

Transition/Interruption Procedure

Objective

To replace problem behavior that has been acquired when problem behavior has resulted in the removal of demands to transition to another activity and thereby the student has maintained possession of a toy, activity, or item.

Candidates for this Program

Students whose problem behavior is due to a history of having demands removed and reinforcing items maintained following problem behavior.

Procedure

1. **Do a preference assessment** to determine reinforcing items, food, and activities that will be used to reinforce correct responses.
2. **Gain the student's attention and provide the instruction (SD)** Approach the student (within 3-5 feet) and ask him to leave that activity and comply with a demand to do something else (e.g., time to put away the toys and come to lunch table). You may have to use a promise reinforcer if the student has a strong history of being reinforced for engaging in problem behavior. This means that you will place the demand to transition while showing and informing the student of the reinforcer available for transitioning without problem behavior.
3. **Provide Reinforcement if** the student complies and does not engage in any problem behavior. Deliver the promised reinforcer and other reinforcers as needed to maintain the activity to which you have successfully transitioned. **If the student responds incorrectly by** engaging in problem behavior in the form of crying, whining, or screaming as soon as you request the transition but still within compliance of the demand (he begins to respond within 3 seconds), you must not remove the demand or allow access to the preferred item or activity he is being asked to give up. In addition, remove the promised reinforcer. Begin delivering appropriate reinforcers in the activity transitioned to, with physical guidance, when problem behavior has stopped for a brief period of time.

Practice Sessions to Learn to be Interrupted/Transition

1. Set up many opportunities a day to teach the student to be interrupted and transition to a less preferred activity without problem behavior.
2. Start the practice session by placing the student in a preferred activity and allow some time for the reinforcing value of the activity to build.
3. Determine the demand to transition to a less reinforcing activity that you will soon place on the student.
4. At first, make the demands during practice easy and relatively effortless, within sight of the reinforcing activity just removed and for only a brief period (e.g., count to 10 once in the less preferred activity).
5. An example might be to ask the student to put down a toy and sit in a chair just three feet from the activity for the count of 10 with the offer of a promised reinforcer.
6. The reinforcer for complying will be the delivery of the promise and the opportunity to immediately return to the preferred activity following the count of 10.
7. If the student engages in problem behavior in the form of crying, whining, or screaming as soon as you request the transition, but is still within compliance of the demand (he begins to respond within three seconds), you must not remove the demand or allow access to the preferred item or activity he is being asked to give up. In addition, remove the promised reinforcer.
8. When student has mastered transitioning and is complying with a few demands, begin to increase the number of demands, the distance from the reinforcing activity, and the length of time in the less preferred activity. How you do this will vary depending on the child and the data obtained once the program is implemented. The data is what will ultimately guide your decision making process on increasing parameters of the demand.
9. It will be necessary to fade the counting procedure and any other stimuli you have used to make the transitions initially easier.
10. Run many trials of this program each day and record the student's responses to help guide your decisions.