Translating Research for Practice

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Using Prompting Procedures to Increase Peer Imitation

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Overview

What is the purpose?
To examine the effectiveness of using progressive time delay (PTD) to teach preschoolers with disabilities to imitate their peers during play activities.

Who received instruction?
Four children between 2 and 5 with reported delays in peer imitation skills.

Where did teaching take place?
Teaching took place in small groups at a university-based inclusive preschool.
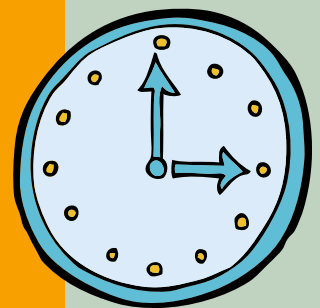
Peer Imitation and PTD

Why is peer imitation important?

Children can learn new behaviors through imitation. Imitation is connected to skills such as communication, social, and play skills. It also gives children access to <u>observational learning opportunities</u>

What is progressive time delay (PTD)?

- PTD is a procedure designed to result in errorless (or near errorless) learning.

- The child is initially provided with the correct response immediately after the task direction.

- Time is gradually added between the task direction and prompt to allow the child to respond independently.

Key Findings

PTD and reinforcement increased peer imitation for children with disabilities.

To maintain the same levels of peer imitation, continued PTD and reinforcement was necessary.

Take Aways

Peer imitation can be taught within small group play activities. Reinforcement is required to maintain peer imitation.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Include opportunities for observational learning in the classroom in multiple ways

- When teaching children to imitate their peers, use familiar settings, materials, and peers

- Visual cues can be used to signal to peers what action to model

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Citation

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