

Running the Count and Mand

Objective: To reduce problem behavior to obtain items and activities by teaching the appropriate mands.

Candidates For This Program: Following a functional assessment, student's whose behavior has been determined to be a function of obtaining items and activities and attention through problem behavior **even when the teacher would deliver the reinforcer for appropriate asking.**

WHEN THE BEHAVIOR OCCURS DURING DAILY ROUTINES **(Naturally occurring opportunities):**

1. Tell student "no (problem behavior)".
2. Once the problem behavior stops, begin a silent count. For some students it may be appropriate to count aloud and/or show the passage of time by using your fingers. What number you count to (count interval) will be determined by the student's repertoire. In any case, keep the count low at first, e.g. 3-5, to insure that the appropriate mand contacts reinforcement frequently.
3. If student does not engage in problem behavior for the entire interval while you were counting, prompt the mand and when student echoes or signs, deliver the item.
4. HOWEVER, if at all during the count interval, the student again engages in problem behavior, you will have to re-start the procedure at step 1.
5. However, if you repeat the count for many trials without reaching the count (number of trials determined based on individual student needs) then discontinue by merely walking away without comment or redirecting to a neutral task AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO AND MAND IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE TO THE STUDENT. IF THE STUDENT MOVES AWAY FROM YOU INSURE HIS/HER SAFETY AND BLOCK ACCESS TO REINFORCEMENT, BUT DO NOT FOLLOW. IF AND WHEN HE RETURNS TO YOU WITH PROBLEM BEHAVIOR CONTINUE THE PROCEDURE. IF HE DOES NOT RETURN AND TIME DICTATES IT IS NECESSARY TO MOVE TO A NEW ACTIVITY THEN MERELY CARRY ON AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAND IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

PRACTICE SESSIONS TO LEARN TO MAND APPROPRIATELY

1. Set up many opportunities per day for the student to learn this important skill while you are continuing to teach appropriate manding for reinforcers.
2. Use the attached data sheet to record the student's behavior during practice.

DATA COLLECTION:

Data collection involves keeping track of the reinforcing situation, whether problem behavior occurred or not for each trial, number of times it was necessary to start at step one, duration to when appropriate mand occurred. In some cases it may be helpful to track specific topographies of problem behavior that occur (see example below).

Example of Count and Mand Data Sheet:

COUNT AND MAND DATA SHEET

Name: Sam Date: 9/10/09 Time: 10:00-10:30

BEHAVIOR KEY: Designate an abbreviation for the problem behavior in this box
(e.g. Kicking = K, Hitting = H)

C=Crying F=Flopping to floor H=Hitting

Trial	What did he/she want?	Problem Behavior	How many times did you have to count?	Time duration to appropriate mand?	Initial
1	Music	C, H	5	15	D.S.
2	Chip	C	1	2 min	D.S.
3	Ball	C, F	1	30 sec	D.S.
4	Music	C, H	17	22 min	D.S.

Data Based Decision Making:

- Graph percent of trials in which student mands appropriately without incidents of problem behavior.
- Criteria for mastery is based on student being successful for 100% (can vary slightly based on individual student) of the trials for "X" number of consecutive days (as determined by team) across people and environments. In other words, the program should be implemented until the problem behavior is no longer occurring during naturally occurring opportunities.

Adapted from Carbone Clinic