

Teaching Self-Management of Behavior to Children with ADHD

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Hawaii International Conference on Education Application
Abstract of Completed Research

Topic Area: Elementary Education

Key Words: Positive Behavioral Support, ADHD, Classroom management

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Abstract of Completed Research

The American Academy of Pediatrics advises that children diagnosed with ADHD be treated with a combination of both drug and behavioral therapy. Despite this advice, the majority of children diagnosed with ADHD are treated with drug therapy alone. Children diagnosed with ADHD who take drug therapy, however, often continue to exhibit behavioral and academic problems in the classroom. While drug therapy is effective at reducing symptoms, these children are missing an important component in their treatment that would reduce their symptoms even further.

Teachers need an easy to implement positive behavioral intervention to help these children reduce problem behavior and improve academic performance in the classroom. In this study a positive behavioral intervention called self-management was implemented in a general education elementary school classroom. Self-management is a behavioral intervention that teaches children to monitor their own behavior and emphasizes independence.

Five children diagnosed with ADHD by independent physicians and taking drug therapy for ADHD participated in the project. Participants were taught self-management techniques to monitor academic performance, on-task behavior, and disruptive behaviors. An alternating treatment multiple baseline across participants ABAB-ACAB design was used to empirically assess the effectiveness of self-management as compared to a teacher-only monitoring control phase with and without reinforcement on three dependent variables for each participant. Self-management was associated with increases of on-task behavior and academic performance and associated with a decrease of disruptive behaviors when compared to other phases. Implications for general education teachers' use of self-management in classrooms with children diagnosed with ADHD are discussed.