Building Independence by Teaching Students to Self-Monitor

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If I look familiar, I am President of the Georgia CEC, and you saw me at the opening session!
Goals for this session

- Understand the purpose of self-monitoring and building independence
- The broader picture of building and supporting independence
- The broader picture of building and supporting self-monitoring
- Teaching students to self-monitoring
My goals -

- Stay on topic!
- Give you the rationale – convince you –
- Give you the structure for implementation
- Not to say a word that doesn’t fit with what you do and can quickly understand how it fits

The resources (visuals, sheets, etc.) are out there!
An independent learner - someone who can manage his or her own learning to achieve this purpose and who is not wholly dependent on a teacher.
Successful, engaged learners -

- responsible for their own learning:
- self-regulate
- able to define their own learning goals
- evaluate their own achievement
- energized by their learning
- have the skills to work with others
Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring empowers students!
A self-aware student . . .

- Understands the impact of his “disability” on his or her life
- Appreciates his own strengths and special skills
- Understands his own learning style
- Learns to compensate for deficits by using classroom accommodations
A student with self-control . . .

- Learns to use anger management skills to avoid emotional blow-ups
- Uses peer mediation and conflict resolution to solve problems in relationships
- Works with his teachers and parents to use problem solving strategies to resolve social, emotional, and academic problems
Self-Regulation

refers specifically to the ability to manage one's behavior in the face of strong feelings, such as anger, anxiety, disappointment, and fear.
Self-Regulation

- an important skill that most children master by the time they enter school
- Infants start gaining an understanding of how to deal with those feelings as they gain language and observe the models presented by parents and siblings.
Self-regulation is usually taught through modeling, observation and natural reinforcement (reinforcement that happens through and in the environment.)

Many of our students are not "hard wired" to observe and learn from the models provided by parents, siblings, and the environment.
At the same time, so many of our students have difficulty with language, so late language development means that they do not have socially appropriate ways to name their emotions, to calm themselves down, and to use their learned experience to prepare for the next occasion they are called on to self-regulate.
Students need direct instruction to teach them how to calm themselves, to name their emotions, (Emotional Literacy) and use language to appropriately address and resolve their concerns.
What are the benefits of teaching students to self-manage?

- Strategies can be differentiated
- Less invasive than teacher-managed strategies
- Have higher levels of self-efficacy, motivation, and school achievement
- Use of appropriate help-seeking behaviors to learn how to do things independently
- Can use to manage a variety of behaviors
Advantage to teaching “tough kids” to evaluate and self monitor – they then depend less on the teacher for guidance, reinforcement, and control.

Emphasis on this self-management approach is relevant to teacher concerns regarding time demands placed on them for implementing strategies.
Other advantages!

- Students become participants in their own improved performance.
- They perceive themselves as more competent as well.
- Self-management skills go where the student goes!
Levels of Prompts

When teaching -
- Hand-over-hand
- Gesture/Model
- Verbal
- Visual

When cueing -
- Visual
- Verbal
- Gesture/Model
- Hand-over-hand
If you say it three times in one hour – create a visual
Change the paraprofessional mindset!

“You are there to help the student(s) become an independent learner.”
Your best job performance – you don’t need to be there!
Visual – visual – visual!!!
Ask a question first!
The first thing you say . . . .

Should be a question –
What should you be doing?
Do you have a question?
What materials do you need to get out?
Make pullout/resource count!

- Teach to the whole group – even if two
- Walk away and expect students to keep working
- Provide the same visual supports you use in other settings
The Importance of Checklists:
Seven good reasons to use them every day!

Adapted from –
C. Faherty, Asheville TEACCH, 2003
Checklists provide **visual information**. Checklists promote **independence**. Checklists become a positive way to allow time for his or her **special interests or reinforcement**. Checklists are primary tools for teaching **flexibility**. Checklists are an important **pre-vocational skill**. Written information creates a greater ease with which the individual with Autism can receive, understand, and accept information… helping him or her become more **cooperative**. When checklists are used consistently they become a **familiar tool** to be used in unfamiliar and new activities.
Checklists –

- Elementary – pictures or simple words: routines, procedures, schedule, center order, etc.
- Middle – words – routines, procedures, reminders, class assignments, self-monitoring reminders, etc.
- High – words or blank – what to do this period, steps of a lab, parts of a long-term project, self-monitoring reminders, etc.
Things to consider when making checklists:

- Size?
- Attached somewhere or to something; or held in hand?
- How many items?
- Pictures, words, or a combination?
- Should the students literally check off each item or just follow?
- Can you insert reminders around the list – behavior cue, short story topic reminder, social cue?
- Are there new things on the list that need to be taught?
The “4” Greatest Things to Know

Make them a part of what you naturally do in your classroom every day!

Live Out Loud
Do-Overs
TEACH the Routines, Rules, and Procedures
Check-Ins
Live Out Loud

As a teacher, model your thought process OUT LOUD whenever possible:

“I am feeling really stressed right now…..”
“I have this problem…..”
“Let me think what I need to do this…..”
“We are going to the media center, but…..”
● Share the agenda/plans – state the obvious – “live out loud”

● Simplify the language – do not expect students to “read between the lines” –
“Do-Overs”

- Would you like to do that over?
- Why don’t you try that again?
- Would you like to make a different choice?
TEACH

- TEACH students what you want them to do! (We too often focus on what we don’t want them to do!)

- Learning the “rules” of a situation and/or setting is a social skill – and learning how to function successfully in that teacher’s classroom is a part of social skills!
Rules

- Make the rules clear
- Post the rules
- Remind the student of the rule(s)
- Give a personal copy when necessary
- Highlight the most significant rules
Procedures/Routines

- Teach the procedures
- Role-play the procedures
- Give reminders about the procedures
- Provide student with a checklist of routines – morning routine, packing up routine, getting ready for lunch routine, at-the-locker routine
Check-ins!!!

- Determine what “plan” or language will be used – a number or color scale – or student decided!
- Have a visual thermometer.
- Ask “Where are you?”
- Student should respond.
- Teacher’s response based on student!
Don’t forget positive behavior supports
  – A reinforcement system – what is the goal?
    ● Tokens
    ● Point sheets
    ● Self-monitoring sheets
Stop and Think!

- teacher interrupts behavior
- “Are you making a good choice or a bad choice?”
- If student cannot correct problem, teacher may suggest ideas.
- “Just do it!”
- Use self-monitoring to determine how well handled
The social autopsy is a strategy to help students with social cognition deficits learn to interpret social and behavioral situations, understand social mistakes, and take the perspective of others.
The autopsy . . . .

allows for analyzing a social skills problem by dissecting social incidents. When a social error occurs, the student works with an adult to

(a) identify the social error or mistake,
(b) determine who was harmed by the mistake,
(c) decide how to correct the mistake, and
(d) develop a plan to ensure that the mistake does not reoccur.
The Do’s and Don’t of Social Autopsies

- Don’t make filling out an autopsy sheet a punishment.
- Don’t do a social autopsy when the student is upset.
- Don’t make writing a problem; the adult can do the writing.
- Individually decide if a written autopsy should be done before discussion or during discussion.
- **Reinforce** a student’s willingness to analyze and discuss his/her mistakes and take the necessary action.

- **Do not make the purpose of your autopsy to prove to the student that he or she did something wrong.**

- Try to use social autopsies for situations that do not require a consequence/punishment. If appropriate to do both, make sure the consequence is discussed separate of the autopsy and its results.
References for Social Autopsies


The **Social Autopsy** is now a very popular strategy for use with students with social cognition deficits. You can search the internet and find many resources and samples of social autopsy forms.
The Incredible 5-Point Scale

- Thermometer type activity with number scales
- Breaks down common target behaviors and puts them in “thermometer format”
- Then you create a visual -
Goal Setting

- Goal setting can be taught in any class
- Goal setting can be demonstrated and monitored in any class
  - This week our plan is . . . . .
  - Did we reach our goals?
Goals for Younger Students

- Have class goals
- **Have visual representations of the goals**
- Talk about the goals; why are they important
- Point out when a goal is being worked on
  - Great job! We are working on gathering out materials.
- Point out when a goal is met
  - We are finished with our safety unit.
For older students -

- Set academic and personal goals
- Have a plan for keeping up with the goals
  - Develop an action plan for meeting the goal(s)
  - Develop a plan for monitoring progress
- Have students evaluate their progress
- Alter the goals or the plan for meeting those goals as needed
- Carry the goal sheet around!
What is our next goal?

We have talked about some broad range strategies –

Let’s teach kids to self-monitor!
For the whole Class

- A cue such as a beep or tone
- Each student marks on a form whether or not he is working on task at that particular moment. Simply knowing the beep is coming and then being reinforced for working helps change the student’s behavior.
- Intervals between beeps vary more frequent as skill taught gradually spaced further apart ultimately phased out over time as students become aware of being on task!
Self-monitoring for an individual

- Discuss with student; student wants to try
- Identify the behavior the student will monitor
- Give student a self-monitoring check sheet
- Show the student what to do; practice!
- Student may wear ear plug to hear beep – or a watch, etc.; marks whether or not working on task
For several behaviors

Initially, teacher rates the student on four to five behaviors – giving a score of 0 to 5 at end of class

Examples: completed classwork; turned in homework; followed instructions; comes to class on time

Then the teacher talks with the student about the behaviors and shows him how to rate

Student practices and compare ratings with the teacher

Gradually, teacher ratings faded out; student only doing
Teach students to monitor their own behavior -

- Index card for tally marks
- Form with multiple dates/tally marks.
- “+ or –” or “yes or no” or “smiley face”
- Small sheet of questions “Today I . . . .”
- “Was I Doing My Work?” Time/Yes or No
- Rate your performance (1=NI, 2=OK, etc.)
- Student and teacher rate
Teach students to monitor their own behavior -

- Number of times blurted out/raised hand.
- Number of times used appropriate words.
- On-task behavior/working on assignment.
- Work completion/problems finished.
- I followed directions.
- I remained cool and calm.
- I kept my hands to myself.
Teach students to monitor their own behavior –

Identify the target behavior.
Define the target or a replacement behavior.
Conference with the student.
Select the self-monitoring procedure – teach the procedure to the student.
A simple idea -

- A piece of paper with 20 squares
- Student is taught to make a +, -
- They make a + each time the “think about” or “recognize” working or behaving appropriately
- They make a – each time they think they are not working or behaving appropriately
- Pluses can be converted to points!
A simple plan -

- Behaviors you might want to track
  - On-task – focus/attention
  - On-task – actively engaged in writing
  - Voice Off
  - Following Directions
  - In my seat
A simple plan -

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>+ or -</th>
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**Directions**

1. Using some type of tactile prompting device, teacher will observe student and record the targeted behavior once every pre-determined number of minutes.

2. After making a quick observation of the student, the teacher will put “+” if the appropriate behavior is seen; a “-“ if it is not.

3. Count the number of pluses and divide by 10 (the number of intervals). Multiply that number by 100 to get the percentage of time the was exhibiting the appropriate behavior.
A simple plan -

- Use this plan for teacher data first
- Use this plan to teach the student
- Use the plan for teacher to graph data
- Use this plan when teacher and student will monitor and then compare data
- Use this plan when the student will self-monitor and then do own graph
Embedding - Maintenance

- Use self-monitoring.
- Provide reinforcements.
- Provide prompts and cues.
- Provide feedback.
For young children -

- Use a smiley face, a frowny face, and a neutral face
- Teachers use this with entire class to teach entire class skills
- Then use with individual students for different behaviors
Once teacher has transferred most of the responsibility to the student, the teacher may continue to rate and mark the behavior some of the time – random basis so student will not know – give a bonus point for exact matches – one or two point difference is O.K. – bigger difference that one or two, student loses his points for pluses
Implementing a Self-Management Program

1. Begin to introduce self-management soon after the behavior has reached an acceptable level with the teacher managing it.

2. Specifically define the behavior the student will monitor and evaluate.
   1. Give examples and non-examples
   2. Role play
3. Design a simple means of counting and recording the behavior. The simpler the system, the more accurate the student will be.

4. Set time limits – start with 15 minutes; increase to 20; increase to 30; one class period.
5. Check the student’s accuracy on a random basis. Build in rewards!

6. Give the student ample opportunity to practice the process of self-management and provide positive, correction feedback.
Teach students to monitor their own behavior –

Implement the self-monitoring.
Use specific verbal praise.
Monitor student progress.
Have students graph data.
Maintenance and follow-up.
Student Self-Graphing

To enhance the effects of an interventions
To increase student motivation

- Targeted Academic Interventions
- Targeted Behavioral Interventions
- Targeted Social Skills Interventions
Some suggestions -

- Create an individualized graph using graph paper or an electronic graphing program
- Teach the students how to complete and then read their graph
- Let students have choices about writing implements and colors; let students pick the font style, color, marker, and graph format
- Save the graphs in a folder or an online file
- Display appropriate graphs publically (i.e. student meeting personal goals; class goal)
- Provide individual incentives and rewards
- Give consideration when to graph: right after instruction, before next session, when time permits, when time has passed for improvement
- Assess the data and make changes
From CEC

● **Attention Deficit Disorder: Strategies for School Children** by Dr. Clare Jones.

● **ADHD Project Facilitate: ADHD Interventions**

*Both include self-monitoring programs!*
Designed for Teachers: How to Implement Self-Monitoring in the Classroom.
Vanderbilt, Allison A. *Beyond Behavior, Fall 2005.*