Teaching new behaviors to learners in your care is not rocket science: It's behavior science! Anyone can be a successful teacher when they know how behavior works. Follow the steps and the flowchart below to improve your teaching outcomes.

**Part 1: Tool Assembly**
Use the following steps to define the behavior the learner WILL DO; arrange their environment to make the right behavior easier; and, identify short-term and long-term reinforcers to teach and maintain the new behavior.

1. **Define the behavior you want the learner to do; this is the target behavior:**
   - What does this behavior look like?
   - Can you describe it without saying what the behavior isn't? Without saying "Stop being X" or "Stop [verb]ing"?
   - Can you describe it without using any "labels"? (see List 1)

2. **Split the target behavior into smaller steps to shape:**
   - Think of ways the behavior can be divided into smaller responses to make the behavior easier to learn.

3. **Create a supportive environment before the behavior occurs:**
   - What in the environment has prevented this behavior in the past?
   - What can you change in the surroundings to make the behavior easier to do?
   - What cues will signal the learner to do the behavior?
   - What prompts will clarify the target behavior, e.g. modeling, verbal instructions, or physical assistance?

4. **Identify long-term reinforcers, i.e., the naturally occurring benefits of this behavior for the learner:**
   - What is the natural outcome of this behavior?
   - Is it worthwhile enough for the learner to maintain the behavior in the long run?
   - Consider the different types of reinforcers: tangible items, social interaction, activities, sensory stimulus and escape from aversive events

5. **Identify short-term "jump-start" (contrived) reinforcers for teaching this behavior:**
   - What extraordinary reinforcers will initially motivate the learner to do this behavior?
   - Are these reinforcers specific and customized to this learner?
   - Can these reinforcers be faded-out as the behavior is mastered, so that only naturally occurring reinforcers maintain the behavior?
   - Examples: praise, edible treats, gentle touch, toy, etc.
Part 2
Teaching Flowchart

Preparation: Observe and Define
- Behavior
- Environment
- Naturally Occurring Reinforcers
- Jump-Start Reinforcers

Throughout the Process:
- Ensure Naturally Occurring Reinforcers.
- Deliver well-timed Jump-Start Reinforcers every time the behavior occurs.

Arrange environment for success.

Shape the behavior by reinforcing smaller responses that lead to the final behavior.

Deliver the cue or note the signals that cue the behavior.

Did the behavior occur?

Yes

Emphasize Naturally Occurring Reinforcers.

No

Watch for opportunities to slowly fade out Jump-Start Reinforcers.

Is a Jump-Start Reinforcer required for every occurrence?

Yes

Maintain environment for mastery and transition to Naturally Occurring Reinforcers.

No
List 1. Commonly used labels that don't describe behavior

None of the following words describe behavior in a functional way. Refer to this list as you describe the behavior to check if you've used a label. Create your description in terms of what the behavior looks like.

abnormal  horrid  lenient
gression  hyper  resent
aggressive  hyperactive  resentful
total  impatient  rowdy
always  modest  rude
angrily  intentions  savage
angry  intention  shy
antics  intentionally  silly
argumentative  indecent  snarky
arrogant  infantile  sneaky
bashful  intention  stern
bossy  intentional  strange
careless  intentions  stubborn
chaotic  irritable  submissive
cheerful  jealous  tame
cowardly  kind  testing
clingy  king  testy
cocky  king  timid
congenial  loyal  touchy
controllable  mean  tough
controlling  mess  tyrannical
crazy  micromanage  unattached
cross  micromanaged  unbelievable
decent  micromanaging  uncaring
derogatory  modest  uncontrolled
despondent  nasty  unfocused
dictating  neurotic  unhappy
dictator  never  unkind
difficult  normal  unlimited
disagree  obedient  unreal
disagreeable  odd  unrealistic
disloyal  oppressive  unrealistic
disobedient  ornery  unreasonable
disobey  overbearing  unrelenting
disorderly  patient  unreliable
disorganized  pesky  unresponsive
distracted  polite  unruly
dominate  presumptuous  until
dominating  pretentious  untidy
domineering  prince  unwilling
domination  princess  upset
emotional  proud  vague
demotionally  psychotic  weird
demotions  pushy  wild
despair  queen  wildly
expectation  question  wrong
desiring  quirk  wrongly
daydreaming  rash  wrong
enjoy  refusal  wrong
happy  refuse  wrongly
hates  refuses  wrong

Wrongly