Reinforcement is a crucial component of Applied Behavior Analysis. Reinforcement increases the chances of a behavior happening again. There are two types of reinforcement – positive and negative.

**Positive reinforcement** is when a stimulus is given after a behavior.

**Negative reinforcement** is when a stimulus is removed after a behavior. *Negative reinforcement is not punishment!*

Stimuli can take a variety of forms including attention or tangible items (e.g., food, stickers, etc.).

It is important that individuals be reinforced for appropriate behaviors! It’s much easier to notice problem behaviors than positive ones; however, to ensure that positive, functional behaviors continue to be exhibited, positive reinforcement is crucial.

This information is provided by the Virginia Institute of Autism (VIA), an organization helping people overcome the challenges of autism through innovative, evidence-based programs in education, outreach and adult services.

VIA operates a 12 month educational program, intervention and assessment services, training, consultation and support groups for children and adolescents with autism, PDD and other developmental disabilities in Charlottesville, VA and the surrounding region. VIA also offers the VIAbility day support program and behavioral consultations for adults with autism.

More information about VIA can be found on our website at [www.viaschool.org](http://www.viaschool.org) or (434) 923-8252.