

The use of **self-monitoring** strategies **will increase** students' **control** of their own behavior!

It is a vital skill for students to be able to regulate their own behavior. In school settings, our students need to be able to demonstrate appropriate academic and social behaviors without prompts from the teacher.

**When students can manage their own behavior, teachers can spend more time on instruction!**

Self-management procedures have been used widely in educational settings with both typical children and children with disabilities with positive outcomes (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 1987; Hughes & Lloyd, 1993; Kerr & Nelson, 1998; Lam, Cole, Shapiro, & Bambara, 1994; Nelson, Smith, Young, & Dodd, 1991; Reid, 1996).

## Where Should I Start?

**Identify the target behavior.** Work with the student to identify the target behavior. Make sure the student understands the exact behavior to be self-monitored.

**Select a way to measure behavior.** The teacher and student should decide whether or not to use a tally sheet, a simple card with just checkmarks under a "yes" and "no" column, or a more elaborate recording system. We've provided samples on the following pages. A time frame should be determined for the self-recording process. Start with short periods of time for the monitoring, and expand that time period as the student masters the skill of self-monitoring his or her behavior.

**Identify appropriate reinforcers or rewards.** These could be praise, free time, or tangible items. Remember: the student should receive reinforcement for both the desired behavior and successful self-monitoring.

**Train the student to use the measurement system.** Practice the self-monitoring system with the student. Set up practice situations where the student can receive teacher feedback regarding whether he or she is using the self-monitoring system correctly.

**Provide feedback on accuracy.** It is critical that students report accurately on their self-recording sheets. It is important that teachers randomly observe, check, and give feedback to students regarding the accuracy of their self-recording efforts.

**Fade the use of the self-monitoring device.** The goal is ultimately to fade the use of the self-monitoring system so that the student can regulate his or her own behavior without an external system.

## Which Behaviors Can Students Self-Monitor?

Many behaviors respond well to self-monitoring programs. Behaviors to be targeted might include waiting one's turn, raising a hand for help, staying in seat, completing class assignments in a timely manner, returning completed homework, or behaving appropriately in class.

Target behaviors must be observable and measurable. It's very important that the student already be able to perform the skill being monitored and that it's not a new skill he or she is just learning. While the skill may not currently be performed often, he or she must know how to perform the skill in order to self-monitor his or her own demonstration of it.

## Research and Resources

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Kerr, M. M., & Nelson, C. M. (1998). *Strategies for managing behavior problems in the classroom*. (3rd ed.). Columbus, Ohio: Prentice Hall.



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Nelson, J. R., Smith, D. J., Young, R. K., & Dodd, J. M. (1991). A review of self-management outcomes research conducted with students who exhibit behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 16(3), 169-179.

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# Examples of Self-Monitoring Behavior Sheets

**Behavior:**

	
Total:	Total:





**Behavior:**

Yes	No

**Behavior:**

9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00

**Behavior: Hand Signals from the Teacher**

	
	
Total: 3	Total: 5

**Behavior: I Raised My Hand When I Needed Help**

Yes	No
	

**Behavior: Am I Working?**

9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00
