

Autism Initiative: Training Series

ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter 3.2: Part 9 – Task Analysis & Chaining

Part 1: Review of Concepts

- *Task Analysis*: is the process of breaking a complex skill or series of behaviors into smaller, teachable units.
- *Chaining*: refers to the process of linking a series of behaviors together to complete a task.
 - *Forward chaining*: involves teaching the steps involved in the behavior in the order in which they occur.
 - *Backward chaining*: involves teaching the steps involved in the behavior, starting with the last step of the chain.
 - *Total task presentation*: involves teaching all of the steps identified in the chain at the same time.

Part 2: Example and Discussion Questions

Chaining procedures are often used to teach life skills, such as dressing, grooming, cooking, cleaning, etc. Below is an example of using task analysis and chaining to teach a life skill. Review with the staff, then ask them to do a task analysis and chaining procedure for a different life skill.

Skill: Using Deodorant

Definition: Applying a deodorant stick in a back-and-forth motion three times underneath each armpit in the morning, before getting dressed and after taking a shower.

Task Analysis of Using Deodorant

1. Take the deodorant bottle out from the cabinet in the bathroom.
2. Remove the cap from the deodorant bottle.
3. Pick up the deodorant stick with the right arm and raise the left arm.
4. Put the deodorant stick on the left armpit and move up and down 3 times.
5. Place the deodorant stick in the left hand and raise the right arm.
6. Put the deodorant stick on the right armpit and move up and down 3 times.
7. Put the cap back on the deodorant bottle.
8. Put the deodorant bottle away.

Chaining procedure

Question: *Would you use forward or backward chaining?*

Answer: Because it is important that the client put on deodorant each day, we will use backward chaining.

Backward chaining: Present the SD: “Put on deodorant”. You (staff) prompt the client without placing ANY demands on the client through steps 1-7. Before getting to step 8 in the task analysis, say, “Put on deodorant” and hand them the deodorant stick to put away

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into the cabinet. When they do so, provide with reinforcement. Then, you'd move to having the client do Steps 7 and 8 independently, and so on.

Part 3: Small Group Activity

Break staff down into small groups (2-3 people). Have the staff choose from one of the following skills and create a task analysis and demonstrate to the group how they would implement backward or forward chaining to teach the skill.

Brushing teeth, brushing hair, trimming nails, washing hair, cooking a simple recipe (macaroni and cheese), using the microwave, folding towels, etc.