



Using a System of Most-to-Least Prompts to Teach Functional Life Skills

What is the level of evidence?

This is a Research-Based Practice based on four acceptable quality single subject studies.

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The best place to find out how to implement most-to-least prompting is through the following research to practice lesson plan starters:

- Most to Least - Functional Life Skills - Lesson1 – Banking
 - http://transitionta.org/system/files/resourcetrees/LP_MtoL_Prompt_F1.pdf
- Most to Least - Functional Life Skills Lesson2- Bowling and Pinball
 - http://transitionta.org/system/files/resourcetrees/LP_MtoL_Prompt_F2.pdf

With who was it implemented?

- Students with
 - Moderate intellectual disability (3 studies, n=8)
 - Severe intellectual disability (2 studies, n=7)
 - Profound intellectual disability (1 study, n=1)
- Ages ranged from 15 to 43
- Males (n=5), females (n= 7)
 - Gender not specified (1 study, n=4)
- Ethnicity
 - None reported (n=16)

What is the practice?

A system of most-to-least prompts is a method used to transfer stimulus control from response prompts to the natural stimulus whenever the participant does not respond to the natural stimulus or makes an incorrect response. Most-to-least prompting starts with physically guiding the participant through the performance sequence, then

gradually reducing the amount of physical assistance provided as training progresses from session to session (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007).

In the studies used to establish the evidence base for using most-to-least prompting to teach cooking skills, most-to-least prompting included:

- verbal instructions with modeling, verbal instructions with physical guidance used in combination with descriptive praise (O'Conner & Cuvo, 1989)
- decreasing prompts in combination with verbal praise reinforcement (McDonnell & Ferguson, 1989)
- decreasing prompts in combination with community-based instruction and social reinforcement (McDonnell & Laughlin, 1989)
- decreasing prompts in combination with total task chaining and three second constant time delay (Vandercook , 1991)

How has the practice been implemented?

- Most-to-least prompting was used in combination with verbal praise to teach withdrawing money from an ATM and writing and cashing checks at a bank (McDonnell & Ferguson, 1989)
- Most-to-least prompting was used with social reinforcement during community-based instruction to teach purchasing food at a fast food restaurant and purchasing items at a grocery store (McDonnell & Laughlin, 1989)
- Most-to-least prompting was used with descriptive praise to teach following an exercise routine (O'Conner & Cuvo, 1989)
- Most-to-least prompting in combination with total task chaining and 3 second constant time delay was used to teach bowling and pinball skills (Vandercook, 1991)

Where has it been implemented?

- Fast food restaurant (1 study)
- Grocery store (1 study)
- Residential facility (1 study)
- Various community locations (2 studies)

How does this practice relate to Indicator 13?

- Indicator 13 Checklist Item #3: Teaching functional life skills may reflect results of transition assessment information
- Indicator 13 Checklist Item # 4: Teaching functional life skills may be a transition service designated in an IEP that will enable a student to meet his or her postsecondary independent living goal(s)
- Indicator 13 Checklist Item #6: Teaching functional life skills may be part of an annual IEP goal that supports a student's independent living goal(s)

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?

- Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems (Ratios and Proportional Relationships, Grade 6)
 - Use ratio and rate reasoning to solve real-world and mathematical problems, e.g., by reasoning about tables of equivalent ratios, tape diagrams, double number line diagrams, or equations

How does this practice relate to the State's Career Cluster Initiative: Essential Knowledge and Skills?

- Demonstrate mathematics knowledge and skills required to pursue the full range of post-secondary education and career opportunities (Academic Foundations)
 - Demonstrate knowledge of basic arithmetic operations such as: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
 - Demonstrate use of relational expressions such as: equal to, not equal, greater than, less than, etc.

References used to establish this evidence base:

McDonnell, J., & Ferguson, B. (1989). A comparison of time delay and increasing prompt hierarchy strategies in teaching banking skills to students with moderate handicaps. *Journal of the Association of Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 22, 85-91.

McDonnell, J., & Laughlin, B. (1989). A comparison of backward and concurrent chaining strategies in teaching community skills. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation*, 24, 230-238.

O'Conner, Y. M., & Cuvo, A. J. (1989). Teaching dancercise to persons who are mentally handicapped: Programming transfer of stimulus control to a community setting. *Behavioral Residential Treatment*, 4, 289-311.

Vandercook, T. (1991). Leisure instruction outcomes: Criterion performance, positive interactions, and acceptance by typical high school peers. *The Journal of Special Education*, 25, 320-339.