



## Backpack Connection Series

### About this Series

The *Backpack Connection Series* was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each *Backpack Connection* handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

### The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit [challengingbehavior.org](http://challengingbehavior.org).

### More Information

For more information about this topic, visit TACSEI's website at [challengingbehavior.org](http://challengingbehavior.org) and type "trade" in the Search Box in the upper-right corner of the screen.



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# How to Help Your Child Learn to Trade

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When a child sees another child playing with a toy she wants, her first instinct is to take it. This behavior can be frustrating to playmates and often leads to an argument. Trading is a solution children can choose as a way to get an object from someone else in a positive way, and is a great first step in learning how to share. Trading is also a skill that must be taught and practiced many times. However, once your child is comfortable trading with others it can make her feel empowered. Knowing how to trade helps children to manage their emotions and confidently solve their own problems without help from an adult. Unlike sharing, where children must wait to use a toy, trading is a solution that allows both people to feel happy with the outcome right away. It takes patience and guidance to teach your child how to negotiate with playmates by herself, but it is a valuable skill that she will use throughout her life.



### Try This at Home

- Play with the skill of trading. "I have a blue block. Can I trade for your red one?"
- Begin with objects that mean little to your child or objects that are similar to each other so he can practice how to work his way through the interaction, rather than worry about the object itself and who has it. For example, trade pencils, crackers or blocks rather than a favorite blanket or stuffed animal.
- Puppets, trains, dolls and cars can also practice how to trade. "Oh no! Thomas the train does not like bananas. Can Bertie trade him for the strawberry?" The follow-up to this interaction is also important. "Wow! Now they are both happy and have food they like."
- Trading can be useful when working through disagreements between siblings. "I know how frustrating it can be when your brother takes your special car. Look, here is another one! Tell your brother, 'We can trade!'"
- Use trading as a possible solution for problems. "There are two boys and only one basketball. Would you like to play together or trade for the soccer ball?"



### Practice at School

At school, children are taught how to trade through role-play or puppet shows before they are expected to trade by themselves during class. Children are encouraged to use trading as a way to solve problems that come up when they play with peers. Teachers give the children many opportunities to practice the skill during the day. For example, a teacher may intentionally set out two colors of paint at an activity table for two children. After the children use the first paint, the teacher might suggest that the children trade to try a new color. Or, if the children initiate the trade themselves, the teacher can compliment them on successfully using a new skill.



### The Bottom Line

Knowing how to trade is the first skill a child can use to work together with others. Trading teaches children how to use their words to engage in conversations with friends and is the first step to learn how to negotiate. Your child will find trading very useful as she becomes interested in the people and things around her and develops opinions about what she likes. Trading teaches a child to value her own desires while balancing the needs and rights of others.



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