

**TAGTEACH™**  
as an  
Occupational Therapy  
Intervention Strategy

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# Occupational Therapists work for people who have disabilities involving:

- Musculoskeletal
- Nervous system
- Developmental
- Sensory
- Cognitive
- Mental
- Systemic
- Immunologic

# Background Education

- Neurology
- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Kinesiology
- Human Development
- Psychology
- Task analysis & Biomechanical analysis

# Autism

- Neurobiological disorder- changes to more than one region of the brain and changes observed in neurochemistry
- Etiology unknown
- Marked impaired development in areas of
  - Social
  - Communication
  - Behavior

# Participant

- 12 year old male
- Diagnosis of Autism
- SLP & OT intervention
- Integrated after-school program offering occupational therapy intervention

# Data Collection

- 2 occupational therapists, 1 dog trainer, 1 occupational therapy assistant
- Clinical observation
- Documentation
- Video Taping
- Functional measures in a natural setting

# Procedure

- Spring/Summer 2007
- 9 weekly sessions, 2 hours per session
- Individual and group settings
- 2-3 peers receiving intervention
- 2-3 main stream after-school participants

Intervention took place in within an assistance dog training group

# Long Term OT Goals

- Ask peer to play a game and ask for his turn  
4/5 opportunities
- Increase trunk strength
- Use 2-3 word phrases to make desires known
- Demonstrate motor planning (ideation, initiation, execution and termination) of an activity he was interested in

# BID – Break it Down!

Task analysis of ONE goal:

Ask a peer to play & ask for turn 4/5 times

- Approach a person
- Get attention with shoulder tap
- Make eye contact
- Wave or say “hi”

# Set up for Success & Expectations

- Points of success identified  
RL could already do with 90% accuracy to increase self-confidence
- RAP  
Responses, actions or positions planned accordingly

# Tiered Reinforcers

Tagulator available- Trade tags for dog treats



# Individual BID Procedure

- Determine starting point of success
- Lesson
- Directions
- TAG point.....repetition of success
- Measurable outcomes
- Debrief

# Approach the Person

- **Starting “point of success”**- Arm out straight
- **Lesson**: It is important to stand close enough to people that they can hear you and know you are talking to them. A good distance is a straight arms length away from them.
- **Directions**: Walk up to the person and stop a straight arms length away – like this.
- A tag means you did it, keep trying until you hear a tag.
- **Tag point**: The tag point is “approach the person”
- The tag occurred at the end of the sequence.
- **Measurable outcomes**-Decrease in number of cues, ability to initiate, body positioning, and distance from others.

# Get the persons attention

- **Starting “point of success”**- Touching a target.
- **Lesson**: Sometimes the person that you want to talk to is doing something else. It is okay to tap a person on the shoulder to get their attention.
- **Directions**: Tap the person on the shoulder to get their attention. A tag means you did it, keep trying until you hear a tag.
- **Tag Point**: The Tag point is “touch their shoulder”.
- **Measurable outcomes**- Time from entering the room to touching a person on the shoulder, demonstration of ability, quality (pressure, surface area of hand, etc), quantity (number of shoulders tapped) and ease of task (social cues- body language, gestures and expressions).

# Make eye contact

- **Starting “point of success”**- Initial eye contact
- **Lesson**: It is important to look at the person who you are talking with so they know that you are paying attention and interested in what they are saying.
- **Directions**: Look at the person who you are talking with. A tag means you did it, keep trying until you hear a tag.
- **Tag Point**: The tag point is - eye contact. This tag point was modified so peer/group tagging was also used.
- **Measurable outcomes**- Demonstration of ability, time lapsed between resets, quality (actual eye contact, not other parts of faces), quantity (how many people) and ease of task (social cues- body language, gestures and expressions).

# Wave or say “Hi”

- **Starting “point of success”**- Wave or say hi to familiar person
- **Lesson**: If you are interested in making new friends or in doing something with a friend, it is a good idea to ask to make sure they want to do the same thing.
- **Directions**: Walk up to the person and wave [or say hi], A tag means you did it, keep trying until you hear a tag.
- **Tag Point**: The Tag point is “wave” (alternate tag point was “say hi”)
- **Measurable outcomes**: Demonstration, quality (voice volume and clarity), quantity (number of people approached) and ease of task.

# VIDEOS

# Results

- Average time to approach and tap someone on the shoulder:

Pre-Intervention: 23 seconds per person

During-Intervention: 2 seconds per person

- Average number of cues (gesture, tactile, verbal) used per interaction:

Pre-Intervention: 18 cues per interaction

During-Intervention: 1 cue per interaction

# Eye Contact

- Average number of times eye contact was made per interaction:

Pre-Intervention: 3 times per interaction

During-Intervention: Technical difficulties. RL demonstrated improvement in initiation of eye contact. RL demonstrated ease of participation with slightly longer eye contact. Seen to make eye contact with the therapist significantly more during the training intervention and the group intervention

# Verbal interaction:

- **Pre-intervention-** RL asked to repeat himself routinely or people would repeat what he said to clarify what he was trying to communicate. He required maximal cues to interact each time he approached someone to introduce himself—he was expected to say the same thing to everyone.
- **During Intervention-** RL was not asked to repeat himself during the intervention and he could be heard across the room indicating improved voice volume and clarity. RL answered questions and only required the tag point to communicate. There was marked progress in his affect as he smiled, laughed and was even surprised!

# Value Added Tag Points

One problem resolved or more than one goal met by working on a single point, were observed.

- RL approached peers and joined them. TWICE.
- RL used two to three word sentences to answer questions at least twice in each session following the introduction of tagging for a response.
- RL is asked to repeat himself approximately 50% now than before.

# Conclusion

This clinician believes that individuals of any ability can benefit from

TAGteach™

as it has clear beginnings, clear endings, it breaks long term goals into achievable short term goals, allows for repetition of success and decreases stimuli to improve processing potential.