

Homework List - Autism Parent Course - Part 1

This homework comes from the online course: TAGteach for Autism with Martha Gabler. These instructions for completing the homework are accompanied by Homework Sheets that you can fill in.

Course Section 1-1 What it Means to Use TAGteach

Make a list of the labels that you commonly use (in conversation, or just in your head) to describe your child. Start a page with the first label as a heading. Under the label write down as many specific behaviors you can think of that go with that label. Repeat for all the labels.

Try to focus of finding labels that are positive, not just the negative ones!

Course Section 1-2 Observation

If you didn't have a chance to do your observation, please do this as soon as you can. It is very important to learn to become a good observer and to observe your child to see exactly what behaviors he is doing.

Here is a link to the child observation chart:

<http://autismchaostocalm.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Child-Observation-chart.pdf>

If you don't have a child handy, or you want more practice, here is a video you can watch. Focus on the physical movements. Record the movements she makes with her feet, hands, arms, legs, head, body. When you think about it this way you will see that there is a lot more to describe than just, "she is walking along the couch". Be as detailed as you can. If you watch it several times you will see more each time.

On the observation sheet for your own child, pick one behavior that you observed that is easy for your child and that you would like to see more of. Choose something that is a productive behavior that could grow into something useful for the child. For example, you might have noticed that your child sometimes reaches for an object, or looks at something or takes two or more steps in the same direction. These are all behaviors that can be increased and shaped into a behavior that will be helpful for the child. Look at your behavior observation chart right now and circle or highlight your top choice of a behavior you would like to increase.

Course Section 1-3 What is a Tag Point?

Look at your observation chart again. Make a list of all the behaviors you would like to see more of. Write them all out as tag points. Be sure to use the WOOF criteria!

Course Section 1-4 Getting Started

Now it's time to teach your child that the tag = great things happen!

Some people will simply tag (click) and give the child a candy or other food reinforcer several times to teach the child that the tag sound predicts good things to come. This can work, but it could have the drawback of reinforcing something the child is doing, like sitting still doing nothing for example, and then you have taught a behavior you didn't mean to teach.

A better approach is to choose a very simple behavior and start with that. Any one of the behaviors in the sample videos shown above are great choices.

The very simplest is to give the tag point to say please (or sign please), tag and give the reinforcer. This makes a quick and memorable impression on the child.

Capturing an easy behavior, like high five, wave, peek-a-boo or reaching for an object can also work for young or non-verbal children that can't follow instructions.

With older verbal children or children that can sign and understand explanations you can explain that they will get a treat after each tag and that the tag means they got the tag point right. Tell them what the tag point is, tag and you're off. Start with something they like to do or want to learn.

Save the more difficult stuff for later, once they understand the game and like to work with tagging.

Your homework is to pick one thing that is easy for your child, create a tag point, tag and treat 10 times in a row. That's it.

If you can't find any behavior, you can start with exhales. Every child can do that.

Course Section 1-5 More Complex Skills

Go back to your observation chart and pick one of the behaviors that you'd like to see more of. Or just choose something simple that you would like to teach your child from the list of behaviors from the labels homework.

Write down all the steps, or individual parts of the behavior or skill you want to teach. Be as detailed as you can. Pick the behavior from the list that seems like it would be easiest to teach, or pick the one that seems the most important for success overall. Write this down in the form of a tag point. Be sure to start back far enough that it is something the child can already do, so he's guaranteed a tag the first time.

Say to your child "the tag point is.." (even if he's non-verbal) and tag when he does it.

For example. Say you wanted him write the letter A. First he would need to come to the table and sit and hold a pencil. If he can't do any of things, you will have to break it down until you find something he can do, that will lead up to the goal behavior. At first this might just be to glance at the work table, then take a step toward it.

If your child can come and sit and pick up a pencil, you could start with "the tag point is pick up the pencil".

Whatever the child can do, start with that and build on it.

Plan and Track Your Teaching

Use the WOOF Planning and Tracking Sheet to plan and track your teaching. There is a completed example and a blank in the homework sheets file. Make as many copies as you like of these. This will form a valuable record of your progress. Circle the step you are working on. It could be that you need more than one tag point to accomplish a single step in the list, but you will work on only one tag point at a time.

You don't have to work on the steps in order, you could start with the easiest, or the most important.

If it turns out that what you wrote down as one step, actually requires four steps, just make the original one step the Goal Behavior and then list the four steps and start from there.

When you have decided on your first tag point, evaluate it against the WOOF criteria and check off all four boxes. Refine the tag point until it meets all four WOOF criteria.

How to Run a Teaching Session

Practice with your child for 10 trials. Keep track of the number your child gets correct, using the tracking sheet. If your child doesn't get a tag three times in a row, make an easier tag point.

If you can manage it, set a timer and keep track of how long each session lasts. You should see over time that as your child becomes more proficient, it takes less time to do 10 trials. At first it might be too much for you to keep track of the time, but once you become better at tagging and planning teaching sessions, you will be able to add a timer to the mix.

When your child gets 8/10 correct, take a break and figure out the next tag point. Try that one.

Repeat until you have done 3 trials if it seems appropriate. If your child is starting to show signs of fatigue or anxiety stop. If your child has a great success and you have already done a few trials, stop, take a play break and then go back to the teaching.

You may have to stay on one tag point for several trials, or you may move to the next tag point after only one trial. You may have to go back to a completed tag point if the child has trouble in a future session.

You could do several trials in one session, in one day, or spread out over several days. Do whatever works best for you and your child.

Whatever you do, be sure to KEEP TRACK! This will be a valuable record to share with your child's behavior professionals and it will be something you can look back on if you ever feel that you are not making progress. You'll see the progress right there on the sheet and you'll know that you and your child can do this!

Course Section 1-6 Break it Down Further

Pick 2 behaviors from the lists of behaviors you made in the labels exercise.

Write down the first one and then write down as many precursor and sub-behaviors as you can think of using the WOOF Planning and Tracking Sheet. Be as detailed as possible. Circle one that you are sure your child can do. This does not have to be the first behavior in the sequence. Write down that behavior in the form of a tag point on the sheet and make sure it meets the WOOF criteria.

If your child doesn't get it right 3 times in a row (or you know from the first trial that he can't do it), break it down further until you find something he can do easily and work up from there.

Try this out with your child and record his progress.

When the child gets 8/10 tries correct, move to the next tag point. Take breaks as required and repeat the process with third tag point. You may get through all three in one session of 3 trials in a row or it may take several days. As long as your child is happy and learning, the pace doesn't matter. Things will speed up as you both become more proficient.

When you have completed the tracking sheets for the first behavior that you picked, move to the second one and repeat the process.

Course Section 1-7 Observing a TAGteach Session

Watch the video below three times (or more would be even better). This is an example of excellent TAGteaching! The mom, Keri Gorman, is a Level 3 TAGteacher and her son Max is very tag savvy. In this case she does not need to give him candy or any tangible reinforcer after the tag. He just likes to know that he is having success.

Make a list of your observations in three categories (focus on only one category per viewing):

1. Learner
2. Teacher
3. Environment

Homework Sheet 1-1

Labels I Use to Describe My Child

Homework Sheet 1-1

Behaviors That Go With the Label

Label: *Loving*

Behaviors: *Gives hugs*
Gives kisses
Lets us hold her stuffed animals

Label:

Behaviors:

Label:

Behaviors:

Label:

Behaviors:

Homework Sheet 1-3

Create Some Tag Points

Behaviors I'd like to see more of (that my child is already doing)

Looking in my direction, pointing at objects, sitting on a cushion

The tag point is... *Turn head toward me*

W O O F

The tag point is... *Points*

W O O F

The tag point is... *Walks near cushion*

W O O F

Behaviors I'd like to see more of (that my child is already doing)

The tag point is...

W O O F

The tag point is...

W O O F

The tag point is...

W O O F

The tag point is...

W O O F

The tag point is...

W O O F

Homework Sheet 1-5

A More Complex Skill

The goal behavior: Rolling a ball

Steps involved: Looks at ball

- Moves hand toward ball (when I offer the ball)
- Touches ball with hand (when I offer the ball)
- Touches ball with hand (when I roll the ball to him)
- Pushes ball with hand

The tag point is... Turn head toward ball

W O O F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Date: 2015/11/13

Length of session: 5 min

||||| ||

Trial 2- # Correct

Date: 2015/11/13

Length of session: 4 min

||||| ||

Trial 3 - # Correct

Date: 2015/11/14

Length of session: 2 min

||||| ||||

The goal behavior:

Steps involved:

The tag point is...

W O O F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 2- # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 3 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 4 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 5- # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 6 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

WOOF Planning and Tracking Sheet

The goal behavior:

Steps involved:

The tag point is...

W O O F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 2- # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 3 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 4 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 5- # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 6 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

The goal behavior:

Steps involved:

The tag point is...

W O O F

Trial 1 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 2- # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 3 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 4 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 5- # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Trial 6 - # Correct

Date:

Length of session:

Homework Sheet 1-7

Observing a TAGteach Session

Observations about the Learner:

Observations about the Teacher:

Observations about the Environment: