Cognitive Behavioral Interventions: Strategies to Help Students Make Wise Behavioral Choices

Self-Instructional Training: (Robinson, p. 8)

1. The teacher models the task while instructing themselves aloud
2. The student will do the task while listening to the teacher instructing them
3. The student will do the task while instructing themselves aloud
4. The student will do the task while instructing themselves in a whisper voice
5. The student will do the task using private nonverbal speech

Problem-Solving: (Robinson, p. 9)

1. Identify the problem
2. Identify possible solutions to the problem
3. Identify the possible results of each possible solution
4. Using the possible solutions, choose one solution to implement
5. Evaluate the results of the solution and go back to step one if the solution is unsuccessful

Recommendations for Implementing the Cognitive Intervention:

- Use these interventions hand-in-hand. For example, use self-instructional training to teach a child problem-solving skills, so that when the child is approached with a problem or an opportunity to act out, they can problem-solve on their own.
- Present the information on how to handle problems or opportunities to act out in short sessions, and periodically. (Some topics to cover when teaching the student(s) how to problem solve are: anger management, communicating effectively, and relaxation.)
- Model for the student self-reinforcement statements for when they are doing well, and self-coping statements for when they are not doing well at responding to a problem or an opportunity to act out. For example, a self-reinforcement statement would be “I did a good job” and a self-coping statement would be “I will do better next time” (Robinson, p. 10).
- Provide a way for the student to self-reflect on the way they handled a potential problem or opportunity to act out (see attached worksheet example).

Critique of Article’s Approach to Cognitive Behavioral Interventions:

This article brought about a method that makes sense to me in instructing children. Since children learn by exploring, noticing and observing, then it makes sense to teach children through modeling. My favorite two parts of this method are 1) speaking aloud the cognitive steps in order to transfer the skill to the student and 2) the vocabulary that the student uses in order to self-regulate. This article is very focused on giving the student responsibility for their actions, feelings and behaviors.

A critique I have for this method is that it can be difficult to teach this method to students who have never been taught this way. If a student hasn’t be taught discipline, anger management, or moral thought, then they may be acting in a way that they don’t see anything wrong with it. So, if a teacher were to teach the student this way of self-regulating, I feel like the student will be reluctant to comply because they might see no harm or wrong-doing in their actions.

Resource:

Figure 1  Sample Self-Reflection Instrument

Trouble Record

Time (Check one):
___ Before class  ___ AM classes  ___ PM classes
___ Lunch  ___ After school

Location (Check one):
___ In class  ___ In the hall  ___ Restroom
___ Gym  ___ Commons  ___ Front of building
___ Cafeteria  ___ Other school area  ___ Off school grounds

If off school grounds, where?

Trigger (Check one):
___ Someone did something I didn’t like
___ Someone said something I didn’t like
___ Someone took something of mine
___ Someone told me to do something
___ Someone shoved me / upset me
___ Other

Who was that “someone”? (Check one):
___ Administrator  ___ Aide  ___ Substitute teacher
___ Student  ___ Teacher  ___ Other:

What did you do? (Check one):
___ Hit him / her  ___ Talked it out  ___ Threatened him/her
___ Complied  ___ Refused to comply  ___ Talked back/argued
___ Reported it  ___ Broke something  ___ Other

How angry were you? (Circle one):  1  2  3  4  5

Would you use this response in the future? (Check one): ___ Yes ___ No.