



ALL

CHILD CARE ▾

SENIOR CARE ▾

HOME CARE ▾

PET CARE ▾

Resources / Child care / Being a parent

[Find babysitters on Care.com >](#)

How to Use a Behavior Chart



Judy Koutsky
July 14, 2015

A behavior chart can help in a variety of areas. Learn more to see if it's a good fit for your child.

-  0
-  0
- 
- 
- 



Is a behavior chart right for your child? Before you decide, you need to know what it is and how it's used. "A behavior chart is like a map of how your child's actions result in a range of outcomes," says [Dr. Jay Dillman](#), a licensed psychologist and author of "The Game Plan: Divisive

outcomes," says [Dr. Joe Dille](#), a licensed psychologist and author of "The Game Is Playing

Your Kid." So how are these charts used? "Whatever the purpose of the chart -- doing chores, homework, potty training, sleep routine -- it acts as a central focus for both parent and child to work from," explains [Victoria Ballard](#), founder of The Victoria Chart Company. "It should hang in prominent area, easy to see and use." Here's a rundown of various types of charts and their uses.

Single-Behavior Charts

"A single-behavior style chart is used when only one specific behavior needs to be addressed, such as brushing teeth by yourself at bedtime," says [Julia Berger](#), a certified positive discipline parent educator and founder of Everyday Parenting.

"The behavior is then written down on a chart and a check mark or a sticker placed on every day of the week when the task was completed successfully." Because you're only tracking progress for one specific action, a single-behavior chart may be ideal for toddlers who are developing life skills. For a twist on the normal sticker system, make this train chart from [Do It Yourself Divas](#) -- for each successful behavior, move the train one spot closer to the finish line.

Multiple-Behavior Chart

A multiple-behavior chart has a similar function as a single-behavior version and is used the same way. "Parent and child must agree on a few behaviors that need to be worked on, and those behaviors will be listed on the chart," Berger says. She advises parents to start with no more than four behaviors to avoid overwhelming a child. Multiple-behavior charts can also mimic a specific routine that needs to be followed.

For example, if it's difficult to get your child up and out the door in the morning, [Everyday Parenting](#) has an idea for chart that lists all the things that need to be done before school. [The Teacher Mama](#) also has a sample of a multiple-behavior chart for tracking positive actions that

encourage good behavior.

Chore Chart

[Somewhat Simple](#) offers chore charts for the tasks that need to be done and the days of the week in which they should be complete. They should primarily be used for older kids who are able to carry out assignments around the house. Getting your child invested in the chore chart is a good way to encourage him to carry out his tasks.

"Depending on a child's age, it's always good to involve him in creating these charts," Berger recommends. "If the child is younger in age, involve them in decorating the chart. If the child is a bit older and can write, they should either draw the goals or write them on the lines."

Reward Charts

Reward charts seek to provide positive reinforcement for kids. You keep track of how many times children engage in a certain good behavior or exceed expectations in a task -- whatever you want to reward them for. Once they hit a predetermined milestone, they earn some type of prize. However, negatives are often taken into account for reward charts, and kids can lose points for bad behavior. [The Girl Creative](#) has a printable version you can laminate and reuse over and over.

Homework Charts

"Homework charts should list all types of homework assignments your child gets during a week -- including math, reading, writing and science -- and due dates for each," says Berger. "If both parent and child are consistent in using the chart, the child really begins looking forward to putting check marks or stickers next to assignments completed, which will not only give him a feeling of ownership but also of pride."

[Love to Know](#) has a few different homework charts that parents can customize to meet their child's workload.

Behavior charts of all types can work if both parent and child work together toward a common goal. Read [A Chore Chart for Kids](#) to learn more about getting little ones involved around the house.

[Judy Koutsky](#) is the former editorial director of KIWI magazine, a green parenting publication. She was also executive editor of [Parenting.com](#), AOL Parent and [BabyTalk.com](#).

Tips and stories from parents and caregivers who've been there.

Sign up for our newsletter

Being a parent

Kids behavior & discipline

Leave a comment

Create a free account with Care.com and join our community today.

Sign up

You may also like



BEING A PARENT

I'm a parent with COVID-19 symptoms: What should I do?



KIDS BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

What losing my pet showed me about the power of grief



BEING A PARENT

9 ways parents can work at home with kids – and actually get stuff done



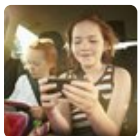
KIDS BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

Photo of mom making son do pushups on bathroom floor sets off discipline debate



BEING A PARENT

13 parents give us a reason to laugh amid the coronavirus pandemic



KIDS BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

7 cell phone rules for kids that every parent should establish right now



BEING A PARENT

10 helpful Down syndrome resources



KIDS BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

Mom defends son for punching a kid who was 'tormenting and bullying him'



Mom defends son for punching a kid who was tormenting and bullying him

How much should you pay for a babysitter?

Babysitting rate calculator



[Care.com](#) [Community](#) [Guides](#) [Safety Center](#)

[About Us](#) / [Help](#) / [Local Directory](#) / [For Business](#) / [Terms of Use](#) / [Privacy Policy](#)

Care.com is the world's largest online destination for care. We connect families with caregivers and caring companies to help you be there for the ones you love.

Care.com does not employ any care provider or care seeker nor is it responsible for the conduct of any care provider or care seeker. Care.com provides information and tools to help care seekers and care providers connect and make informed decisions. However, each individual is solely responsible for selecting an appropriate care provider or care seeker for themselves or their families and for complying with all applicable laws in connection with any employment relationship they establish. The information contained in member profiles, job posts and applications are supplied by care providers and care seekers themselves and is not information generated or verified by Care.com. Care.com does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment or engage in any conduct that requires a professional license.

Care.com and "There for you" are service marks or registered service marks of Care.com, Inc. © 2007-2020 Care.com. All rights reserved.

The care you need. The jobs you'll love.

[Find caregivers or jobs](#)

