Research-Based Practice: Prompting/Fading Procedures

References:

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Buffington, D.M., Krantz, P.J., McClannahan, L.E., & Poulson, C.L. (1998). Procedures for teaching appropriate gestural communication skills to children with autism. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *28*(6), 535–545.

Description: A process of providing cues to a student to ensure successful responses and systematically fading out those cues until the student is able to respond independently.

Types of Prompts:
- There are several different types of prompts including physical, gestural, visual, and auditory prompts (Wolery, Ault, & Doyle, 1992).
- Modeling/request imitation is another form of a prompt that involves showing the student what to do and immediately giving the student an opportunity to imitate your model and receive feedback (Buffington, Krantz, McClannahan, & Poulson, 1998).

Ways to Deliver and Fade Prompts: There are two main ways to use prompting and fading procedures: least-to-most prompting and most-to-least prompting (or graduated guidance) (Alberto & Troutman, 2012; Cooper et al., 2007). When using least-to-most or most-to-least prompting, you develop a hierarchy of prompts from least intrusive to most intrusive that would be necessary to support a student in successful responding. If you are using least-to-most prompts, you begin with the least intrusive prompt you think the student needs to be successful and increase the prompting supports if necessary. With most-to-least prompting (graduated guidance), you begin with intensive prompting and fade it out with successive opportunities. In either case, the goal is to eventually fade all prompts until the student is able to respond independently.

Examples of prompt hierarchies:

Answering reading comprehension questions:
   a. Reread the sentence from the book that includes the answer and restate the question.
   b. Provide a fill-in. For example, if the question was, "What did the family eat at the picnic?" say "The family ate _____." The fill-in can also be provided in written format giving the student the opportunity to write the answer instead of saying the answer.

c. If there is a picture that shows the answer, point to the picture after you ask the question.

d. Use modeling/request imitation by supplying the answer and having the student repeat the answer. Then restate the question again to give the student an opportunity to respond without the model.

Solve double digit addition with regrouping:

a. Remind the student to follow a missed step using a gestural prompt.

b. Remind the student to follow a missed step using a verbal prompt.

c. Use model/request imitation to correct errors or help the student with the next step