# DIGNITY & DISABILITY

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR COMPLIANCE GOALS

*This post outlines information about programming compliance goals for children with disabilities.*

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# WHAT IS COMPLIANCE?

## Definition

A child's acceptance and execution of an adult-delivered instruction to engage in a specific behavior. Execution is usually required immediately but can also be delayed.

*(Radley & Dart, 2015).*

## Compliance as a Goal

Compliance is often identified as a goal for children with disabilities (ex: IEP goal). However, there are many considerations to ensure compliance goals are appropriate and the child learns and maintains self-advocacy skills.

# EXPECTATION GAP

Children with disabilities are often expected to comply with more adult instructions than children without disabilities.

Ex: Child will comply with 80% of adult instructions across 3 days...

**80-100%**

*Expected compliance for children with disabilities*

**60-70%**

*Average compliance for children 4-12 years old*

(Forehand, 1977)

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# EVALUATING NONCOMPLIANCE

*Before programming a compliance goal, consider other factors that may be contributing to noncompliance and motivating adults to implement this goal.*

## Ask:

1. Is there a **problem with the environment**? (ex: lack of motivation, unreasonable demands, ineffective teaching strategies, unclear expectations)
2. Is the goal to **benefit the learner** or make life easier for adults?
3. Does the noncompliance **significantly inhibit the learner's ability to participate** in their environment?
4. Are the **standards for compliance reasonable**?
5. Is the objective compliance or appropriate behavior that needs to be taught in a **variety of contexts**?
6. Is this goal being chosen as a **cure-all**?

(McDonnell, 1993)

# WHEN PROGRAMMING A COMPLIANCE GOAL

## 1

### *Measure Efficacy of the Intervention*

- Set individualized criteria for intervention inefficacy
- Re-evaluate often
- Assure the compliance intervention is not inadvertently reinforcing noncompliance

## 2

### *Teach Self-Advocacy Skills*

- How to not comply
- When it is okay to not comply
- When it is dangerous to comply
- When to initiate without adult directions
- How to make choices
- How to independently monitor and regulate their behavior

# THE ABILITY TO SAY "NO"

Saying "no" is an important skill that we want every child to have. When programming for compliance, assure the child has a means for communicating their wants and needs (ex: asking for a break).

Self-reflect to consider how to make the environment more motivating and reinforcing. What supports can you provide to help the child succeed? How can you incorporate their interests into activities?

Incorporating self-advocacy when programming compliance goals teaches children to advocate for themselves and follow instructions.

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# CITATIONS

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