Self-Management (SM)

Brief Introduction

Self-management (SM) interventions help learners with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) learn to independently regulate their own behaviors and act appropriately in a variety of home, school, and community-based situations.

Description

Self-management (SM) involves teaching learners with ASD to discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, accurately monitor and record their own behaviors, and reinforce themselves for behaving appropriately. Although learners may initially require adult support to accurately record behaviors and provide self-reinforcement, this support is faded over time. Self-management is often used in conjunction with other evidence-based practices including modeling, video modeling, and visual supports.

SM meets evidence-based criteria with 10 single-case design studies. According to the evidence-based studies, this intervention has been effective for preschoolers (3–5 years) to young adults (19–22 years) with ASD. SM can be used effectively to address social, communication, behavior, play, school-readiness, academic, and vocational skills.

Brief Adapted from

Brock, M. E. (2013). *Self-management (SM) fact sheet*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

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Matrix of SM by Outcome and Age (years)

	Social			Communication			Behavior			Joint Attention			Play			Cognitive			School Readiness			Academic			Motor			Adaptive			Vocational			Mental Health		
Age	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22	0-5	6-14	15-22
		■			■			■	■					■					■	■	■	■										■				

Research Summary: Self-Management (SM)

Ages	Skills/Intervention Goals	Settings	Outcome
3–21 years	Social, daily living, academic, behavior, communication	School, home, clinic, community	EBP

*The information found in the Research Summary table is updated yearly following a literature review of new research and this age range reflects information from this review.

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Research

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Steps for Implementation

Step 1. Preparing the Self-Management System

A. To prepare the self-management system:
 i. Identify the target behavior to increase or decrease
 ii. Develop a clear description of the target behavior that adults agree upon and that is presented in a format that learners are able to comprehend.

B. Identify reinforcers that reward the learner by:
 i. asking family members,
 ii. asking or formally assessing the learner, and
 iii. using knowledge about the learner.

C. Develop a data collection system by identifying:
 i. the type of data collection system (interval or frequency) and
 ii. the initial criterion for the target behavior.

D. Select self-monitoring recording and cueing (if interval system is used) devices that are appropriate based on learner characteristics and the setting in which the self-management system will be used.

Step 2. Teaching Learners to Use the Self-Management System

A. Instruct the learner to demonstrate the correct behavior by:
 i. providing learner with a description of the target behavior in a comprehensible form,
 ii. prompting learner as needed to demonstrate correct behavior upon request,
 iii. reinforcing all correct demonstrations of behavior (prompted and unprompted), and
 iv. fading prompts until the learner consistently and independently demonstrates correct behavior upon request.

B. Instruct the learner to discriminate between examples of correct and incorrect behavior by:
 i. modeling examples and nonexamples of the behavior;
 ii. prompting the learner as needed to identify whether each modeled behavior is correct or incorrect;
 iii. reinforcing all accurate identifications of correct and incorrect behavior (prompted and unprompted); and
 iv. fading prompts until learner can consistently and independently identify examples of correct and incorrect behaviors that are increasingly similar to correct behavior.

C. Teach the learner how to use self-recording systems by:
 i. modeling examples of correct and incorrect behavior and prompting the learner as needed to record accurately at the appropriate time;
 ii. reinforcing all accurate recordings at the appropriate time (prompted and unprompted); and
 iii. fading prompts until the learner independently and accurately records behaviors 80% of the time.

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Step 3. Implementing the Self-Management System

A. Either:
    i.   provide learners with materials needed to use the self-management system at the appropriate time or
    ii. teach learners to independently gather the necessary materials.

B. Provide learners with cues (e.g., verbal instruction, visual aid) that signal them to begin using self-management systems.

C. Teach learners how to self-record their behavior in the target setting by:
    i.   prompting them (as needed) to self-record accurately at the appropriate time,
    ii. reinforcing all accurate self-recordings at the appropriate time (prompted and unprompted), and
    iii. fading prompts until learners self-record (without prompts) with accuracy 80% of the time.

D. Teach learners to gain access to reinforcement when the criteria are reached by:
    i.   prompting learners (as needed) to acquire reinforcement when the criteria are reached and
    ii. fading prompts until learners consistently and independently acquire reinforcement when the criteria are reached.

Step 4. Promoting Independence with the Self-Management System

A. Conduct ongoing, intermittent checks to determine whether learners continue to accurately self-record and acquire reinforcement when the criterion is met.

B. Gradually increase the criterion by ensuring that learners are successful at the current criterion before increasing it further.

C. Gradually increase the session length while simultaneously increasing the criteria.

D. Gradually increase the interval length as the session length increases.