Using an SD Procedure to Establish Social Praise as a Conditioned Reinforcer

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Participant

• 3-year-old boy with autism
• Capable of sitting in a chair and attending to a teacher for 7 minutes

Problem and Purpose

• Social praise is typically not an effective reinforcer for children with autism
• Pairing procedure is used informally at the center of the intervention and has failed to establish praise as a reinforcer
• SD procedure was used to first establish a social praise statement as a discriminative stimulus and in turn as a reinforcer

SD Procedure

• Established “Terrific!” as an SD
• Trained response of holding out a hand contingent on “Terrific!”

Pre and Post-Tests

• Five pre-tests were conducted
• Frequency of selecting “Terrific!” alone
• Comparison of selecting “Terrific!” versus preferred toys (book, train, and play-dough)
• “That was awesome!” versus “Terrific!”
• Post-tests were identical to pre-tests

General Discussion

• Manding for “Terrific!” increased in frequency
• Manding for untrained social praise statement increased in frequency
• Tangibles were still preferred over socials
• Follow up probes demonstrated that the value of social praise maintained
• Future steps include generalization and replications with another student

Results

Comparison Data (Socials)

![Comparison Data Graph]

SD Procedure

![SD Procedure Graph]