

Module: Naturalistic Intervention

Case Study

Marco

Marco was a twelve-year old with Asperger Syndrome. His speech language pathologist had been working with him on greetings as specified on his IEP, but he had not generalized the skill to his general education classroom or community settings. His parents wanted him to be able to say hello to family friends at the softball field and his teacher reported that Marco did not respond to peers' greetings in the morning. Marco was able to both respond to and initiate greetings in a small group speech therapy session. The team decided to set up a naturalistic intervention to help him generalize these skills to other environments. They developed a data collection sheet for Marco to carry with him through school environments, and invited his mom to send data from home through email.

In his general education homeroom class, Marco's teacher provided support to Marco as the students filtered into the class. When a student greeted Marco, the teacher whispered behind him, "What do you say, Marco?" and Marco was able to respond with an appropriate greeting (like he had practiced in speech). Occasionally, he required a direct model. All of Marco's teachers and many staff were provided with some instruction regarding this practice via an email and also in a general sixth-grade team meeting. They were more mindful in their greetings to Marco as they knew what prompts to provide in order to elicit the appropriate greeting. His case manager arranged for Marco to run some errands throughout the day, allowing for more practice as he delivered mail to the office, returned dishes to the cafeteria, and brought copies to the resource room. Marco's parents were also taught the strategies for eliciting the greeting, such as providing a model or a mand-model, and they were able to support Marco's use of greetings at the weekly softball game as well as other times throughout the week. Below is an example of the data collection sheet that was used with Marco; other environments (e.g., second period, art class) were added as needed.

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Learner: <i>Marco</i>					
Person collecting data: <i>**please initial your entries</i>					
Target Behavior (TA): <i>Greeting</i>					
Date	Activity/Routine	Environmental Modifications	Strategies Used (underline or circle)	TA used Yes/No	Notes
10-14	Homeroom E.L.		M <u>Ma</u> TD IT O	Y	<i>Greeted me & Will. Responded to Kaitlyn's "hello"</i>
			<u>M</u> Ma TD IT O	Y	
			M <u>Ma</u> TD IT O	N	
			<u>M</u> Ma TD IT O	Y	
			M Ma TD IT O		
10-14	School errands to office K.S.		<u>M</u> Ma <u>TD</u> IT O	Y	
			M <u>Ma</u> TD IT O	Y	
			M Ma TD IT O		
			M Ma TD IT O		
			M Ma TD IT O		
10-14	Softball game Mom		<u>M</u> Ma TD IT O	Y	<i>Wow! Mom reports via email that they waited and he said hi to his buddies!!</i>
			<u>M</u> Ma TD IT O	Y	
			M Ma <u>TD</u> IT O	Y	
			M Ma <u>TD</u> IT O	Y	
			M Ma <u>TD</u> IT O	Y	

M = Model, Ma = Mand-Model, TD = Modified Time Delay, IT = Incidental Teaching, O = Other

Marco quickly began using greetings in multiple environments. His teachers and parents began noticing that he was spontaneously using these greetings, and they worked with others on the team to reduce the level of prompting (e.g., using modified time delay). By taking advantage of natural interactions with multiple people in multiple environments, Marco was able to generalize the skills. Marco now greets peers and teachers appropriately at school, and his parents report that he is more likely to respond to others' greetings in the community.