RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS
Access to the General Curriculum


BOTTOM LINE

The authors investigated the effects of self-monitoring strategies on six middle school students with moderate to severe disabilities in general education. Students were instructed to acknowledge a given direction, complete the task and monitor their performance. Results suggest that all students learned the strategy and maintained their performance at mastery levels.
KEY FINDINGS

- Those Student directed learning involves teaching students to use one or more self-directed instructional strategies to plan, perform and monitor a learning task.

- By using these strategies, dependence on external support is minimized, engagement and motivation are increased and learning is maximized.

- Critical to a student’s success in learning and task performance is the ability to self-regulate his or her own performance. The students’ needs to recognize the correct performance and record when he has performed it correctly.

- There is a mistaken perception, that individuals with moderate to severe disabilities are incapable of regulating their own behavior. This perception contributes to students with disabilities remaining dependent on others to direct their behavior.

- A self-regulation strategy of great utility for students with severe disabilities is self-monitoring. Self-monitoring involves a student’s self-observation of a target behavior, followed by an occurrence.

- The six participants began (before the self-regulation instruction) following the steps of directions correctly with means between 9% and 23%.

METHODS

- Six 7th and 8th grade students identified with moderate to severe mental retardation placed at least partially in general education classrooms participated in the study.

- These students were also identified by their teachers for improvement in following directions.

- The students were placed in an industrial technology, art, social studies or family consumer science classes where many specific directions and procedures were given to students.

- The primary dependent measure was the amount of change in each student’s performance of following directions. Observers recorded daily the behaviors participants demonstrated in following directions. These behaviors included...
acknowledging the person giving the direction, beginning the activity and completing
the activity. Performance data was calculated as the percentage of successfully
completed steps of the task sequence.

- A multiple-baseline design across subjects was used to assess effects of an instructional
  program designed to train students to follow directions. The experimental conditions
  included: baseline, intervention and maintenance.

- The intervention involved teaching students to complete assigned tasks and self-
  monitor their performance. This instruction involved recognizing a direction from
  other statements, explaining the purpose and steps of self-monitoring, including
  recording target behavior and then the explained different steps of following directions
  including demonstrating exemplar and non-exemplar behaviors.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS


M. Wehmeyer & D.J. Sands (Eds.) Making it happen: Student involvement in educational
planning, decision making, and instruction (pp. 355-377). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

for service delivery and teacher preparation. The Journal of the Association for Persons
with Severe Handicaps, 25, 167-274.

in Disabilities, 4, 211-218.

package to support high school students with mental retardation in general education


Wehmeyer, M., Agran, M., & Hughes, C.(2000). A national survey of teacher’s promotion of
self-determination and student-directed learning. The Journal of Special Education, 34,
58-68.

Wehmeyer, M., Sands, D.J., Knowles, H.E., & Kozleski, E.B. (2002). Teaching students with
mental retardation: Providing access to the general curriculum. Baltimore: Paul H.
Brookes.
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