Giving Up Reinforcers Teaching Protocol

Objective: To replace problem behavior that has been acquired when problem behavior has resulted in the student maintaining possession of a toy, activity or item.

Candidates for the Program: Following a functional assessment, student whose behavior has been determined to be a function of a history of maintaining access to reinforcing items following problem behavior. (Students who have problem behavior when an attempt is made to have them give up a reinforcer)

1. Set up many opportunities a day to teach the student to give up reinforcers without problem behavior. Start these practice session by placing the student in a preferred activity and allow some time for the reinforcing value of the activity to build.

2. Determine the items/activities you will use as your promise reinforcer. Ideally the promise reinforcer is of equal or lesser value than the reinforcer you will ask them to give up. There may be exceptions to this rule depending on the history of the student and the severity of the problem behavior.

3. At **first** make it easy for the student to give up the reinforcer. You should start off by offering a "promise reinforcer while asking the student to hand you the item they have at hand.

4. Intersperse easy/mastered steps with the target step during training session. Run target criteria on only 20% or so of each day's trials; the other 80% of trials should be at levels the student has already mastered.

5. Run these trials both during Natural Environment Teaching, during structured teaching (IT sessions), during high MO activities, etc and on an unpredictable schedule. Don't just run giving up reinforcer trials as a session (although for some students this might be appropriate during initial training).

6. If the student gives up the reinforcer upon request with no problem behavior, you should immediately give the student the promise reinforcer. In other words, you are trading the items being offered for the one they have at hand.

7. Initially, you can immediately hand back the item they gave up and gradually increase the time you keep the reinforcer for and the time interval before you deliver the promise.

8. Fade the use of Promise Reinforcer through intermittent trials for giving up reinforcers.

9. Run as many giving up reinforcer trials per day as possible (20 to 50 per day). A trial equals each time the student gives up a preferred item/activity.

10. Use the skill sequence to guide decisions on fading promise reinforcer, increasing the interval of when to deliver the promise and/or return the item to the student and, eventually, embedding tasks between the time they give up the reinforcer and the time they get it back.

11. Trials in which the student readily gives up the reinforcer should be differentially reinforced (for example, give better reinforcement than for trials where student might have shown some hesitance).

12. If student fails to give up the reinforcer within two seconds prompt as necessary and then run a transfer trial. In other words, make sure that after the prompted trial you run another trial in which student responds independently of with less of a prompt.

13. If student engages in problem behavior, immediately remove the promise reinforcer and prompt the student to give up the reinforcer. Continue to run a transfer trial until student gives up the reinforcer without problem behavior while maintaining safety of the student.

14. For some students it may be necessary to sequence steps carefully so that you "Set them up for success". Some of the considerations include the value of the reinforcer you ask them to give up, value of the reinforcer being offered as the promise, number of trials in the day in which you ask to give up reinforcers, and percent of trials in which a promise reinforcer is offered. Here is an example of a sequence that will make it more likely for the student to learn to give up reinforcers while avoiding too many episodes of problem behavior occurring:

Step 1: Gives up reinforcer in exchange for a promise, immediately followed by receiving the reinforcer they gave up

Step 2: Gives up reinforcer in exchange for a promise, and 3 seconds later receiving the reinforcer they gave up

Step 3: Gives up reinforcer in exchange for a promise, and 5 seconds later receiving the reinforcer they gave up

Step 4: Gives up reinforcer when offered a promise, performs one easy trial, followed by receiving the promise and reinforcer they gave up

Step 5: Gives up reinforcer without the use of a promise, immediately followed by receiving the reinforcer they gave up

Step 6: Gives up reinforcer without the use of a promise, and 3 seconds later receiving the reinforcer they gave up

Step 7: Gives up reinforcer without the use of a promise, and 5 seconds later receiving the reinforcer they gave up

Step 8: Gives up reinforcer without the use of a promise, performs one easy trial, followed by receiving reinforcer they gave up

Step 9: Gives up reinforcer without the use of a promise, performs 2-3 easy trials, followed by receiving reinforcer they gave up

DATA COLLECTION:
Record the data for each trial on the giving up reinforcers data sheet.

Example of Giving Up Reinforcers data sheet:

Giving Up Reinforcers Data Sheet

Student: Date:

| Trial | Reinforcer given up | Promise Reinforcer | Yes Delivers Reinforcer | | No | | | Time Until Reinforcer Given |
			No Promise	With Promise	Prompt	Transfer Trial	Demand On	
1	Ball	Skittle		+				-
2	Swing	Ball				+		2 min
3								
4								

Data Based Decision Making:
Criteria for mastery: When the student successfully gives up reinforcers in naturally occurring situations across people, places, and for a variety of reinforcing items and activities for "X" number of consecutive days.