helped and that you were able to take something useful away from it. Always feel free to reach out. I'd love to hear what worked for you and what didn't.*
- *For similar material or content related to my book writing journey, feel free to check out the below handles:*

## Psychminds Platform

*Website: [www.psychminds.com](http://www.psychminds.com)*

*Instagram: [@psychmindspodcast](https://www.instagram.com/psychmindspodcast)*

*Podcast: Psychminds Podcast*

## Author Platform

*Website: [www.nicoleplumridge.com](http://www.nicoleplumridge.com)*

*Instagram: [@authornicoleplumridge](https://www.instagram.com/authornicoleplumridge)*

Rate. Review. Subscribe.  
THANK YOU!

