

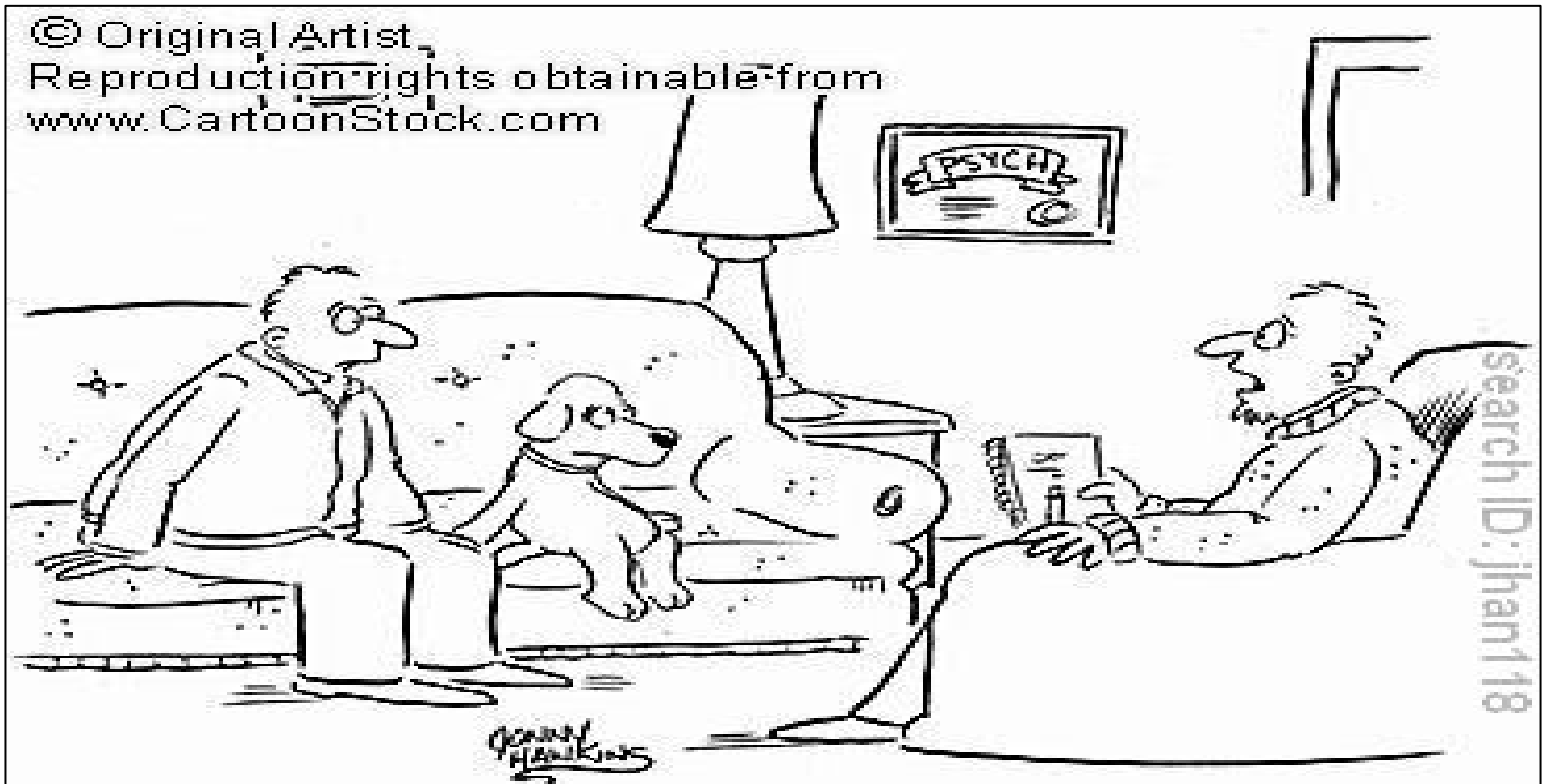
Incentives and Sanctions in Juvenile Drug Court



Wendy L. Schiller
Information Specialist
Alcohol and Other Drug Division

Just for Laughs

© Original Artist,
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



“It might help Skippy’s feelings if you said he needed improvement instead of calling him a bad dog.”

Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Immediate

- The impact of incentives and sanctions is diminished by any delay
- Have a system in place to monitor behavior and deliver immediate responses
- Ask who can be involved in the process:
 - Judge, parents, team members



Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Consistent and Fair

- Consistent delivery of consequences for targeted behaviors
- Positive reinforcement brings about rapid change
- Sanctions given inconsistently are more likely to reinforce the undesirable behavior than diminish it



Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Certain

- Clarify behavioral expectations and consequences with youth and families on the front end
- Predictability is essential for your responses to be effective
- Put youth and families in control

Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Appropriate Intensity

- Does the response match the level of improvement or non-compliance
- If the sanction is perceived as too strong it might trigger defiance or retaliation
- If you start out with too high a level of incentive, or too strong a sanction, you are left with nowhere to go

Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Goal Oriented

- Have a goal in mind, or the responses to behavior become haphazard, and the results unpredictable
- Ask these type of questions when developing or administering incentives and sanctions:
 - What are you trying to accomplish?
 - How is the response related to the behavior?
 - Will the sanction/incentive motivate the youth to increase/decrease a behavior?



Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Graduated

- Use a range of incentives and sanctions that increase in value or intensity
- Your expectations and responses should be graduated by:
 - Phase
 - Level of behavior
 - repetitions

Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

○ Individual

- The incentive/sanction should mean something to the youth
- Consider age appropriateness...what works for a 14 year old might not work for a 17 year old
- Consistency comes from the level of severity or incitement

Guidelines for Effective Incentives and Sanctions

- Therapeutically Appropriate
 - Distinguish between court sanctions and treatment responses
 - Changes in treatment should come from the treatment provider
 - Treatment levels should never be increased as a sanction, and it should never be perceived as a punishment



Types of Incentives

- Tangible
- Token
- Activity
- Sanction Reduction
- Social
- Natural Consequences



Types of Sanctions

- Tangible
- Token
- Activity
- Increase in Sanction
- Social
- Natural Consequences



Frequently Asked Questions

- Why is the effect sometimes different from what we expected?
- Is it okay to give a “second chance” by withholding a sanction?
- How can we afford incentives?
- What happens if treatment and JJ disagree?
- How does the new behavior “stick” after Graduation?



Publications & Handouts

- The Carrot and the Stick, by Judge Stephen C. Cooper
- The Incentives and Sanctions “Laundry List”
- Frequently Asked Questions Surrounding Incentives and Sanctions



Incentives and Sanctions in Juvenile Drug Court

Contact Information:

Wendy L. Schiller
Information Specialist
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
P.O. Box 8970
Reno, Nevada 89507
Phone: (775) 784-1748
Fax: (775) 784-6628
E-mail: wschiller@ncjfcj.org