

Teaching Skills

Behaviour Skills Training

How to Teach a Skill Using Behaviour Skills Training (BST)

Behaviour Skills Training (BST) is one of the most well researched and effective ways to teach and learn a new skill. BST has been shown to be effective at teaching safety skills, social skills, daily living skills, physical exercise, and more. BST is used until the desired outcome is met, rather than for a certain amount of time. For example, BST may be used to teach someone to ride a bike until they no longer use training wheels.

Behaviour Skills Training Includes Four Components:

Instruction

Provide a verbal or visual description of the skill. Explain why it is important to learn (i.e. provide the rationale), as well as when and when not to use the skill.

Modelling

Show the person how to perform the skill using role play or video modelling. Ensure the person has imitation skills. The person must have the ability to watch what is being modelled and then be able to replicate it.

Rehearsal

Have the person practice the skill while you observe. Practice often, with different people and in different environments to promote generalization.

Feedback

During rehearsal, provide positive praise when the skill is performed correctly (e.g., "Great work, that is exactly how you safely cross the street!"). Provide corrective feedback when a skill is performed incorrectly (e.g., "That was a nice try, remember to look both ways before crossing")

Keep in Mind:

- ◆ the age and skill of the person
- ◆ the person's readiness skills for the task (e.g., if you are teaching tying shoelaces, the person must have the required fine motor skills)
- ◆ ensure all four components of BST are followed in sequential order, with a repeated focus on rehearsal and feedback until the skill is acquired

Miltenberger, R. (2004). Behaviour Modification: principals and procedure (3rd ed.) Belmont, CA. Wadsworth Publishing.

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