

# Modeling

**Use This When:**

To facilitate instruction of a skill through demonstration.



**Objectives:**

- to promote rapid acquisition of a new skill (e.g., approaching a feared object, having a conversation)
- to provide an opportunity for a caregiver to demonstrate the skill or to cue the child to use the skill in appropriate situations

**Steps:**

❑ <b>Provide rationale</b>	Explain to the caregiver or child that when learning a new skill it is often helpful to see another person performing the skill in an appropriate situation.
❑ <b>Identify the skill and situation</b>	Select a skill that the child has difficulty performing, and identify the situation in which the child exhibits difficulty.
❑ <b>Discuss the advantages of developmental models</b>	Teach the caregiver about the difference between <i>mastery</i> models (those who show no problem using the skill or performing a new behavior) and <i>developmental</i> models (those who struggle with the new behavior, but then overcome their difficulty). Point out that developmental models are more effective at promoting skill acquisition. Thus, ideal models should first exhibit thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are similar to those of the child but should over time become more adept at implementing the skill smoothly and easily.
❑ <b>Consider other attributes of models</b>	Models can be more effective when they share features in common with the child, such as having a similar age, gender, or appearance.
❑ <b>Identify the model</b>	You may serve as the model, but the caregiver may also model new skills, as can other youth or a model on video. An advantage of having the caregiver act as the model is that he or she can assist with practice sessions later, but this must be weighed against advantages of other types of models noted above. Choose what you think best fits the situation and context.
❑ <b>Model the skill</b>	<p>The model should exhibit poor performance or negative thoughts at the onset of the situation. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When helping a child manage social situations, the model might initially appear hesitant to say hello to a group of other people, saying aloud, “I don’t want to say hello. They might ignore me or make fun of me.”</li> <li>• When teaching problem solving skills, the model might initially appear angry about the situation and certain of a poor outcome, saying aloud, “I hate when the teacher starts trouble with me for something I didn’t do. He’s out to get me and there is nothing I can do about it.”</li> </ul>

## Steps:

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Model the improved skill</b>	The model should then demonstrate increasingly competent coping strategies in the chosen situation. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The model may take deep breaths to relax and approach the group while saying, “When I have been in uncomfortable social situations in the past, I know that practicing them makes them easier. These people are smiling, so they will probably say hello back to me and even if they ignore me I can walk away and it won’t be so bad.”</li><li>• The model may say, “I feel angry when I think about what happened at school today. Even though it doesn’t seem like it, there are probably things that I can do to make the situation better. I should make a list of possible ideas and see which one might solve this problem.”</li></ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Follow with discussion, praise, and a plan</b>	Discuss with the child and caregiver what the child noticed about how the model started out in the situation (e.g., “What was the person doing at the beginning of the situation?”) and how things turned out (e.g., “How did the person turn things around? How would the situation have turned out if the person had kept going the way he/she started out?”).
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Have child perform the behavior</b>	Have the child imitate the behavior performed by the model. Give plenty of praise, even for attempts that are not entirely successful. Provide constructive feedback between each attempt, and practice several times so that there are opportunities to improve.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Plan additional practice</b>	Make a plan with the child and caregiver to continue to practice the new behavior at home. If the caregiver was able to serve as the model, the caregiver should continue to demonstrate the behavior and provide feedback on the child’s practice attempts.

## Helpful Tips:

- Remember to praise often, and encourage family members to praise one another.
- Remember to review often, by asking questions.
- Remember to use examples to explain concepts.
- Remember to practice often and provide corrective feedback to the child and caregiver.
- Brief any other caregivers, teachers, or other adult figures who may be involved.
- Simplify these steps if you have to.
- This material can be covered in more than one session/meeting.