Welcome to Special Learning's Webcast Training Series

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Topic: Errorless Overview

Speaker: Michele LaMarche, BCBA

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Instructor Training Series

Errorless Overview

Presented By: Michele LaMarche, BCBA

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Speaker Bio

Michele LaMarche is a BCBA and co-founder of Special Learning, Inc. She is also the founder and Executive Director of Step By Step Academy (SBSA), a highly-regarded center-based non profit Autism treatment facility in Columbus, Ohio. Since its formation almost ten years ago, SBSA has touched the lives of over one thousand students through rigorous application of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) treatments, resulting in exceptional outcomes.

Michele, with over fifteen years of professional experience in the field of ABA, uses her knowledge of behavioral treatment to produce ground breaking, effective, empirically validated curricula, a critical factor in successfully mainstreaming hundreds of students with ASD. With her credentials and work through Special Learning and SBSA, she has changed the lives of countless individuals and families affected by ASD.

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Objectives

1. Discuss Errorless Teaching and prompting strategies.
2. Describe how to implement these methods and strategies.
3. Show video demonstrations of prompting.
4. Identify how to effectively fade prompts in order to increase independence and avoid prompt dependency.
5. Discuss the importance of Error Correction.

Errorless Teaching

- Errorless teaching is a strategy that minimizes the possibility of errors by using prompts and prompt fading procedures so that the child will be successful.
- What is the purpose of implementing the errorless teaching method?
  - It allows the individual more opportunities to access the reinforcer, or reward.
  - Ensures the student's success in the early stages of skill acquisition.
  - Errorless Teaching is used when first gaining instructional control otherwise known as compliance.
  - You can also use it when you are introducing a new skills with a student.
  - At times, skills are returned back to this phase of teaching if the student requires additional training or is not making adequate progress.

Prompting

- Prompts are supplementary stimuli (supports) used to increase the likelihood that a correct response will be given after an instruction/question has been delivered.

- Prompts are delivered with or immediately after the presentation of the instruction/question (within 1-2 seconds).
  - The child must give you the correct response within 3-5 seconds

$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

+ prompt

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Types of Prompts

- Verbal Prompts:
  - Vocal (V) = Vocal prompt
  - Non-Vocal (Vis) = Visual prompt or Textual prompt
- Physical Guidance (PH)
- Modeling (M)
- Movement Cues:
  - Gestural (G)
  - Look (L)
- Position (P)

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Prompts: Verbal

- Verbal Prompts: Vocal
  - Vocal prompt (V) = you provide the exact vocal model of the desired response or give the child additional information to help them achieve the desired/correct response

$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

"Spell cat…C, A, T" → "C, A, T" ← "that's right!"

"Say cookie, kkkooo" → "cookie" ← tickles the student

"Get your shoes on, + → gets shoes ← plays outside

"they are in the closet"

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Prompts: Verbal

- Verbal Instructions: Non-Vocal
  - Visual prompt or textual prompt (Vis)= you provide a picture cue, written word, script, or checklist to help them achieve the desired/correct response

$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

"Spell cat" → "C, A, T" ← "you are so smart!"

+ shows a card C-A-T

"Clean your room" → "cleans room" ← delivers a movie

+ shows a visual

bed, toys and clothing

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Prompts: Physical

- Physical (PH) = you physically guide the child through all movements of the response, or partially guide their movements

$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

"touch nose" → touches nose ← delivers a piece of cookie

+ physically assists

student to touch his nose

"Clean your room" → cleans room ← "you rock"

+ physically assists

student to clean his room

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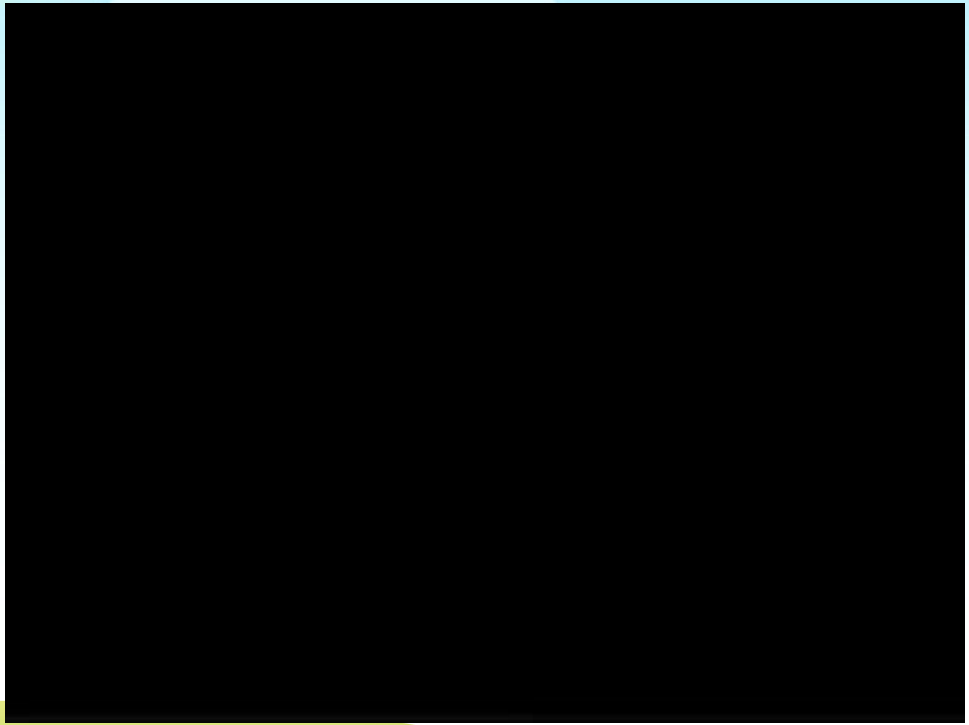

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Prompts: Modeling

- Modeling (M)= you demonstrate the behavior/correct response

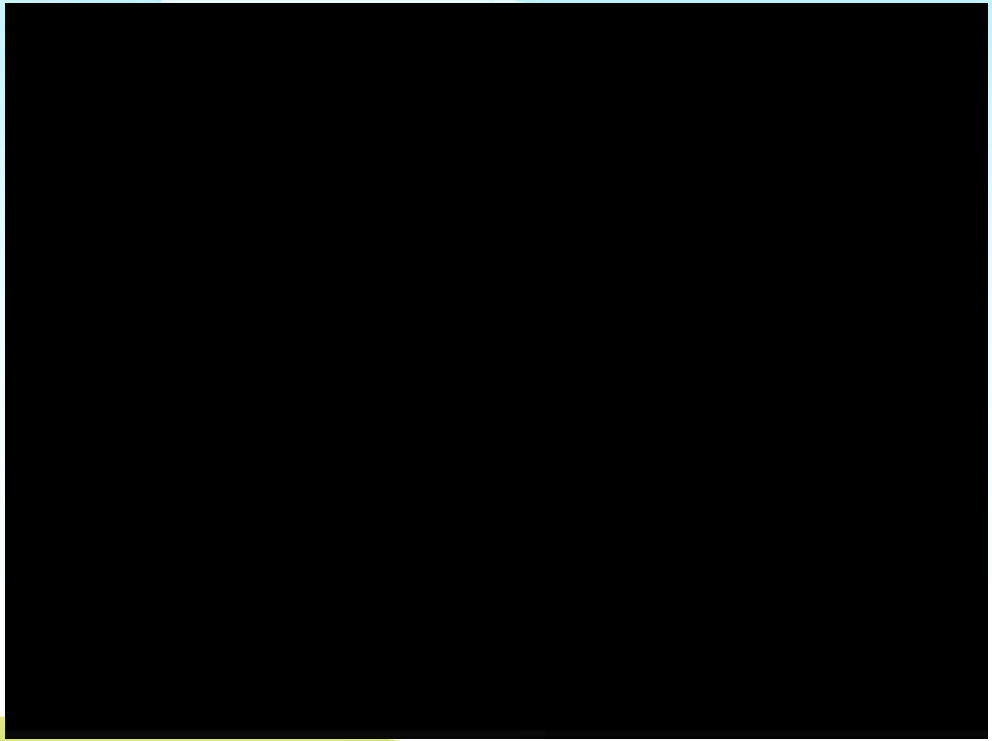
$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

"touch nose" → touches nose ← delivers a high 5

+ points to own nose

"Clean your room" → cleans room ← delivers a movie

models cleaning up the room



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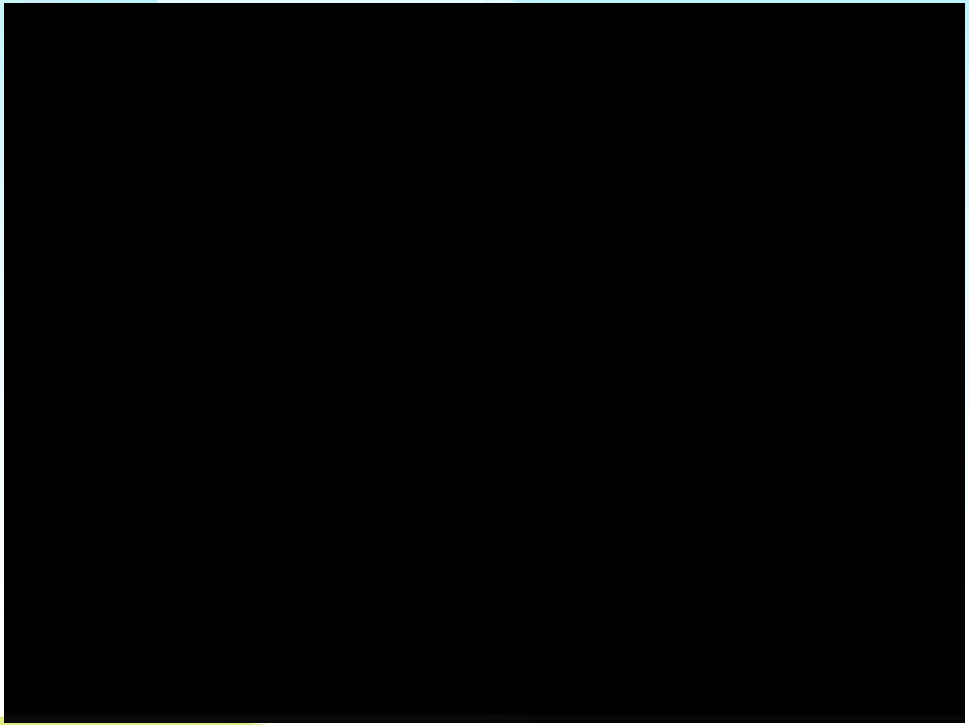

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Prompts: Movement Cues

- Movement Cues:
  - Gestural (G)= as you point to, tap, or touch the item, the child should be attending to you and identify it

$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "that is a cat"

+ points to picture of cat

"take off shirt" → takes off shirt ← tickles belly

+ points to student's shirt

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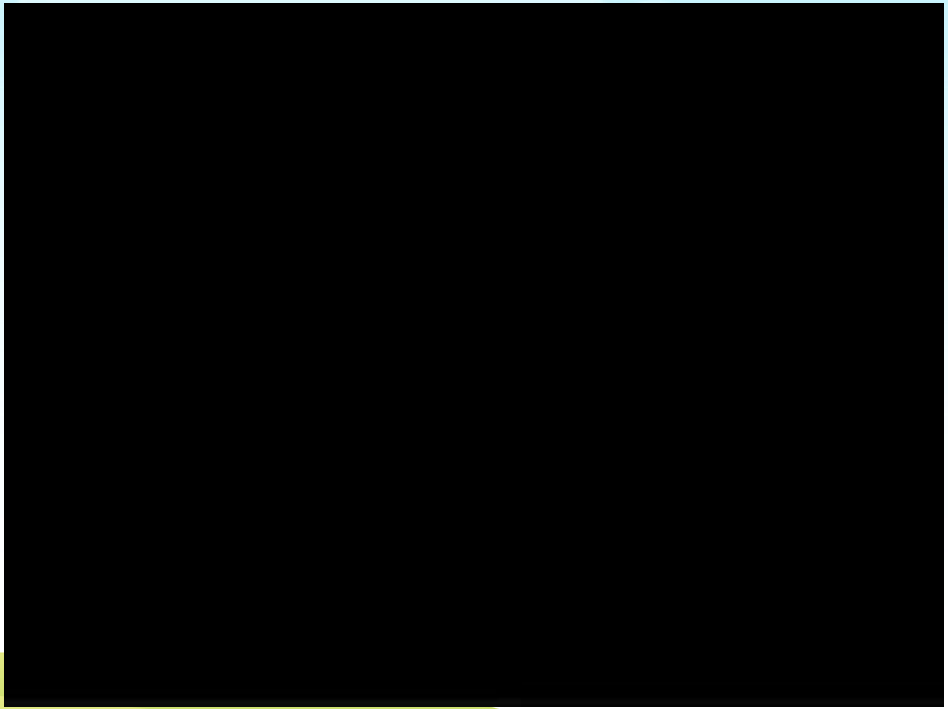

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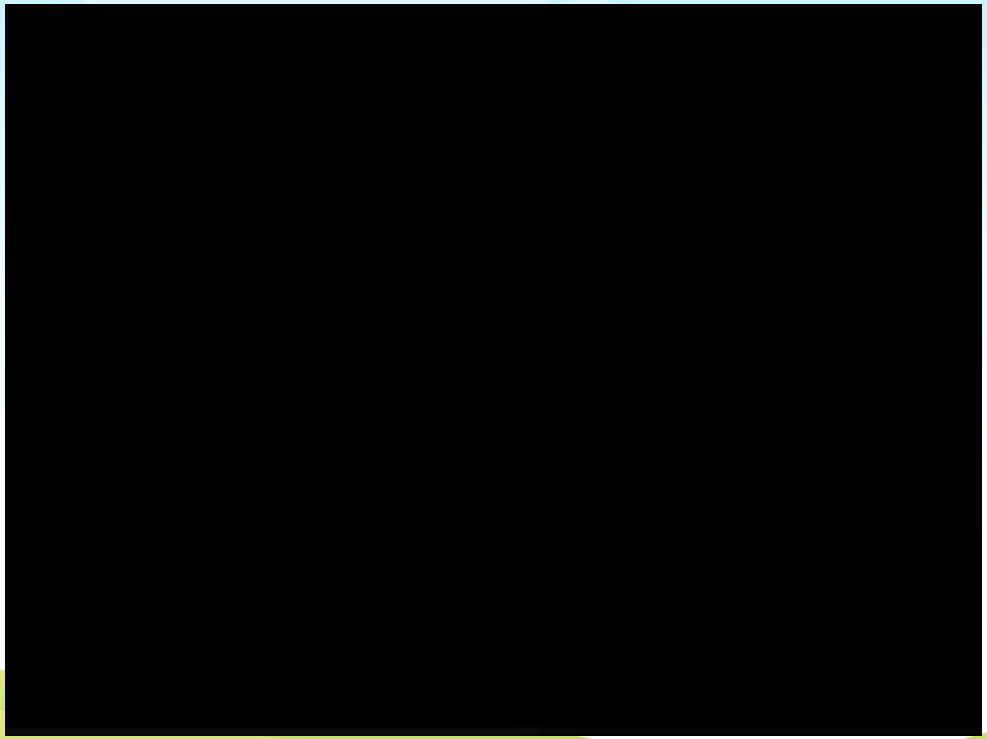

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Prompts: Movement Cues

- Movement Cues:
  - Looking (L)= by looking directly at or in the direction of the item, the child should be attending to you and identify it

$$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$$

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "that is a cat"

+ looks at picture of cat

"brush teeth" → gets toothbrush ← "you are the best"

+ looks at the toothbrush

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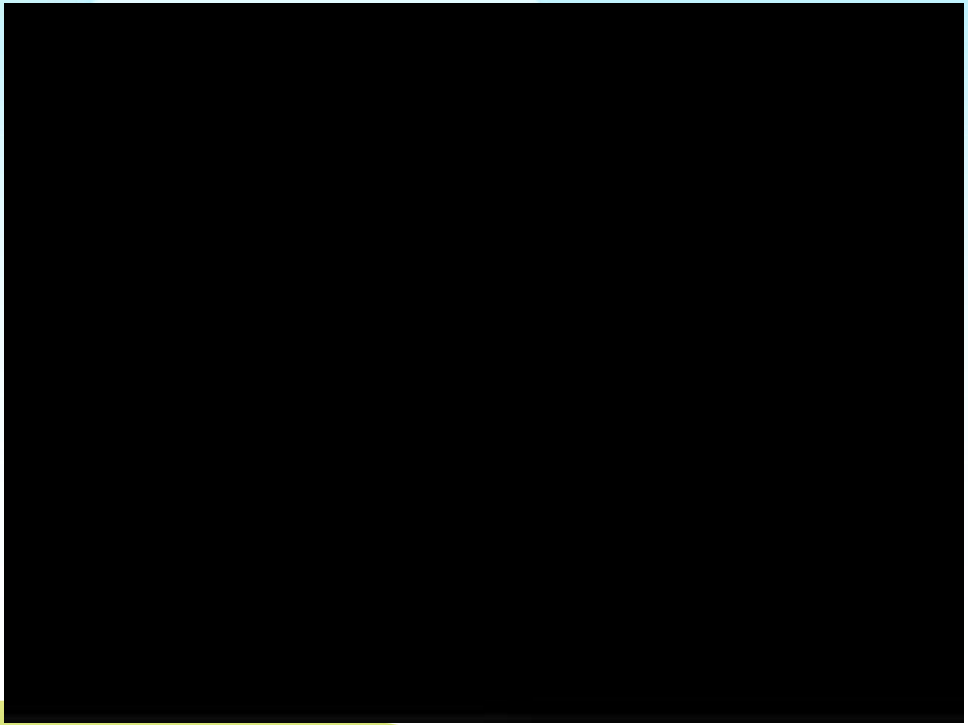

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Prompts: Position

- Position
  - Positional (P)= you place the item closer to the child to cue the correct response

$S^D \rightarrow R \leftarrow S^R$

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "that is a cat"

+ moves picture of cat close to child

"brush teeth" → gets toothbrush ← "you are the best"

+ moves toothbrush and toothpaste next to child

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Prompting Strategy

- Use the most effective prompt to ensure the response is correct and then, remember to systematically fade out the prompts *(this may require the initial use of a more intrusive prompt).*

Ex. Receptive Responses -child is required to perform an action

Physical (intrusive prompt)
↓
Modeling
↓
Gestural/Positional
↓
Looking

Ex. Vocal Responses –child is required to vocalize

Vocal prompt (intrusive prompt)
↓
Visual

Fading Prompts: The importance of it!

- **Importance of systematically fading out the prompts:**
  - If prompts are not systemically faded out, there is more than likely a chance to create what we call prompt dependency.
  - What is prompt dependency?
    - Prompt dependency: creating exactly what it sounds like, the individual becomes prompt dependent after the instruction is given to complete the task. The person is less likely going to complete the task independently when prompt dependency has been created.

Fading Prompts: The importance of it! (cont.)

Example…

When teaching the a new skill, it is important to immediately prompt the individual to complete the task which will ensure a successful response. The type of prompt required will depend on what the response expectation is from the individual.

In this example, let's say the new skill is to teach an adolescent to put away his backpack and coat in his locker. Initially, you will need to provide prompts so that the adolescent knows what is expected of him….to open his locker and put away his belongings.

Over time, however, the goal for you is to systematically fade out the prompts so that the adolescent can learn to independently put away his belongings.

Prompt dependency may be established if we don't systematically fade out our prompting strategies! Here, the adolescent could become prompt dependent (and, you will see this happen) if by the time he approaches his locker, he simply stands there waiting for you to provide assistance (a prompt to get started).

This will definitely compromise fostering independence for this young man!

Fading Prompts: The importance of it! (cont.)

- When do you start to fade out the prompts (How do you know?)
  - You should consider fading out your prompting strategy as the individual demonstrates he/she is acquiring the skill.
  - It may look like a “dance” where you are providing more intrusive prompts (like physical guidance) and then based on the individual’s response, you could move to a less intrusive prompts (like gestural prompt).
  - You will base these decisions on the individual’s response to the instruction/task.

The ultimate goal is to of course, have the individual respond independently without creating prompt dependency.

Fading Prompts

S^D → R ← S^R

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "that's right"

+physically guides hand to touch picture of cat

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "good job!"

+ points to the picture of the cat

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "you are so smart!!"

+ looks at the picture of the cat

"touch cat" → touches the picture of cat ← "you did it!!!" and tickles

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Error Correction

What is Error Correction?

- Error Correction is a procedure used to ensure correct responses with minimal chance of making errors.
- It utilizes various prompting strategies (gesture, model, physical, verbal, etc.) and systematic prompt fading techniques.
- It is designed to reduce the number of errors a child makes during a teaching session.
- Research has shown that error correction can be effective in helping to teach new skills.

Common Types of Error Correction

Research also shows that errorless teaching results in rapid acquisition of skills and considerable decreases in the frequency of challenging behaviors.

- Four types of error correction:
  - Errorless strategy
  - Using “No”
  - Giving the student 2 tries
  - Providing natural consequences
    - » Ex. check mark, an “X”, etc.

Review: Prompting

- Prompts are delivered with or immediately after the presentation of the instruction (within 1-2 seconds).
- Start with least intrusive but most effective prompt and provide continuous reinforcement.
- Gradually fade your prompts so that way your child does not become prompt dependent. You want to ensure that when you deliver an instruction or a directive, your child responds independently versus waiting for you to guide him.
  - Use Differential Reinforcement –this means that you want to provide mildly reinforcing rewards (ex. high “5”) for trials that you prompted but, then remember to use the more powerful rewards (ex. M & M’s) for the trials your child completes independently.

Outcomes

Upon completion of the ***Errorless Teaching and Prompting Strategies*** presentation, participants should be able to:

1. Discuss Errorless Teaching and prompting strategies.
2. Describe how to implement these methods and strategies.
3. Identify how to effectively fade prompts in order to increase independence and avoid prompt dependency.
4. Discuss the importance of Error Correction.

Resources

Cooper, J.O., Heron, T.E., & Heward, W.L. (1987). *Applied Behavior Analysis*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Sundberg M. L, Partington J. W. Teaching language to children with autism or other developmental disabilities. Pleasant Hill, CA: Behavior Analysts, Inc; 1998.

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