Using Community Based Instruction to Teach Grocery Shopping Skills

What is the level of evidence?

This is a Promising Practice based on one acceptable quality group study and two acceptable quality single subject studies.

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

The best place to find out how to implement CBI to teach grocery shopping skills is through the following research to practice lesson plan starter:


With whom was it implemented?

- Students with
  - Mild intellectual disability (1 study, n = 20)
  - Moderate intellectual disability (1 study, n = 20)
  - Moderate to severe intellectual disability (2 studies, n = 9)
- Ages ranged from 16 - 20, 2 studies; mean age of 17.2 years, 1 group study
- Males (n=33), females (n=16)
- Ethnicity
  - None reported (3 studies, n= 49)

What is the practice?

Community based instruction is teaching functional skills that take place in the community where target skills would naturally occur (Brown et al., 1983).

In the studies used to establish the evidence base for using community based instruction (CBI) to teach grocery shopping skills CBI:
- immediately followed simulated instruction (Bates, Cuvo, Miner, & Korabek, 1999)
- followed a phase of instruction in the classroom (Gaule, Nietupski, & Certo, 1985)
- was the only setting for instruction (Ferguson & McDonnell, 1991)
How has the practice been implemented?

- Simulated instruction paired with CBI was more effective and efficient than CBI alone to teach students tasks associated with purchasing items in a grocery store, using a 32 step task analysis, including picture lists (Bates et al., 1999)
- Response prompts (static picture cues) were used to teach students to locate, obtain, and purchase items in the grocery store during the second and third phases of instruction, following a first phase of classroom instruction (Gaule et al., 1985)
- Concurrent sequencing, presenting all steps without controlling order, was used to teach selecting grocery items from a list (Ferguson & McDonnell, 1991). All instruction occurred in the community in this study

Where has it been implemented?

- Grocery stores (3 studies)

How does this practice relate to Indicator 13?

- Indicator 13 Checklist Item #3: Teaching grocery shopping skills in the community may reflect results of transition assessment information
- Indicator 13 Checklist Item #4: Community based instruction on grocery shopping may be a transition service designated in an IEP that will enable a student to meet his or her postsecondary independent living goal(s)
- Indicator 13 Checklist Item #6: Teaching grocery shopping skills using CBI may be an IEP objective that supports a student’s postsecondary independent living goal(s)

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?

- Reason quantitatively and use units to solve problems. (Number and Quantity, Grades 9 – 12)
  - Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and the origin in graphs and data displays
- Solve real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations. (Expressions and Equations, Grade 6)
  - Use variables to represent two quantities in a real-world problem that change in relationship to one another
How does this practice relate to States’ Career Cluster Initiative: Essential Knowledge and Skills?

- Demonstrate mathematics knowledge and skills required to pursue the full range of post-secondary education and career opportunities (Academic Foundations)
  - Identify whole numbers, decimals, and fractions
  - Demonstrate use of relational expressions such as: equal to, not equal, greater than, less than, etc
  - Demonstrate knowledge of basic arithmetic operations such as: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division

References used to establish this evidence base:

