

Improving a Child with Autism's Reporting of Daily Activities to Parents

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Introduction

Methods

Results

Rationale

The ability for a child to meaningfully converse with his/her parents is an important and socially valid outcome (Grosberg & Charlop, 2017). Although interventions have been described in the literature that increase parent-child communication (Kaiser, Hancock & Nietfeld, 2000), they largely focus on interactions related to immediate events (e.g., asking and answering questions regarding events in a single context). In this study, parents expressed concern that their son failed to report events that occurred during the day (i.e., at camp). An assessment was conducted to determine the cause of this communication difficulty. A related intervention was developed that resulted in a systematic increase in reporting.

Research Question

What are the effects of a multiple-component package including systematic instruction with time delay, textual prompts, and embedded choice-making on the reporting of daily activities by a child with autism.

IOA

IOA was conducted for all sessions for each phase by the second author. IOA across all sessions was 100%.

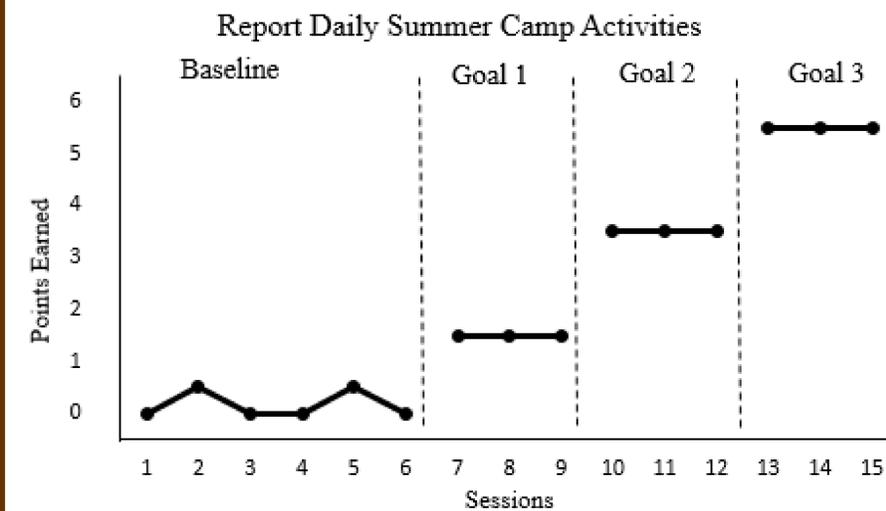
Procedural Fidelity

Procedural fidelity was assessed by the second author using a researcher created checklist for a minimum of 30% of sessions per phase with results as follows: Baseline 100%, Phase 1 100%, Phase 2 91%, and Phase 3 100%.

Design

Changing Criterion as demonstrated by systematic increases in number of activities reported to parents.

Participant & Setting	The participant was a 5-year-old boy diagnosed with autism. The participant demonstrated above average cognitive functioning and was able to read at a 1st grade level, according to CBM probes. Intervention was conducted in an inclusive summer day camp, with daily reporting occurring during the car ride home.
Dependent Variables	<p>Total points earned each day for reporting daily activities.</p> <p>Accurate Response: Verbal responses that state specific activity the participant engaged in at camp with a complete sentence starting with the subject, I, and followed by predicate and object (2 points).</p> <p>Partially accurate response: Verbal response to initial question that describes general activity or provides only 1-word response that describes an activity available at camp (1 point)</p> <p>Inaccurate response and no response: Verbal responses that are irrelevant to initial question or no response within 10 seconds of question (0 points).</p>
Intervention & Procedures	<p>Step 1: Assessment indicated participant was not able to accurately identify activities in which he was engaged.</p> <p>Step 2: In-vivo training was conducted daily to teach the child to identify and label camp activities when actively engaged.</p> <p>Step 3: Prior to camp dismissal, the participant was provided an embedded choice (among five preferred activities instructed in step 2) that he wanted report to his parents. The interventionist reviewed reporting the activities, and facilitated with a textual prompt which was used in the car.</p> <p>Data Collection: Upon pick up from camp, the parent asked the question, "What did you do at camp today?" and audio recorded the participant's response on an iPhone. The recording was then sent to the researchers for coding.</p>



Results indicate that the child successfully reported one, two, and three accurate responses of daily activities to both his mother and father.

Discussion

Findings demonstrate effectiveness of the multi-component intervention package to facilitate conversation about past events between a child with autism and his parents. However, it is unclear if the textual prompt can be faded without loss of the target skill. Future research should identify a method for fading the textual prompt while maintaining mastery of the target skill.

Social Validity

Social Validity was measured using a researcher created rating form based on the TARF-R with a total of 21 likert scale questions completed by each parent. Both parents reported the following general findings: High acceptability of intervention, procedures, and target skill; high satisfaction and confidence of intervention effectiveness; with willingness to continue in the future. Additionally it was reported that the intervention was feasible, affordable, with no disadvantages.