

Intervention Name: Choice of Task Sequence

Brief Description:

To lower incidences of inappropriate behavior, child will engage in choice. Research has found that just making a choice is reinforcing.

What "Common Problems" Does This Address?

Students who engage in inappropriate behaviors to escape from tasks either because the tasks are too difficult, student just does not want to do it, or student has not learned how to do task.

Procedures

1. The teacher identifies 3 tasks that were observed to be connected to noncompliance or problem behaviors.
2. The teacher decides on whether student gets reinforced for engaging in the task or completing all three tasks.
3. The teacher presents all 3 tasks to student (e.g., "What would you like to do first today?", then "What would you like to do next?")
4. The student chooses the order he/she wants to complete the task.
5. The teacher gives praise when child engages or when child complies.
6. The teacher ignores problem behaviors.
7. The teacher reissues prompts every 10 seconds until the child engages or completes all three tasks. The teacher provides reinforcement (verbal praise, attention, or tangible reinforcement) when child engages or completes tasks.

Critical Components that must be implemented for intervention to be successful:

Child needs to have a set time limit or task limit, which can be decided based on the teacher's preference. Once the child receives a time/task limit, such as a fixed interval for 15 minutes, reinforcement needs to be contingent based on whether student completed the given task. Teacher must present choices to the student verbally, visually, or pictorially (e.g., picture of someone reading or sitting quietly). Teacher must reissue prompts in a consistent manner. Teacher can decide what contingency she prefers -- time can be altered to reissue prompts

Critical Assumptions/Problem-Solving Questions to be Asked:

Assumptions: There is the assumption that verbal praise is a strong enough reinforcement for the student to complete or engage in assigned tasks, and that the child can actually perform and complete all of the tasks.

Limitations: There is the limitation that the original study was done in an inpatient hospital setting, which may not be generalizable to a classroom setting. There are also limitations, such as the student's inability to complete assigned tasks. Before using this intervention, ask yourself: "Can the student successfully complete these tasks?"

- If yes, then reinforce appropriate behavior and punish inappropriate behavior.
- If no, then teach student the task.

Does the student engage in inappropriate behaviors to escape from the task because task is too difficult?

- If yes, then make the academic task more reinforcing by giving them a choice of how to complete task.
- If no, then have child complete the task.

Does the student engage in an inappropriate behavior in order to escape from discomfort?

- If yes, then give access to that activity contingent upon appropriate behavior.
- If no, then have child complete the task.

Materials

- Photographs or visual prompts of the three chosen tasks

References

Kern, L., Mantagna, M.E., Vorndran, C.M., Bailin, D., & Hilt, A. (2001). Choice of task sequence to increase engagement and reduce problem behaviors. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 3, 3-10.