Kelsey Webster

- Major: Behavioral Psychology
- Minor: Addiction Studies
- Plans for future: Attending graduate school at WMU under Dr. Stephanie Peterson.
- Area of Interest: Decreasing severe problem behavior in individuals with developmental disabilities.
Teaching Two Children Diagnosed with Autism to Tolerate Physical Contact

By: Kelsey Webster
Mentor: Phylicia Ruso
Purpose/Goal of Project

• Prompting commonly used to teach skills in autism/DD population.
• However, problem behaviors occurred during prompting.
• Prevented individuals from learning new skills
• E.g., Various forms of tantruming, resistance, self-injurious behavior (SIB)
Background

• Minimal research on the topic.
• However,
  • Cuvo, Reagan, Ackerlund, Huckfeldt and Kelly (2010)
  • Altabet (2002)
Participants

• Student #1
  • 4-year-old male
  • Diagnosis – Autism
  • Resistance, screaming, throwing, kicking or stomping feet, eloping, grunting.

Put picture of D.H. here
Participants

• Student #2
  • 2-year-old male
  • Diagnosis – Autism
  • Resistance, screaming, kicking or stomping feet, eloping, self-injurious behavior (SIB)

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Setting/Materials

• Classroom at Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Regency (KRESA) West Campus

• Materials
  • Eating utensils, cups, ball, bin, variety of toys, crayons
  • Top three reinforcers from preference assessments
Design - Baseline

- 10-trial sessions
  - % of trials engaged in problem behavior
  - Intensity
- Prompt hierarchy
- No reinforcement
- Student #1 vs. Student #2
Design - Intervention

- 10-trial sessions
- Least-to-Most intrusive
- Reinforcement
- Phase change criteria
  - 3 sessions at 80% or 2 sessions at 90%
- Student #2
Student #1 Results

- Project was terminated due to student moving to another classroom
- Baseline
  - Percentage of trials with problem behavior remained variable
  - Intensity steadily decreased
Student #2 Results

• Baseline
  • Problem behavior 100% of the trials.
  • High levels of intensity
• Intervention
  • Lower percentage of trials engaged in problem behavior
  • Intensity remained around a level 1
Discussion

• Able to introduce prompts with low levels of problem behavior.
• Slowly fade in more intrusive prompts.
• Initially, target problem behavior
• Then, focus on skill acquisition.
My Experience

- My role
- Two semesters go by quickly!
- Nothing ever goes as planned!
- Special Thank You!
  - Phylicia Ruso
Questions/Comments?