**Module: Time Delay**

**Overview of Time Delay**


Time delay is a practice that focuses on fading the use of prompts during instructional activities. This practice is always used in conjunction with prompting procedures such as least-to-most prompting, simultaneous prompting, and graduated guidance. With this procedure, a brief delay is provided between the initial instruction and any additional instructions or prompts. The evidence-based research focuses on two types of time delay procedures: progressive and constant. With *progressive time delay*, teachers and other practitioners gradually increase the waiting time between an instruction and any prompts that might be used to elicit a response from a learner with ASD. For example, a teacher provides a prompt immediately after an instruction when a learner with ASD is initially learning a skill. As the learner becomes more proficient at using the skill, the teacher gradually increases the waiting time between the instruction and the prompt. Similar to progressive time delay, with *constant time delay*, there is no delay between the instruction and prompt when a learner is first learning a skill. However, with constant time delay, a fixed amount of time is always used between the instruction and the prompt as the learner becomes more proficient at using the new skill.

**Evidence**

Time delay meets the evidence-based practice criteria with five single-subject design studies, demonstrating its effectiveness in the domains of academic, language/communication, play, and social domains in the elementary age group.

**With what ages is time delay effective?**

Time delay can be used effectively with children and youth with ASD, regardless of cognitive level and/or expressive communicative abilities. The evidence base shows that time delay is an effective intervention for learners with ASD ranging from 6 to 11 years of age.

**What skills or intervention goals can be addressed by time delay?**

Time delay can be used to teach a variety of skills including academic, play/leisure, language/communication, and social skills.

**In what settings can time delay be effectively used?**

The evidence-based studies were conducted in clinical environments. While the research did not demonstrate use of time delay in the home, school, or community-based settings, it might be ideal for teaching to occur in these contexts as well to promote generalization of skills.
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**Evidence Base**

The studies cited in this section document that this practice meets the NPDC on ASD’s criteria for an evidence-based practice. This list is not exhaustive; other quality studies may exist that were not included.

**Elementary**


**Selected Additional Resources**