

Teaching adolescents with ASD to tact private events related to tactile stimuli



PRESENTERS

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Background

People with autism may have language difficulties and limitations (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2018). Thus, it is difficult for them to report to a caregiver that they are feeling something, such as pain. For this reason, the caregivers of people with ASD don't know whether the person is feeling good or bad (Courtemanche & Black, 2016). Therefore, it is important to teach people with ASD to "talk about events not observable by others" (Skinner, 1945).

Results

All participants learned the correct response of sensation+body part target and generalized it to novel body parts and novel objects, but not to novel sensations. Thus, an alternative response for the novel sensations was taught which was first learned and then generalized to still other sensations.

Extra results

To date, 2 out of 3 participants have reported private events pain-related to adults (e.g. "I feel stinging in my head", "I feel pain in my tummy", "I feel itchy eyes", etc.) after the study was concluded.

Methods

N=3 Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Age range: 13 – 16 years old
- 2 boys; 1 girl

BASELINE

No participants showed correct responses for any target:
Low level of correct response
No Trend
Stable data

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

- Multiple Baseline Design across subjects – concurrent
- Prompt and Prompt fading – Time delay
 - Reinforcement for correct responses
 - Objects manipulations (for exclusive control of tactile stimuli)
 - Leading question for maintenance

DIPENDENT VARIABLE

Percentage correct response (sensation + body part):

- Teaching
- Novel body parts
- Novel objects
- Novel sensation
- Other Sensations

