



DIRECT BEHAVIOR RATING (DBR) AS AN INTERVENTION TOOL: SELF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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Self management systems are used to promote student awareness of their own behaviors and performances. Self management systems are designed to increase desired behaviors and decrease undesired behaviors. Students monitor their behavior, and it is the intention of the self management system that the child's perceptions of their own behaviors become more accurate. More specifically, the self management process provides an opportunity for the student and teacher (or other adult) to rate target behavior(s) at specified intervals. The student then compares their rating with that of the teacher, which is followed by feedback, discussion and contingent consequences (e.g., points). This process can improve the accuracy of student's self-perception/awareness of their own behavior and how it is perceived by others.

DBR can be used to facilitate self management systems. The use of self management systems can ultimately teach students skills to succeed independently in the classroom or at home without prompting. Children use DBR scales to rate their behavior for a designated time period (it is beneficial to have an adult rate the child's behavior at the same time) and are then given feedback on their ratings.

Who can use DBR for self management?

Self management systems can be used by anyone involved with the child:

- Teachers and other school personnel (e.g. counselor, school psychologist)
- Parents, guardians, and other family members

Why use DBR within self management systems?

DBR scales are an excellent tool for self management systems. Within a DBR scale, behaviors are explicitly defined and ratings are pre-set, meaning students and adults can easily monitor behavior during an observation period.

Using self management systems for intervention

The purpose of the self management system is to make children more aware of their actions. As a result of increased awareness, desirable behavior should increase and undesirable behavior should decrease. Students rate behavior and see how accurate their perceptions are when compared to the teacher's observation.

Potential Benefits of Using DBR in Communication:

- Provides immediate and consistent feedback about student behavior
- Promotes student awareness of behavior
- Encourages student to take responsibility
- Increases communication between students and adults on student's performance
- Helps student develop a sense of independence and self competence

There are three facets of self management:

- 1) **Self-Observation/Monitoring**
- 2) **Self-Recording**
- 3) **Sharing/Comparing**

Not only must the student perceive and rate their own behavior on the DBR scale, but the adult must also observe the student's behavior to serve as a metric of comparison in determining the accuracy of the child's perception of their behaviors. The DBR facilitates the recording process. The student is given the rating scale and explicitly told to rate their behavior. The adult, in turn, gives the student their ratings for that time period.

As mentioned, one of the goals of self management systems is to have the student yield ratings that are consistent with the adult's. When ratings generated by the student are close to the ratings given by the adult, the student can be rewarded. For example, it can be decided that a 1 point discrepancy or less between the ratings from the child and from the adult may result in an award.

Incentives

The rewards from a self management system can be built-in: students may notice that the scores on their tests are improving throughout the self management process. As a result, they will continue to express more desirable behaviors in order to receive the reinforcement of obtaining good grades.

While rewards are not necessary, they can be used in addition to the self management system. For example, when student perceptions are accurate (i.e. within 1 point of adult rater) students can be rewarded with extra reading time (see incentive program protocol for more information on incentives).

Teaching students to self manage:

- 1) Clearly define target behavior to student in terms of operational definitions (engagement, disruptive behavior, or other determined target behavior)
- 2) Explain to student how to fill out DBR form
 - Can use modeling, and student practice followed by feedback
- 3) Determine self monitoring schedule; explain to student how often self monitoring will occur
- 4) Prompt student when to fill out form for an observation period

* When implementing self management systems it is important to keep in mind the student's age, capabilities, and other unique factors that characterize the student. For example, students who are younger or who have developmental delays may need additional instruction and training.

Steps for implementing self management systems

- 1) Explain rating system to student and teach student to self management
- 2) Have student rate behavior
- 3) Rate student behavior for same time period
- 4) Compare results with student
- 5) Determine student's accuracy of self management by comparing their ratings against the ratings you created for same time period
- 6) Award student for accuracy in perception of behavior (optional)

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