

Behavior Bingo is a game that can be played in parenting classes or among parents alone, as friends or in PTAs, as an enjoyable way of discussing how to handle the challenges often presented to us by children's actions. As we move away from the harsh and counterproductive practices of spanking and other corporal punishments, parents need to think carefully about what children will learn from our responses to the things they do that we wish they wouldn't.

To play Behavior Bingo, the sponsoring organization can donate prizes, or the parents themselves can bring white elephant sort of gifts (unwanted treasures, perhaps) or the parents can ante in small change or candies just to have a pot.

Then by turn, each parent describes a scenario they have either experienced or are concerned might happen. Everyone then places their token (can be coins, circles of paper or stickers) on their choice of response. Afterwards, go around the group and discuss why each parent chose the option they did, and why. Then respectfully discuss. Set a time limit for each scenario, depending on the overall time allowed and the number of parents in the group, so lets, say if there is 60 minutes to the exercise and parents in the group, each scenario be allocated 10 minutes (maybe even 8, so as to allow some overall discussion of the experience in the end). As all who've played other versions of Bingo will remember, whoever finds they have a line completed on the Bingo card first wins the prize. But don't be surprised if that never happens and instead, the group gets lost in deep discussion of these most important matters. And that's a good thing!

The idea of the game is to foster conversation and provide mutual support while learning new and hopefully more effective way of guiding children as they grow.