

Group Agreements

Group agreements are important because they help create a shared understanding of how we treat each other, make play safe, and create space for everyone. For both kids and adults, group agreements build a sense of community, encourage accountability, and set the tone for positive interactions. When children have a say in the rules, they're more likely to understand why they matter. It also shows them their voice counts, building confidence.

Here are a few examples of what group agreements could look like:



Play Safe: Be mindful of your space and those around you, and use respectful words.



Try it on: Practice being brave and resilient. Sometimes it takes a few tries to warm up to an activity!



Don't Yuck My Yum: Allow every player to express their opinions without judgments (as long as those opinions are respectful towards others).



Play Hard, Play Fair: Whether you win or lose, give it your all! Be honest, call your own fouls, outs, or tags. Encourage others when they get out or make a mistake.

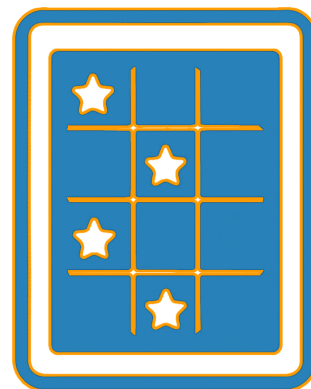
Choose one to two positive behaviors to encourage during play (sharing, following the rules, honesty, etc). Clearly explain what your child should work toward and how to earn rewards. Keep incentives simple and fun, like a sticker or choosing the next game. Offer a few different rewards and let your child pick. Stay consistent, celebrate progress, and keep it playful!

Here are few examples:



Verbal praise and Special Roles

- Reinforce positive behavior by naming it and praising the effort
- Let kids be the “Game Leader” or “Rule Reminder” for the next round.
- Take it a step further by giving special roles at home like “Dinner Helper” or “Snack Picker”



Sticker Chart

- Use a sticker or token chart to reward positive behaviors during play
- After earning a set number, kids can trade them in for a small reward (sticker, small toy, special snack, etc).
- Name the behavior and celebrate

When setting boundaries during play, we recommend following the 4 R's to help guide consequences:



Reasonable: Keep the consequences proportional in response to behavior while ensuring your child has a chance to reflect and try again.



Revealed in Advance: Let your child know ahead of time what to expect, so they can make informed choices and understand the outcomes.



Related: Make sure the consequences directly relates to the behavior.



Respectful: Talk to your child in a way that encourages them to make better choices.

Let's walk through an example:

You're playing tag at the park with your kid and a group of their friends. Before starting, you set the rule: tag with two fingers only, and anyone tagging too hard will take a break to practice. During the game, one player keeps tagging too hard.

Here's how you can use the 4 R's to respond:

Consequence: Taking a break from the game to practice using two fingers to tag safely.

- **Respectful:** You name the behavior
- **Reasonable:** The break is short and gives the child a chance to fix their behavior and rejoin the game.
- **Related:** Practicing how to tag gently connects directly to the issue, helping the player understand and improve.
- **Revealed in Advance:** Before starting, you let everyone know that if tagging gets too rough, they'll take a break to practice safe tagging.