Self-management (SM)
---Step-by-Step Guide---

This practice guide outlines how to plan for, use, and monitor the practice of self-management.

Keep in mind that SM can be used to help learners with ASD independently regulate their behaviors.

BEFORE YOU START…

Each of the following points is important to address so that you can be sure the selected EBP is likely to address the learning needs of your student.

Have you found out more information about. . .?

☐ Identified the behavior…

☐ Collected baseline data through direct observation…

☐ Established a goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target skill is, and how the team will know when the skill is mastered…

If the answer to any of these is "no," review the process of how to select an EBP.

For more information visit:
www.afirm.fpg.unc.edu

Now you are ready to start...

Step 1: SM Planning

The planning step explains important elements involved in preparing to use SM with a learner. Be sure to identify reinforcers and develop a data collection system for the learner to self-monitor behaviors.

1.1 Conduct a functional behavior assessment (if appropriate)

If the identified behavior involves an interfering behavior, which the team would like to decrease, then a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is needed.

1.2 Identify reinforcers

To increase the likelihood that the learner with ASD will use self-management strategies, select reinforcers that are appropriate for the individual learner with ASD. If possible, reinforcers should be natural and related to the activity.

> 📄 *Use the **Reinforcer Selection Checklist** to identify potential reinforcers.*

1.3 Develop a data collection system

Teachers and practitioners will work together to develop a data collection system. The data collection system can be a frequency or interval system.

> 📄 *Use the **SM Recording Sheet** to collect data.*
> 📄 *Use the **SM Interval Recording Sheet** to collect data.*

1.4 Determine initial criterion

The initial criterion for the target behavior should be based upon baseline data collected. Set the criterion low to ensure the learner is likely to be successful.

1.5 Select self-monitoring recording and cueing devices

Based upon characteristics of the learner and setting, a self-monitoring device should be selected. If an interval system of self-monitoring was selected, the learner will need a cueing device as well.

1.6 Teach learner to demonstrate correct behavior

Teach learner to demonstrate correct behavior by:
(1) providing a description of the target behavior,
(2) prompting the learner to demonstrate the behavior upon request,
(3) reinforcing the learner for correct demonstrations, and
(4) fading prompts for learner.

Step 1: SM Planning (continued)

1.6 Teach learner to demonstrate correct behavior (continued)

Once learners are able to demonstrate the correct target behavior, learners are taught to discriminate between occurrences of correct behavior versus incorrect behavior.

1.7 Teach learner to use self-recording system

Teach the learner to use the selected self-recording system by:
(1) model examples of correct and incorrect behavior and prompt the learner (as needed) to accurately record at the appropriate time,
(2) reinforce all accurate recordings at the appropriate time, and
(3) prompt the learner until learner independently and accurately records behavior.

Step 2: Using SM

The using step explains how to cue and teach learners how to use the self-management system in the target setting.

2.1 Provide cues

After the self-management system is set up, the teacher or practitioner will provide the learner with a cue to begin using the self-management system. The cue could be a visual cue, verbal cue, or gestural cue, but should be easy for the learner to understand.

2.2 Teach learner to self-record behavior in target setting

Teachers and practitioners will teach the learner how to self-record specific behavior within the specified setting by:
- Prompting the learner (as needed) to self-record accurately at the appropriate time,
- Reinforcing all accurate self-recordings at the appropriate time (prompted and unprompted),
- Fading prompts until learners self-record (without prompts) with accuracy 80% of time.

2.3 Teach learner to gain access to reinforcement

Teach a learner to gain access to reinforcement when criterion is met by:
- Prompting learner (as needed) to acquire reinforcement when criterion is reached and
- Fading prompts until learners consistently and independently acquire reinforcement when the criterion is reached.

Step 3: Monitoring SM

The following process describes how the use of self-management can be monitored and how to adjust your plan based on the data.

3.1 Conduct checks to determine if learner accurately self-records

When beginning to use a self-management system, teachers/practitioners will frequently conduct checks to determine if the learner is accurately self-recording and acquiring reinforcements when criterion is met. As learners become fluent in using the self-management system, teachers/practitioners will check learner's accuracy in recording behaviors and acquiring reinforcements during 20% of all sessions.

📄 *Use the **SM Recording Sheet** to record target behaviors.*

3.2 Increase criterion, session length, and interval length

When a learner consistently earns reinforcement at the initial criterion, teachers/practitioners should gradually increase the criterion. As the criterion increases, the teacher/practitioner should simultaneously increase the session length to promote independence. As the session length increases, teachers/practitioners can gradually increase the interval length.

3.3 Determine next steps based on learner progress

Collecting data will help team members determine if a learner is making progress. If a learner is making progress based upon data collected, team members should continue to use self-management.
If the learner with ASD is not showing progress with self-management strategies, ask yourself the following questions:
- Is the behavior well defined?
- Is the behavior measurable and observable?
- If needed, was a functional behavior assessment conducted?
- Are the reinforcers appropriate for learner?
- Can the learner demonstrate the behavior?
- Is the learner using the self-recording system accurately?
- Does the learner understand how to record behaviors in the target setting?
- Is the criterion, session length, and interval length appropriate for the learner?
- Is self-management used with fidelity (based on the implementation checklist)?

If these issues have been addressed and the learner with ASD continues to now show progress, consider selecting a different evidence-based practice to use with the learner.