Evidence-based Practices for Individuals with Autism, Intellectual Disability, and Related Disabilities

Self-Monitoring for Teachers

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Mrs. Erna is a second year teacher who supports students with autism. She uses systematic instruction when teaching greater number identification with her student, Kyian. However, Mrs. Erna has noticed that Kyian is having inconsistent growth in this skill. Mrs. Erna wants to evaluate her implementation fidelity of systematic instruction to ensure her teaching practices are supporting Kyian's learning appropriately.

Special education teachers are obligated to use evidenced based interventions (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015) when delivering instruction. However, implementation fidelity of evidence based practices is the critical link to success within classroom implemented strategies by teachers (Cook & Odom, 2013). Providing teachers with a method to improve their implementation fidelity could increase student outcomes; self-monitoring is a tool that can be used for this purpose. Self-monitoring has been used to increase teacher fidelity implementation for behavior specific praise (Sallese & Vannest, 2020), discrete trial training (Belfoire et al., 2008), function-based interventions (Pinkelman & Horner, 2017), and behavior supported intervention (Plavnick et al., 2010). Self-monitoring is successful in increasing the implementation fidelity of instructional strategies by teachers.

Self-Monitoring in Practice

A self-monitoring system for teachers requires two prerequisite skills: (a) the ability to identify when the target instructional skill has occurred and (b) if the instructional skill occurred in the correct context (Rafferty, 2010). After the pre-

requisite skills have been determined, the next step is to develop materials. Materials should be simple to use and create, accessible, in a frequently used format, and feasible to use across all instructional areas. Self-monitoring systems can also include supplementary cues and prompts for the teacher to support use of the self-monitoring checklist (see Figure 1). These prompts can be visual (i.e., icons) or language based (i.e., reminders in the margins). For self-monitoring to be successful, the teacher must be able to use the materials to record when they have observed themselves completing steps in the appropriate context (Cooper et al., 2020). Self-monitoring systems for teachers may need to be discrete, so they do not distract the student during the instructional session. When developing a self-monitoring system teachers can employ systems that already work well, if a teacher uses a tablet to record student data, the teacher self-monitoring system can also be on a tablet.

Mrs. Erna decided to implement a self-monitoring system to evaluate her fidelity of systematic instruction during number identification instruction with Kyian. Her self-monitoring checklist consists of five steps to support her instruction as well as includes a space for daily reflection to inform her teaching. Mrs. Erna uses clipboards and data monitoring sheets with her students, she decided to use a paper based self-monitoring sheet that could be added to the clip boards.

When designing a self-monitoring system, teachers should record the most important elements of their instructional behavior (i.e., prompting hierarchy), use self-moni-

toring frequently, and incorporate self-monitoring from the initial skill instruction. By using self-monitoring often and from the onset of the instruction, teachers will develop mastery, independent use, and generalization of the strategy. Finally, accurate self-monitoring should be reinforced (Cooper et al., 2020). This can be accomplished from administration and peer teachers through feedback and praise.

Figure 1 provides an example self-monitoring checklist for teachers that could be used during an instructional session. This checklist can be used when providing any systematic instruction to increase the fidelity of the procedures. A benefit of this self-monitoring checklist is the generalizability. The teacher self-monitoring checklist can support any lesson that uses systematic instruction. While less literature exists for teacher-implemented self-monitoring systems, it is a support tool that can be easily implemented into the classroom routine of a teacher. It supports improved student outcomes by increasing the implementation fidelity of evidence based interventions.

After implementing the self-monitoring checklist Mrs. Erna noticed that she often provided a consequence after showing Kyian the stimulus, she was overlooking the prompt step. The self-monitoring checklist has increased the fidelity of Mrs. Erna's systematic instruction as well as increased the successful identification of greater numbers by Kyian. She plans to continue to use a self-monitoring system when using systematic instruction to teach her students.

Figure 1. Teacher-implemented self-monitoring checklist for systematic instruction

Instruction with: Kyian		Lesson objective: Identify greater number				
For each instructional trial	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
All materials were prepared and available	Used preferred # cards					
Provide a stimulus	point to bigger #					
Provide a prompt	Modeled					
Wait for a response from the student	✔					
Provide a consequence; correct mistakes & praise correct responses	✔					
Notes from Monday	Used double digit stimulus, need to use single digit					
Notes from Tuesday						
Notes from Wednesday						
Notes from Thursday						
Notes from Friday						

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