## Pairing

### WHAT IS IT?
When two items or activities are consistently experienced together the perceived value of one will influence the perceived value of the other. This is done by consistently pairing yourself with your student’s favorite things. Pairing causes the value of these reinforcing objects to be transferred to your student’s perceived value of you.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
- To establish yourself as a reinforcer.
- To establish the work area as reinforcing, not aversive.
- Once your interaction is paired with fun activities, the student will begin to see your interaction as a fun activity worth making behavioral adjustments to maintain.
- The student will desire to keep your interaction and will begin to make choices designed to maintain it.

- It can be used with everyone!
- When developing a relationship with students, staff, family, and friends.
- To maintain instructional control.

### WHEN CAN IT BE USED?
- It can be used with everyone!
- When developing a relationship with students, staff, family, and friends.
- To maintain instructional control.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT?
1. It is recommended that 75% of every interaction should be reserved for the process of pairing yourself with fun activities and known reinforcement. For example, if it takes 15 seconds for your student to answer three instructions, you should then spend about 45 seconds reinforcing and sharing in a fun activity with him before introducing your next set of instructions.
2. Pairing activities should be led by the student’s motivation and should include only non-verbal (“ooohs” and “ahhhhs”) and declarative language (“Wow, this is fun!” “Thank you” and “I love playing cars!”).
3. To pair yourself with reinforcement, allow the student access to play with anything he is interested in as long as you are allowed to play along with him. Make the student’s playtime more fun because you are a part of it. For example, if he wants music, you should be the one to provide the music. In addition, you could hold him, bounce and dance with him while he is listening.
4. Declarative language is language that asks for nothing of your student. You should practice sharing your thoughts and ideas with your student in creative and exciting ways without requiring anything in return.
5. Avoid asking questions or making requests during pairing. Saying “Your turn,” “Look at this” and “Try this” all ask for something for the student and can take away from your attempts to pair with reinforcement.
6. Don’t let the student leave the pairing area with a toy to play alone. The student can have access to the item as long as you are a part of the activity.

### REFERENCES

Schramm, R. & Miller, M. (2014). *The seven steps to earning instructional control: A program guide for developing learner cooperation*. Pro-ABA.

To view a short video, scan here: