



Practice Brief: Practice 5

To help implement embedded learning opportunities as complete learning trials it is useful to...

Use systematic instructional strategies with fidelity and fade prompts overtime to teach skills and promote child engagement and learning.

Practice description:

In order to use systematic instructional strategies with fidelity, you need an instructional plan. The instructional plan helps identify specific instructional components that will allow you to implement complete learning trials and support child learning. A good instructional plan will outline (1) the target behavior for the child to do, (2) the antecedents to elicit the target behavior, (3) the additional help provided if the target behavior does not occur or an approximation of the behavior occurs, and (4) the consequence or feedback to “end” the trial. Different combinations of putting together the parts of the plan relate to a range of named instructional strategies – these include naturalistic instructional strategies, prompt/prompt fading strategies, and consequence/feedback strategies. The key to ensuring the use of systematic instructional strategies is to make sure you plan for all the component parts of complete learning trials.

Why is it important for embedded instruction?

Instructional plans set the stage for using systematic instructional strategies with fidelity, because they help you think through and write down how to implement each component of a complete learning trial. With a plan in place, you will know what to do to elicit the target behavior and respond to the child whether or not the target behavior occurs. Instructional plans will be most useful as you learn how to plan for, implement, and evaluate complete learning trials. Note however, it might not be necessary to write an instructional plan for every learning target once you have the hang of it.

Tips for using this practice:

- Remember, a range of instructional strategies can be used to ensure complete learning trials.
- Design your complete learning trials based on what you know about the type of behavior targeted, the child’s preferences for support and help, and the child’s stage of learning (e.g., more help during acquisition).
- Share your instructional plan with the team so everyone knows the component parts of the complete learning trial and can implement them with fidelity.
- When using prompts to elicit behaviors, remember to fade prompts overtime so the child can complete the behavior independently in response to the natural cue.