

SELF-MONITORING:

AN INTRODUCTION

Self-monitoring is a versatile intervention, which is relatively simple to implement and it can be used to address behavioral, social, or academic needs (Lane, Menzies, Bruhn, & Crnobori, 2011).

Students learn to observe and record their own behaviors with self-monitoring. For self-monitoring to be successful, students must be very clear on the exact behavior they are expected to monitor (e.g., on-task behavior). In the observation component, students decide whether the target behavior occurred. At the end of a given interval, such as a class period or a set amount of time, the student must make a determination as to whether or not he or she demonstrated the behavior during that period. The student will then record his or her behavior —the second process of self-monitoring— on a monitoring sheet or via mobile technology.

Often self-monitoring includes reinforcement when the student meets the targeted goal. Attention should be paid to the function of the behavior when selecting the reinforcer. In brief, people engage in behaviors to either access or avoid attention, activity/tangible, or sensory experiences. However, for other students, the act of monitoring and recording their behavior is reinforcing enough to increase the future probability of the target behavior occurring. Progress is often graphed by the student, an additional motivation toward success.

In summary self-monitoring can be implemented as a relatively simple Tier 2 intervention using the following research-based steps (Menzies et. al, 2009; Vanderbilt 2005):

- Step 1: Establish the prerequisite conditions
- Step 2: Identify and operationally define the behaviors
- Step 3: Design the self-monitoring procedures, including a monitoring form
- Step 4: Teach the student the self-monitoring procedures
- Step 5: Monitor student progress
- Step 6: Consider maintenance and follow-up

The subsequent materials provide teachers a procedural checklist for implementation of self-monitoring as an intervention, sample self-monitoring forms for both primary and secondary level students, treatment integrity checklist, and pre/post-intervention social validity measures for students and teachers, as well as a brief on the supporting research.