

Check-in/Check-out intervention for ASD adolescents and young adults in the workplace

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Superheroes social skills training, Rethink Autism internet interventions, parent training, EBP classroom training, functional behavior assessment: An autism spectrum disorder, evidence based (EBP) training track for school psychologists.

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Introduction

Employment for individuals on the autism spectrum is often a goal for the individual and their families. Job related skills are often sought after for these individuals because they may be lacking the skills to be successful in the workplace. With additional supports, many of these individuals can be very successful yet only 48% of youth with autism received job placement services (Migliore, et al., 2012). Looking at outcomes of employment, indices of behavioral functioning are also likely related to the employment activities of young adults with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD; Taylor & Seltzer, 2011). For example, autism symptoms, maladaptive behaviors, functional independence, and comorbid psychiatric disorders are related with lower job success.

Thus, interventions targeting the behaviors or skills lagging in these young adults with ASD while on the job can help improve the chance of success at independence in the workplace. One way to improve the job performance of these young adults is to target and reinforce appropriate behaviors while on the job. Targeting skills that lead to success in the workplace and that the young adult can perform, yet does not consistently perform can effectively be done with a structured intervention. One such intervention is Check-in/check-out (CICO).

Check-in/Check-out (CICO). CICO is a tier 2 intervention effectively used with students who have behavior maintained by adult-attention. This intervention has several components including: morning and afternoon meetings with an intervention coordinator, scheduled feedback from teachers, a point card, a token economy, and a home-school note (Campbell & Anderson,

2011). This provides participants with increased positive feedback and adult attention. Further, a type of CICO that has demonstrated positive results is the Behavior Education Program (BEP; Hawking, O'Neill, MacLeod, 2011; Lane, Capizzi, Fisher, & Ennis, 2012). Participants check in with a staff member at the beginning of their day that ensures that the participant is prepared for his day. These meetings serve as a time for the participants to review their goals for the day and receive praise for checking in to encourage success during the day. Throughout each period, the participants check in with their supervisor to receive specific feedback about their performance on meeting the behavioral expectations. At the end of the day, the participants will check out with the same staff member to review their daily progress report where they receive feedback and reinforcement if they met their daily goals.

Description: A modified check-in/check-out system would be implemented with adolescents and young adults with an autism spectrum disorder who are working on independence skills in the workplace. The young person's supervisor or job coach acts as the 'mentor' and their co-workers or supervisor throughout the day work as the person evaluating the behavior during each period. Target behaviors would be specific job-related behaviors such as greeting each customer with a smile and a positive greeting, or cash register coming out even. They would need to have a cognitive ability level where they could understand the verbal directions involved with a check-in check-out system.

First, a behavior contract is implemented to determine the specific behaviors required of the young adult on the spectrum. A good behavior for the contract is descriptive, specific, and measurable (Jenson, 2009). In other words, if a video camera was put on the behavior, what would you see? Following, those behaviors on the contract can be used on the behavior tracking

form to support the success of the behavior contracting. The rewards will be pre-determined through the behavior contract.

The young person can earn points for following specific behavioral expectations during each measurement period, which lead to earning a reward of the young person's choice. Some example behaviors include arriving on time for each work period, using appropriate language on the job, or maintaining appropriate space between self and others. The rewards will be different privileges and responsibilities that they can earn on the job.

Population: The targeted population will be adolescents and young adults with an autism spectrum disorder who are having a difficult time being successful with the current level of support provided in the work setting. They may need the addition of this individualized behavioral support to be successful in the work environment. This can be used in a variety of work settings where the young person with ASD is receiving some support.

Steps for Behavior Contract Implementation

1. Determine the specific behavior for which the contract is being implemented (i.e., what does it look like if you put a video camera on it?).
2. Determine the reinforcers for the behavior (i.e., what do you earn?).
3. Determine the contract criteria (i.e., how do you measure it?). This can be the number of points (or percentage of points) from the behavior tracker.
4. If necessary, determine bonus or penalty clauses. A bonus clause is for exceptional behavior. A penalty clause can be used for nonperformance.

5. Discuss the contract with the young adult. The behavior, rewards, and criteria can be negotiable with the young adult.
6. Put the contract terms in writing and have all participating parties sign the contract (see attached contract).

Steps for Behavior Tracking Implementation

1. Complete behavior contract (see above).
2. Determine who will and collect and review information from the tracking form on a daily basis (see attached behavior tracking form).
3. Review the tracking form and behavior contract procedures with all participating adults (e.g., job coach, supervisors, family, participating young adult) and ensure a common agreement and understanding of the program.
4. Collect the tracking form after each work shift and review progress with the participating young adult.
5. Reward the young adult as pre-determined.
6. Make adjustments as necessary. As goal criteria are met, begin to increase the demand on the young adult or fade out the intervention.

Troubleshooting

What if the young adult is consistently not meeting the determined behavior criteria?

- Check for understanding: ensure the young adult understands what is expected of him or her. Is he or she capable of meeting this goal? Meet and problem solve with the young

adult and other adults involved in helping him or her succeed. Get the young adult to commit to correcting the problem.

What if the young adult expresses that he or she is embarrassed to have this additional support on the job?

- Save face: plan check-ins with the young adult in a private space where his or her coworkers are not privy to the intervention supports. For consistency, it may be worthwhile to schedule one-on-one meetings with other staff members so that the young adult in the check-in/check-out program does not feel singled-out.

What if the student begins working hard and loses motivation for the program, or appears frustrated?

- The reward may be too delayed. Try giving reinforcement after less time.
- If that does not work, a penalty clause may be necessary to encourage the young adult to participate.
- Check the behavior criteria. The behavior expectation may be too difficult.

What if the young adult is not willing to participate?

- From the beginning of planning the program, the young adult should be included in conversations about their behavior expectations. Give them the option to negotiate the terms of the contract and tracking procedures. Consider including a positive mentor that the young adult respects in the conversation.

Note: The interventions were taken and adapted from the following sources:

Jenson, W. R., Rhode, G., & Reavis, H. K. (2009). *The tough kid toolbox*. Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.

Ramapo for Children (2015). *The ramapo toolbox*. New York, NY: Ramapo for Children

References

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- Taylor, J. L., & Selzer, M. M. (2011). Employment and post- secondary educational activities for young adults with autism spectrum disorders during the transition to adulthood. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 41*, 566–574.

Staff Name: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Behavior Contract

	Contracted Behavior	When	How Well
#1			
#2			
#3			

Length of contract: _____ From: _____ To: _____

If I am successful, I will earn: _____

Given by: _____ on: _____

Bonus Clause: _____

Penalty Clause: _____

Perfect Score Bonus: _____

Staff Signature and Date

Supervisor Signature and Date

Behavior Tracking Form

Staff Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions:

1. The staff carries this form to each period.
2. Each supervisor completes the rating in the appropriate box at the end of the period. *Note: 0 = Poor 1 = Fair 2 = Good*
3. Additional comments may be made on the back of this form.
4. The staff reviews this form each day with their supervisor.

Target Behavior 1: _____

Target Behavior 2: _____

Target Behavior 3: _____

Period	Behavior 1	Behavior 2	Behavior 3
1	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
3	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
4	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
5	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
6	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
7	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
8	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2

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Period	Behavior 1	Behavior 2	Behavior 3
1	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
3	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
4	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
5	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
6	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
7	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
8	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2

Period	Comments
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Period	Comments
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	