NTACT THE COLLABORATIVE | National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

Using the Self-Advocacy Strategy to Teach Student Involvement in the IEP

(Evidence-Based Practice)

What is the evidence base?

This is an evidence-based practice for students with disabilities based on two methodologically sound group experimental studies with random assignment, four methodologically sound single-case studies, and one rigorous single-case study across 79 students with disabilities.

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

- The Self-Advocacy Strategy: Enhancing Student Motivation and Self-Determination https://www.edgeenterprisesinc.com/product/self-advocacy-strategy-enhancing-student-motivation-and-self-determination/
  Note. This curriculum is a "pay for" curriculum.

With whom was it implemented?

- Students with
  - Specific learning disabilities (*n* = 56)
  - Intellectual disability (*n* = 14)
  - Emotional behavior disorder (*n* = 6)
  - Other health impairment (*n* = 3)
- Ages ranged from 14 to 19
- Males (*n* = 42), females (*n* = 37)
- Ethnicity
  - White (*n* = 27)
  - Hispanic (*n* = 9)
  - Black (*n* = 5)
  - Asian (*n* = 1)
  - Not Reported (*n* = 37)

What is the practice?

The *Self-Advocacy Strategy* (SAS) is a motivation and self-determination strategy designed to prepare students to participate in education or transition planning conferences. The strategy consists of five steps that are taught over a series of seven acquisition and generalization stages. The five steps are presented using the mnemonic "I PLAN" to help cue students to remember the steps for the strategy (VanReusen & Bos, 1994).

I PLAN represents:

- I - Inventory completed by students listing their strengths, weaknesses, learning needs, goals, and choices to prepare them for their upcoming IEP conference
- P - Provide your inventory involves identifying appropriate time for individual to share information during the conference, speaking clearly and completely, and referring to inventory as needed
- L - Listen & Respond addresses being an active listener and responding to statements made by others in a positive manner
- A - Ask questions focuses on asking appropriate questions to gather needed information
- N - Name your goals to communicate goals and ideas on actions to be taken

The studies used to establish the evidence base for using the Self-Advocacy Strategy to teach student involvement in the individualized education program (IEP) included:

- *SAS* paired with self-instruction and simulation has been used to teach relevant contributions during the IEP meeting and identifying goals during the IEP meeting (VanReusen et al., 1989)
- *SAS* paired with modeling and simulation has been used to teach identifying IEP goals prior to the meeting; increase verbal contributions during the IEP meeting; improve ratings of student participation in the IEP meeting according to student, parent(s), and teacher; and increase the length of meetings (VanReusen & Bos, 1994)
- *SAS* paired with computer-assisted instruction has been used to teach verbal responses to questions during the IEP meeting, student contributed IEP goals during the meeting, and knowledge of the strategy (Lancaster et al., 2002)
- *SAS* paired with computer-assisted instruction and simulation has been used to increase student participation in IEP meetings (Hammer, 2004)
- *SAS* has been used to improve student contributions during the IEP meeting (Test & Neale, 2004)
- Used SAS to help students become organized before their IEP meeting and provided techniques to improve students' communication skills during meetings (Cease-Cook et al., 2013).
- Used SAS, which contained five separate sessions that provide instruction related to developing SHARE behaviors (i.e., sit up straight, have a pleasant tone of voice, activate your thinking, relax, and engage in eye communication), completing an inventory of educational needs, and using steps of SAS in IEP meetings (Schelling & Rao, 2013).

Where has it been implemented?

- Special education classroom in a high school (7 studies)

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3** – Knowledge of Language: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

How does this practice relate to the Common Career Technical Core?

- **Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals.** Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and they regularly act on a plan to attain these goals.
- **Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.** Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others.
- **Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.** Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive

References used to establish this evidence base:

Cease-Cook, J., Test, D. W., & Scroggins, L. S. (2013). Effects of the CD-ROM version of the "Self-Advocacy Strategy" on quality of contributions in IEP meetings of high school students with intellectual disability. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental, 42(2), 258-268.* https://www.jstor.org/stable/23880644

Hammer, M. R. (2004). Using the self-advocacy strategy to increase student participation in IEP conferences. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *39*(5), 295–380. https://doi.org/10.1177/10534512040390050601

Lancaster, P. E., Schumaker, J. B., & Deshler, D. D. (2002). The development and validation of an interactive hypermedia program for teaching a self- advocacy strategy to students with disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *25*(4), 277–302. https://doi.org/10.2307/1511358

Schelling, A. L., & Rao, S. (2013). Evaluating self-advocacy strategy instruction for students with an intellectual disability using an interactive hypermedia program. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *4*(17), 1-10.

Test, D. W., & Neal, M. (2004). Using the self-advocacy strategy to increase middle graders' IEP participation. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, *13*(2), 135–145. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOBE.0000023660.21195.c2

Van Reusen, A. K., & Boss, C. S. (1994). Facilitating student participation in individualized education programs through motivation strategy instruction. *Exceptional Children, 60*(5), 466–475. https://doi.org/10.1177/001440299406000510

Van Reusen, A. K., Deshler, D. D., & Schumaker, J. B. (1989). Effects of a student participation strategy in facilitating the involvement of adolescents with learning disabilities in individualized education program planning process. *Learning Disabilities*, *1*(2), 23–34.

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