

## *Intervention Case Study 6*

### *Introduction*

John is a 10 year old boy in the fifth grade who lives with his parents and two younger brothers. John has a diagnosis of Asperger syndrome and has some problems with social interactions, although most of his peer interactions are age-appropriate. He does well in most subjects at school, but has difficulty in understanding abstract concepts. He is in a classroom for students with speech and language difficulties.

John displays problem behaviors such as crying or throwing tantrums when asked to do something he does not want to or when a task is difficult. He often displays problem behaviors during the morning routine of getting up and getting ready to go to school.

### *Measurement*

The team videotaped John in the morning before the intervention, during the intervention, during a time when the intervention stopped, and during the reintroduction of the intervention. The team collected data twice a week.

The team looked at whether John displayed problem behaviors (tantrums, running around without clothing, refusing to get dressed) or on task behavior (following the morning routine).

### *Functional Behavioral Assessment*

The team interviewed John, his parents, his brothers, and his grandmother about his likes, dislikes, and the context in which his problem behaviors occurred. The team also observed John in the morning and throughout the day. John's morning routine consists of getting out of bed, going to the bathroom, putting on his clothes, brushing his hair, and eating breakfast. Instead of getting ready he often plays with his hamsters or watches television.

The team concluded that John was attempting to avoid those parts of his morning routine that he found difficult and that more enjoyable activities competed for his attention. They decided that a visual schedule would help John keep track of his routine, that he needed help with dressing, and that he would be more likely to complete the routine if he could choose a desired activity to do.

### *Intervention*

John's team created a visual schedule of the morning routine for him. When John completed a part of the routine, he would remove the picture representing that part from his chart. When he had removed all the pictures, his mother would praise him. John's mother also laid out his clothes for him in the morning. John had difficulty tying his shoes so his shoelaces were changed to the type that he only needed to tighten. After dressing, John chose a desired activity such as playing with his hamsters.

### *Results*

During the times without the intervention, John engaged in on task behavior an average of 25% and during the times with the intervention, task engagement rose to 80%. During the times without intervention John displayed problem behavior an average of 68% and during the times with the intervention, problem behavior decreased to 13%. During the nonintervention stages,

John got out of bed and got dressed in 27 minutes on average and during the intervention stages, John got out of bed and got dressed in 11 minutes on average.

Clarke, S., Dunlap, G., & Vaughn, B. (1999). Family-centered, assessment-based intervention to improve behavior during an early morning routine. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 1*, 235-241.