Guided Walks

<u>Primary objective</u>-the student will learn to walk calmly while holding hands. Loosely, students also learn to be comfortable with teachers taking control over simple behaviors.

<u>Additional potential objectives and future directions</u>

-the student will follow points to locate items of potential interest

-the student will walk at the same pace as others

-the student will remain near others without physical prompting

-the student will remain near others without verbal reminders

<u>Mastery Criteria</u>- the student will walk with others, whether or not he is holding hands with anyone, for at least 500 feet without requiring any redirection or correction. (*After this objective is achieved, guided walks may evolve into advanced "rubber band training", pg. _____, in which the objective is to teach students to stay near others without reminders throughout outings into the community.) The student will not need to know where he is going or what he is getting, and he will not require positive feedback during the walk.

<u>Basic procedure</u>

1. Say "Come with me" or something similar. Extend your hand for your learner to grasp. Wait up to a few seconds for your learner to take your hand. If he does not take your hand, gently grasp his hand. Do NOT grip your student by the wrist.
2. Walk with your student without pulling him.
3. If your student protests in any way, such as by whining or attempting to pull away, say something like "that's not good walking" and pause walking. Do not let him leave. Wait until he is calm, ask something like "are you ready?" and proceed if he affirms readiness in any way. He may just glance at you, or may even show readiness by NOT increasing any signs of agitation after being asked whether he is ready.
4. After walking, end with some form of reinforcement. This may be nothing more than permission to return to free play, or it may be as significant as a treat or preferred toy.

(*I usually prefer to introduce "guided walks" by "finding" a surprise reinforcer at the end of our walk. I point at the reinforcer and say "Oh, look!" I will allow the student some time to independently notice that I've pointed out a reinforcer. I may repeat myself after several seconds and include the name of the reinforcer. Unless my student actually resists this process, I will ultimately ensure that he successfully notices the reinforcer.)

Bonus points-after you and your student are both comfortable with the basic procedure, occasionally vary your speed or pause. Reinforce as your student gets better at matching your changes in speed. This will be particularly meaningful after you begin walking without holding hands.

Dimensions Grid

You can use this grid to make your guided walks easier or harder for your student, as appropriate. With an entirely novel student, particularly a student who tends to demonstrate resistance to teacher expectations, you may literally walk 3-5 feet holding hands to retrieve a powerful reinforcer. *It is also possible that you will need a less powerful reinforcer, to minimize your student's stress with regards to delays in reinforcer acquisition. After you and your student are both comfortable, you can increase the distance of the walks, conduct walks with no obvious student payoff, vary the speed of the walk, and perhaps walk without holding hands.

Easier	Harder
Short distances	Long distances
Potential reinforcer in sight*	No potential reinforcer in sight
Frequent positive feedback	Little positive feedback
Holding hands	Not holding hands
Maintaining a constant speed	Varying speed and occasionally stopping
Not required to pass potential reinforcers	Required to walk past potential reinforcers
No "stressors" or potential distractions	Potential "stressors" (e.g., loud crowds, etc)

*Occasionally, a student is less cooperative when a potential reinforcer is in sight. Loosely speaking, the student knows where the reinforcer is and doesn't want to be slowed by his teacher.

Data-record the distance traveled and other dimensions from the dimensions grid above. Tally the number of stops required for any forms of student resistance. Record "0" if there are no stops required☺ Measure duration to gauge the average duration required for each stop. There is a big difference between walking 20 feet with one stop within 15 seconds and walking 20 feet with one stop within 90 seconds.

Date	Approximate distance walked	Holding hands? (Y/N)	# of stops required	Approximate walk duration

Moving forward-after 2-3 consecutive walks without any need for stopping, increase the level of challenge in one or more of the ways described in the "dimensions grid". If you are currently walking less than 25 feet, my first preference would be to increase the distance of the walk. If you are currently walking toward a reinforcer that is in sight, and this is easier for your learner than a reinforcer that is not in sight, then removing the sight of the reinforcer is also a high priority.

Moving backward-if multiple stops are required on 2-3 consecutive walks, decrease the level of challenge in one or more of the ways described in the "dimensions grid". Maybe you need to go back to holding hands? Maybe you need to shorten the distance of the walk?

Can you analyze the reason for your student's continued resistance? Your intervention should be specific to the reason for the resistance. For example, if he always struggles walking past a particular door, either avoid that door for a while or make all of the other dimensions very favorable and isolate your practice walking past that door.