

What Is It?

Self-management is an individualized strategy that builds skills by teaching children to recognize and attend to their own behavior. Supporting children's ability to self-manage can promote the use of appropriate social, play, communication, and adaptive skills. Self-management interventions provide visual reminders for expected behavior and a way for children to track whether they engaged in the expected behavior, such as a chart or a checklist.

When to Use It

- To decrease challenging behavior and increase positive, desired behavior.
- With children who are able to (a) identify the expected behavior, (b) self-observe, and (c) identify their performance.

Steps to Implementation / How to Do It

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Identify the target behavior you want to increase. Define it in observable terms that the child can understand (e.g., being a kind friend: Invite peers to play, take turns, use kind words).
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Identify activities and routines during which the self-management intervention will be used. Design a simple recording form (e.g., checklist, yes/no recording).
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Teach the child how to use the self-management form. Have the child practice recording their performance of the target behavior. While the child practices self-observing and recording, you should also record the child's performance and compare your observations with the child's observations. Continue to provide feedback to the child as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Using baseline data, set a goal and select a reinforcer to be delivered when the child meets the goal. Reinforcers should be child-specific and increase the likelihood that the child will engage in the appropriate behavior in future occurrences. Make sure the child knows what they need to do to receive the reinforcer.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Have the child use the self-management form during selected activities or routines. An adult may need to provide the self-management form to the child, remind the child to notice and attend to their behavior, and support the child with filling out the self-management form following the activity/routine.

<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Immediately reinforce the child for meeting self-management goals at the end of each activity or routine. If reinforcement will be delayed (e.g., child earns a video right before snack), acknowledge that the child met their goal, provide praise, and ensure that reinforcement is delivered as soon as possible at an appropriate time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Monitor the child's progress throughout the intervention.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. As the child is successful in meeting their goals across multiple opportunities, set new goals with the child.

Example

Jackson frequently grabs toys and preferred materials roughly from his peers in Ms. Pickett's class. The intervention team completes a functional behavior assessment. Ms. Pickett and the rest of the intervention team decide to implement a self-management intervention for Jackson during free play. They define the target behavior as (a) asking for a turn and (b) waiting for a turn with a calm body. The team designs a simple "yes/no" recording form for Jackson that also has visual images representing the target behavior.

At the end of each activity across the program day, Ms. Pickett and Mr. McCoy, the assistant teacher, take turns reminding Jackson to complete his "self-management" form and assist him in doing so. With adult support, Jackson checks "yes" if he asked for turns and waited for his turn with a calm body during the preceding activity, and "no" if he exhibited grabbing objects from others.

Using baseline data and input from Jackson, Ms. Pickett and Mr. McCoy decide that if Jackson can demonstrate the target behavior during 6 out of 10 classroom activities, then he can walk down to the program office with Mr. McCoy to pick a prize from the program "treasure chest." The next day, Jackson uses the self-management form with Mr. McCoy following each activity. Using the form with an adult ensures that Jackson is reporting his behavior accurately. When Jackson is successful in meeting his goal, Ms. Pickett and Mr. McCoy work with Jackson to set a new goal and give him the option of selecting a new reinforcer that will be likely to increase the occurrence of the target behavior across classroom activities.

How to Increase Effectiveness

- If a recording form is too complicated, redesign it so the child can use it more easily.
- Provide the child with examples of the identified target behavior.
- Reinforce the child as soon as possible once they reach their goal.
- Work collaboratively with the child to set goals and select reinforcers.

Resources

Apple, A. L., Billingsley, F., Schwartz, I. S., & Carr, E. G. (2005). [Effects of video modeling alone and with self-management on compliment-giving behaviors of children with high-functioning ASD](#). *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 7(1), 33–46.

Reynolds, B. M., Gast, D. L., & Luscre, D. (2014). [Self-management of social initiations by kindergarten students with disabilities in the general education classroom](#). *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 16(3), 137–148.