

# Intentional Instruction: Instructional Strategies

## Peer Mediated Strategies

Peers can be powerful instructional agents for other children. Their interactions are often very motivating for the child with social emotional delays. Peer mediated instruction refers to the use of peers to prompt, model, and reinforce the child who is learning a target skill. When planning to use peer mediated instruction, you might need to prepare the child without the disability by giving the peer information on how to initiate an interaction and how to interpret the child's communicative responses.

There are several approaches the teacher might use to implement peer mediated instruction. She might ask children if they are willing to serve as a peer buddy for a child in the classroom. Once children are recruited, they are told how long and when they need to stay with their buddy and provided clear directions of what to do together (e.g., "Take Christopher to the sand table. Show him how to fill a bucket with sand. Then, show him how to pour it out."). When buddies play together, the teacher monitors the interaction and provides feedback. Teachers need to be cautious about limiting the demands on buddies (beware of buddy burn out) and should select several children who might serve as buddies to ensure that there are ample children willing to interact with the target child and that they can collectively come up with engaging play ideas. Another approach for preparing and instructing peer buddies, is to give them simple directions such as ("Stay with your

friend", "Play with your friend", and "Talk with your friend"). Finally, another strategy might be to provide a script with visuals for the play interaction and encourage the peer buddy to implement the script. The visuals on the script can depict the sequence of the activity using photos (e.g., photographs of building a block tower depicting each step).

Sample skills that can be taught using **Peer-Mediated** Instruction:

- Greet peers or adults
- Explore new environment, object, or toy
- Participate in simple turn-taking social games
- Share and takes turns with peers
- Participate in group activity
- Follow routine and rules
- Follow rules in simple games
- Use materials for intended purpose
- Transition from activity

## Mand-Model

Mand-model is used to help children use the language they have learned within appropriate contexts. In this procedure, the teacher arranges the environment in a way that will gain the child's interest. For example, you might begin playing with a toy to capture the child's attention. When the child expresses interest, you mand (i.e., verbally instruct) the child to respond. For example, you might say "Tell me what you want" or "Say \_\_\_". If the child responds correctly, you provide the toy. If the child does not give you the response, you model what you want the child to say. For example, you might say "Parker say, I want to play with the

train". If the child says the response, you provide the toy or object and expand on what the child said (e.g., "You said I want to play with the train. Parker wants to play with the train and push it on the track."). If the child does not say anything, you provide the toy and restate the model. The goal in mand-model is not to make the child use language to get the object or interaction. The goal is to assist the child in knowing when and how to use his words.

Mand-model could also be used for helping a child comment or label. For example if you are teaching a child to use feeling words in an activity where you are asking the child to identify the expression on a photo, you can use mand-model to teach the child how to label the photo. To gain the child's attention you could provide a photo or picture in a book. When the child looks at the picture, you might say "What feeling is this?" If the child responds correctly, you provide specific praise "That's right, this face looks sad." If the child needs an additional prompt, you model what to say "This face looks sad." If the child responds by saying "sad", you provide specific praise and an expansion "You said that the face is sad. This is a sad face."

Sample skills that can be taught using **Mand-Model**:

- Ask for a turn
- Ask for a toy
- Greetings
- Partings
- Giving compliments
- Identify feeling word
- Ask to play

### Least-to-Most Prompting

Least-to-Most prompting might be used when the child has the skill, but does not use it in the target context (e.g., the child knows to pass the toy but does not do it during circle time). Least-to-most prompting begins with the least intrusive prompt and uses more intrusive prompts as corrective feedback. The goal in the prompting hierarchy is to ensure that the child successfully uses the skill or behavior.

The first step is for the teacher to design a hierarchy or order in which she will deliver prompts. The order begins with the least intrusive prompt which is typically a verbal direction or the presentation of the item and an expectant look. If the child fails to respond to that prompt, the teacher follows with the next level of prompt. This could be a verbal direction such as “Pass the toy to Ryan.” If the child does not respond, the teacher might move to a physical prompt such as touching the child’s hand. If the child fails to respond to that level of prompting, the teacher would use the most intrusive prompt, hand-over-hand assistance. The goal is to ensure that the child uses the skill successfully. When the child responds correctly (no matter the prompt level), the child should receive specific praise and the natural reinforcer involved in the activity.

Sample skills that can be taught using

#### Least-to-Most Prompting:

- Pass a toy
- Activate a toy
- Sign language or gestures
- Use communication device
- Transition from activity
- Put materials away

### Most-to-Least Prompting

Most-to-least prompting is used to teach a child a new skill. It is an appropriate instructional strategy to use when the child does not know how to perform the behavior. For example, if you want to teach a child to give an object or toy to another child and the child does not know how to pass a toy, most-to-least prompting might be an effective strategy to use.

The first step is for the teacher to design a hierarchy or order in which she will deliver prompts. The order begins with the most intrusive prompt which is typically hand-over-hand assistance. The teacher determines how many times she will use the most intrusive prompt and the criterion for the child’s response to the prompt and then moves to the next level of the hierarchy that is less intrusive than the previous step. For passing a toy, the first prompt might be to pass the toy on the direction of “give the toy to \_\_\_” and provide hand-over-hand assistance. After 3 days of guiding the child each time with full assistance, the teacher moves to providing the prompt of touching the child’s hand. She continues to use that level of prompt until the child performs the skill with just the touch prompt for four consecutive days with no errors. If the child makes an error (i.e., does not pass the toy with the touch prompt), the correction is to use the previous prompt (hand-over-hand assistance). The next level of prompt might be to provide the verbal direction only of “Give the toy to \_\_\_.” Again, if the child makes an error, the teacher uses the previous prompting level to correct the child and if that level of prompting does not work, the teacher moves back to the first prompt level of hand over hand assistance.

Sample skills that can be taught using

#### Most-to Least Prompting:

- Pass a toy
- Activate a toy
- Sign language or gestures
- Use communication device
- Transition from activity
- Put materials away