

Discrete Trial Teaching Fact Sheet

Brief Description

Discrete trial teaching (DTT) is a one-to-one instructional approach used to teach skills in a planned, controlled, and systematic manner. DTT is characterized by repeated, or massed, trials that have a definite beginning and end. Within DTT, the use of antecedents and consequences is carefully planned and implemented. The instructional trial begins when the adult presents a clear direction or stimulus, which elicits a target behavior. Positive praise and/or tangible rewards are used to reinforce desired skills or behaviors. Data collection is an important part of DTT as it provides teachers/practitioners with information about beginning skill level, progress and challenges, skill acquisition and maintenance, and generalization of learned skills or behaviors. Other practices that are used in DTT include task analysis, prompting, time delay, and reinforcement.

Qualifying Evidence

DTT meets evidence-based criteria with 13 single case design studies.

Ages

According to the evidence-based studies, this intervention has been effective for preschoolers (3-5 years) to elementary school-age learners (6-11 years) with ASD.

Outcomes

DTT can be used effectively to address social, communication, behavior, joint attention, school-readiness, academic, adaptive, and vocational skills.

Research Studies Providing Evidence

- Goldsmith, T. R., LeBlanc, L. A., & Sautter, R. A. (2007). Teaching intraverbal behavior to children with autism. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, 1*(1), 1-13. doi: 10.1016/j.rasd.2006.07.001
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- Simer, N., & Cuvo, A. J. (2009). Training vision screening behavior to children with developmental disabilities. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 3(2), 409-420. doi: 10.1016/j.rasd.2008.08.007
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- Wynn, J. W., & Smith, T. (2003). Generalization between receptive and expressive language in young children with autism. *Behavioral Interventions*, 18(4), 245-266. doi: 10.1002/bin.142

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