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SPED 898

Dr. Sean Smith

Reflection Artifact SPED 800

The Communication Project

The Communication Project served as a comprehensive artifact completed for SPED 800: Communicative Behavior for Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities at the University of Kansas. The project was designed as a three-part running assignment intended to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate an evidence-based communication intervention for a student diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The central focus was to effectively enhance the student's communicative behaviors by applying evidence-based practices (EBPs) recognized by the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice (NCAEP).

Artifact’s Purpose

The primary purpose of this artifact was to deeply understand and address the communication needs of Bobby, an 11-year-old student diagnosed with ASD. Through targeted assessment, application of evidence-based practices (specifically reinforcement via Avian-Assisted Intervention), and data-driven analysis, this artifact aimed to improve Bobby’s functional communication skills, enhance his engagement in social interactions, reduce maladaptive behaviors (such as elopement), and promote generalization of skills across various contexts. The project's ultimate goal was to facilitate Bobby’s successful interaction and communication within educational and social environments.

Addressing Assignment Requirements

All assignment requirements were comprehensively addressed throughout the three-part project. Initially, Bobby’s communicative needs were systematically assessed using appropriate tools outlined in the course text and guidelines from NCAEP. The operationally defined target behavior, focusing on Bobby’s engagement in structured classroom activities without elopement, was clearly established. Baseline data collection provided concrete benchmarks for intervention efficacy. Reinforcement through Avian-Assisted Intervention was implemented with fidelity, demonstrating significant improvement in Bobby’s engagement and communication. Data analysis was meticulous and provided clear interpretations and directions for future intervention. Although the project received satisfactory grades in all three parts, minor deductions were attributed exclusively to minimal APA formatting errors, indicating strong content execution overall.

Decision on Revision

Although an opportunity was available for revision, a thorough assessment indicated that only minimal revisions regarding APA formatting were necessary. Hence, the decision was made not to engage in substantial revision of the artifact. Adjustments were limited strictly to APA corrections based on instructor feedback for submission to the SPED Portfolio. Dr. McKeithan’s final feedback confirmed the successful execution of the Communication Project, highlighting a robust understanding of Bobby’s needs, effective implementation of interventions, and insightful reflections focused on continuous professional growth and improvement.

Learning and Professional Development

This artifact significantly contributed to my professional growth as a special educator, emphasizing the critical role of evidence-based interventions, systematic assessment, and data-driven decision-making. Through the rigorous process of planning, implementing, and reflecting, I gained invaluable insights into tailoring communicative interventions that match the unique profiles and needs of students with autism. This project underscored the importance of fidelity in intervention implementation and highlighted the necessity of adaptability, collaboration with families, and ongoing assessment. This artifact enhanced my skills in reflective practice, reinforcing my commitment to ongoing professional learning and improving student outcomes in special education.