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Brite Bridge Parent Behavior Toolkit™

Practical tools for behavior, communication, and daily routines

"Guided by the Brite Bridge Model™"

Play and Social Skills

Helping families understand behavior, support communication, and build meaningful skills through positive and evidence-based ABA strategies.

Strategies should be individualized and implemented in collaboration with your child's BCBA.

This resource is intended for general education only. Strategies should not be implemented as a substitute for individualized treatment or clinical guidance. Always consult with your child's BCBA before making changes to your child's intervention plan.

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Part of the Brite Bridge Model™ approach to supporting skill development across home, school, and community environments. ✦

Introduction

Your child's progress extends beyond therapy sessions. Progress is often supported when strategies are used in everyday routines at home, school, and in the community.

This toolkit helps families understand behavior, strengthen communication, and build practical skills using positive, evidence-based Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

The tools in this guide are simple, practical, and designed for everyday use. You will find guidance, examples, and strategies that support your child's learning while strengthening collaboration between families and professionals.

Our goal is to provide caregivers with clear, easy-to-use tools that support children in building meaningful skills and succeeding across environments.

Strategies should be individualized based on each child's needs and implemented with guidance from a qualified professional.

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Overview & How to Use This Toolkit

Section 1 — Purpose

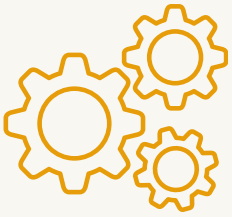
This Play & Social Skills Toolkit is part of the Brite Bridge Parent Behavior Toolkit™, designed to help families support their child's development across home, school, and community environments.

Play and social interaction are commonly addressed within Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to support communication, cooperation, and engagement in everyday activities.

This toolkit provides general, evidence-based strategies to help caregivers support peer interaction, turn-taking, shared play, and social communication during natural routines. The strategies are designed to be simple, practical, and easy to use across a variety of settings.

Section 2 — What's Included

This resource will help you:



- Understand foundational play and social interaction skills
- Learn strategies to support peer engagement and shared play
- Use simple prompts and modeling to guide social behavior
- Support turn-taking, communication, and cooperation
- Reinforce positive social interactions
- Support the development of confidence and independence during play
- Track progress and recognize meaningful improvements over time

Section 3 — How to Use This Toolkit

- Start with one or two strategies that fit your child's current needs
- Practice during natural play opportunities and daily routines
- Use simple language, modeling, and gentle prompting
- Reinforce your child's efforts and positive interactions
- Keep interactions short, positive, and supportive
- Gradually increase expectations as skills develop
- Use reflection sections to track progress and guide next steps

This toolkit is designed to be used at your child's pace and in collaboration with your BCBA.

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Important Note

This resource is for educational purposes only and is intended to be used in coordination with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). It does not replace individualized assessment, treatment planning, or clinical guidance.

Our Goal

Our goal is to provide caregivers with clear, easy-to-use tools that support children in building meaningful social skills, improving communication, and increasing independence across everyday environments.

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MODULE 1 — Why Play Matters

How play builds communication, connection, and social learning

Play is one of the most powerful ways children learn. Through play, children build communication, social skills, flexibility, and connection — all in a way that feels natural and motivating. This guide focuses on using play to support growth, not force interaction.

SECTION A — Play Is Learning

Play is not a break from learning — it is learning

During play, children practice important skills such as sharing attention, taking turns, problem-solving, and communicating needs. When play feels enjoyable and safe, learning happens more easily.

Soft reminder line: Connection comes before instruction.

SECTION B — Skills Built Through Play

Play helps children develop:

- Communication and language
- Joint attention and engagement
- Social interaction skills
- Flexibility and coping with change
- Imitation and learning from others
- Emotional connection and trust

Even short moments of shared play are meaningful.

SECTION C — What Play Looks Like for Different Children

Play looks different for every child

Some children enjoy pretend play, while others prefer movement, cause-and-effect toys, or repetitive activities. All types of play are valid starting points for learning and connection. There is no “right” way to play

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SECTION D — What This Guide Will Focus On

In this guide, you will learn how to:

- Join your child's play without taking control
- Build engagement and shared attention
- Teach turn-taking and simple social skills
- Expand play skills gradually and playfully
- Support peer interaction in developmentally appropriate ways

SECTION E — Caregiver Reminder

Progression does not mean perfection. Every child has challenging moments, and real progress comes from consistency and adjustment over time.

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REFLECTION PAGE

Supporting Play & Social Skills

Use this page to reflect on your child's play and social interactions. Noticing patterns over time can help guide how you support your child's learning and connection.

1. What type of play or interaction did you focus on?
(e.g., shared play, turn-taking, imitation, requesting, joint attention)

2. What did play look like in this moment?
(e.g., independent play, playing near others, brief interaction, longer engagement)

3. What strategies or supports did you use?

- ☐ Modeling (showing how to play or interact)
- ☐ Joining your child's play
- ☐ Offering choices
- ☐ Prompting (gestures, words, guidance)
- ☐ Keeping play simple and short
- ☐ Following your child's lead
- ☐ Other: _____

4. How did your child respond?

- ☐ Engaged with support
- ☐ Engaged independently
- ☐ Stayed briefly
- ☐ Needed additional support
- ☐ Showed limited interest
- ☐ Other: _____

5. What went well during play?

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6. Did you notice any small moments of connection?
(e.g., eye contact, shared attention, turn-taking, smiling, staying longer)

7. What felt challenging?

8. Did you follow your child's lead during play?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Not yet

9. What is one small step you would like to try next?

10. Notes or questions for your BCBA:

This reflection is intended for educational purposes only and to support caregiver awareness. It should be reviewed with your child's BCBA to guide individualized support.