



# TEACHING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION

Functional Communication Training (FCT) is a very powerful tool that teaches a child to communicate. Through FCT, a child is taught to get their needs met through their communication instead of relying on their problem behavior. What a superpower!



**Functional Communication Training increases communication skills while decreasing problem behavior.**

## How does it work?

Problem behavior may happen because communication is hard. It can be easier to cry, yell, or run away than ask for something nicely.

The goal is to teach simple and easy ways to communicate. Your child will learn that communication gets them what they want, not acting out or becoming upset.

Over time, communication increases and problem behavior decreases!

## Practice is the key to learning!

Practice is needed for your child to learn to communicate. Be prepared to help your child through their problem behavior! Don't worry - this won't last forever. This is an important part of the learning process.

**More practice = faster reductions in problem behavior and greater increases in communication!**

### Parent Tip

Teaching your child to communicate means dealing with problem behavior. This can be overwhelming. Recognize when you are becoming overwhelmed and take a step away. During this process, when you are calm, your child is more likely to be calm. This will help maintain a positive learning environment.

### What can you do?

- ✖ Talk with your BCBA about your child's communication. Your BCBA will help determine a plan for you and your family.
- ✖ Keep your expectations realistic. Even if your child is a good communicator, the goal is to make communication quick and easy for them.
- ✖ Help your child to communicate when one of these situations happens. Once they communicate, make sure to give them what they asked for right away!
- ✖ The more practice they have with you, the faster they will learn.