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Title: Sibling self-management: Programming for generalization to improve interactions between typical siblings and children with autism spectrum disorders

Abstract: The relationship between children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and their typically developing siblings is important, yet challenging. Behavioral training is one strategy used to improve interactions between typical siblings and children with ASD, but there is limited empirical support that it results in generalized improvements. One method to program for generalization is to teach learners to monitor their engagement in behavior change tactics (i.e., self-management). A multiple baseline probe design across typical sibling-sibling with ASD dyad was used to demonstrate a functional relationship between behavioral skills training and typical siblings’ engagement in self-management of a social skills curriculum. Results indicated that typical siblings learned to self-manage a social skills curriculum, which generalized across novel settings and over time. Game play sessions between siblings were shaped to be increasingly longer and/or more interactive over the course of intervention for three sibling dyads. Comparisons of social-communicative responses by typical sibling-sibling with ASD dyads to their typical peers were variable, but did provide some support for the social validity of the intervention outcomes. These results provide further evidence to support the use of self-management when explicitly programming for generalization, which continues to be a key consideration when including typical siblings in interventions with their siblings with ASD. Alternate programming strategies to further positively impact the interactions between the siblings are discussed.