AFIRM

Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

Time Delay (TD)
---Step-by-Step Guide---

This practice guide outlines how to plan for, use, and monitor the time delay practice.

Keep in mind that the two time delay procedures are:
- Constant Time Delay
- Progressive Time Delay

While each procedure is different, the practice guide is applicable to all. When unique features are tied to a specific procedure, we will identify them through examples or cautions.

BEFORE YOU START...

Each of the following points is important to address so that you can be sure the selected EBP is likely to address the learning needs of your student.

Have you found out more information about. . .?

- ☐ Identified the behavior…

- ☐ Collected baseline data through direct observation…

- ☐ Established a goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target skill is, and how the team will know when the skill is mastered…

If the answer to any of these is "no," review the process of how to select an EBP.

For more information visit:
www.afirm.fpg.unc.edu

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Now you are ready to start...

Step 1: TD Planning

The planning step explains how to assess learner's current abilities, select key components of time delay, and determine times and activities for using the practice.

1.1 Assess learner's current abilities

Assess the learner's current abilities to determine if the learner has essential prerequisite skills needed for time delay to be successful.

1.2 Select target stimulus and cue

The target stimulus is the event, thing, or situation to which the learner with ASD should respond when a team member is not present or after the target skill/behavior is mastered.

The target cue will signal the learner to perform the skill or behavior.

1.3 Select the controlling prompt

Select the least restrictive prompt needed by the learner to use the target skills successfully as the controlling prompt.

1.4 Select reinforcers

To increase the likelihood that the learner with ASD will use the target skill again in the future, select reinforcers that are appropriate for the individual learner with ASD and the target skill/behavior.

1.5 Identify times and activities for using time delay

Time delay can be used during individual work, small group activities, and embedded within ongoing routines and activities at home or at school.

1.6 Determine time delay procedure

Team members should decide to use constant time delay (implement a fixed delay) or progressive time delay (gradually increase the delay).

*Complete the **Time Delay Planning Worksheet** before using the procedure.*

Step 2: Using TD

This step describes the process of using time delay.

2.1 Establish learner attention and provide cue

Establish learner attention by using an attention getting strategy. Next, the team members presents the cue to begin the teaching activity.

2.2 Deliver the controlling prompt

When beginning to teach a skill using time delay, a fixed 0-second delay is used with both constant time delay and progressive time delay. There is no wait time between the cue and delivering the controlling prompt.

2.3 Increase time delay

With constant time delay, team members implement a fixed delay (usually 3-5 seconds) after using the initial 0-second delay.

With progressive time delay, team members gradually increase the delay between providing the cue and delivering the controlling prompt.

2.4 Respond to learner's attempts

Team members will respond to learner's attempts. If the learner correctly responds, team members offer reinforcement and state what the learner did well. If the response is incorrect or no response is provided, team members provide the controlling prompt.

Step 3: Monitoring TD

The following process describes how the use of time delay can be monitored and how to adjust your plan based on the data.

3.1 Collect data on target behaviors

Track learner's unprompted correct responses, prompted correct responses, unprompted errors, prompted errors, and no errors.

   📄 *Use the **Time Delay Data Collection Form** to collect data.*

3.2 Determine next steps based on learner progress

If the learner with ASD is showing progress with reinforcement based upon collected data, then continue to use this practice with the learner. Gradually new target skills and behaviors can be introduced to the learner with ASD.

If the target skill or behavior is not increasing, ask yourself the following questions:
- Is the target skill or behavior well defined?
- Is the skill or behavior measurable and observable?
- Is the skill too difficult and needs to be broken down into smaller steps?
- Has enough time been devoted to using this strategy?
- Was time delay used with fidelity based upon the implementation checklist?
- Does the learner have the prerequisite skills and abilities for time delay?
- Are reinforcements used that are motivating to the learner?
- Are team members responding to the learner's attempts appropriately?

If these issues have been addressed and the learner with ASD continues not to show progress, consider selecting a different evidence-based practice to use with the learner with ASD.