

# USING BEHAVIOR SKILLS TRAINING AND A GROUP CONTINGENCY TO PROMOTE MASK-WEARING IN AN EARLY EDUCATION CLASSROOM

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**INTRO:**

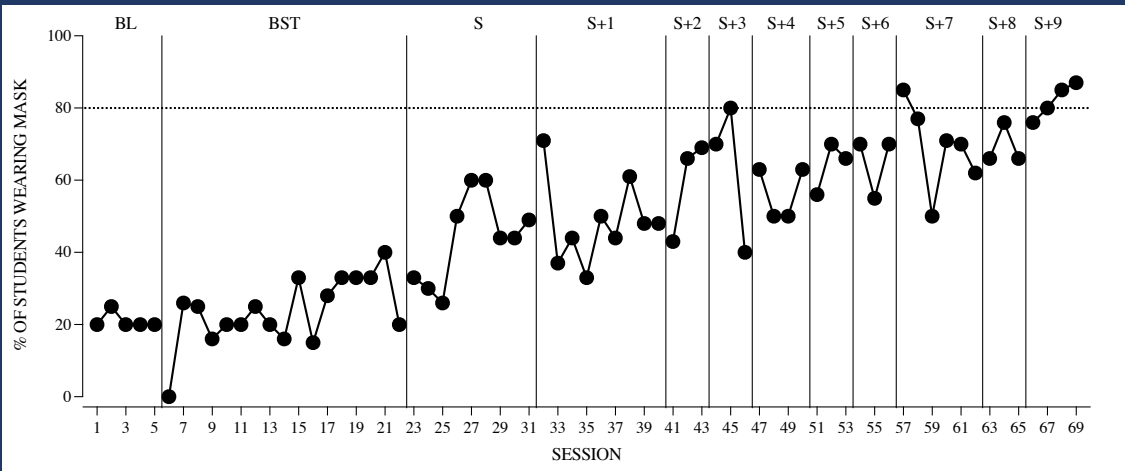
- Group contingencies are a widely used and effective classroom management strategy that includes three main components: establishing classroom expectations, explicitly teaching the behavior that is expected, and reinforcing appropriate, expected behaviors (Chow & Gilmour, 2016)
- Behavior skills training (BST) is an instructional procedure that has been used to teach a variety of behaviors (Miltenberger, 2008)
- Given that students with disabilities are not required to wear a mask (CDC, 2020) in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, special education teachers are at high risk for exposure and contracting COVID-19

**PURPOSE:**

- To increase mask-wearing in an early childhood special education classroom

- Participants**
  - 8 M, 3 F (ASD, Speech Impairment, OHI [ADHD])
- Dependent Variables**
  - % of students wearing mask appropriately
    - Momentary time sampling (FT 30 min)
- Research Design**
  - Changing criterion
- Conditions**
  - Baseline
  - BST
  - Group Contingency
    - 15 min access to choice of leisure activity

When provided with **BST** in proper mask wearing, along with a **group contingency**, mask wearing amongst 3 to 5-year-old children with developmental delays increased to **80%** of students across three consecutive days.



# Using Behavior Skills Training and a Group Contingency to Promote Mask-wearing in an Early Education Classroom

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## **Abstract**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the resulting pandemic has had widespread implications on the safety of the work that teachers do with students each day. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends people age 2 years and older should wear masks in public settings; however, for children with disabilities, wearing a mask may be difficult and as such, is not required (CDC, 2021). Special education teachers and students in particular are at high risk for exposure and contracting COVID-19. Therefore, behavior-analytic strategies that can teach and reinforce appropriate mask-wearing should be evaluated. In this study, students ages 3 to 5-years-old with developmental delays were taught how to properly wear a mask using behavior skills training (BST; Miltenberger, 2008) until all students were able to put on a mask independently. Then, a group contingency was utilized to reinforce the wearing of masks throughout the day in the classroom. Using a changing criterion design, BST and a group contingency was effective in increasing mask wearing for students in the classroom. A task analysis and instructions for implementation are provided and results discussed.

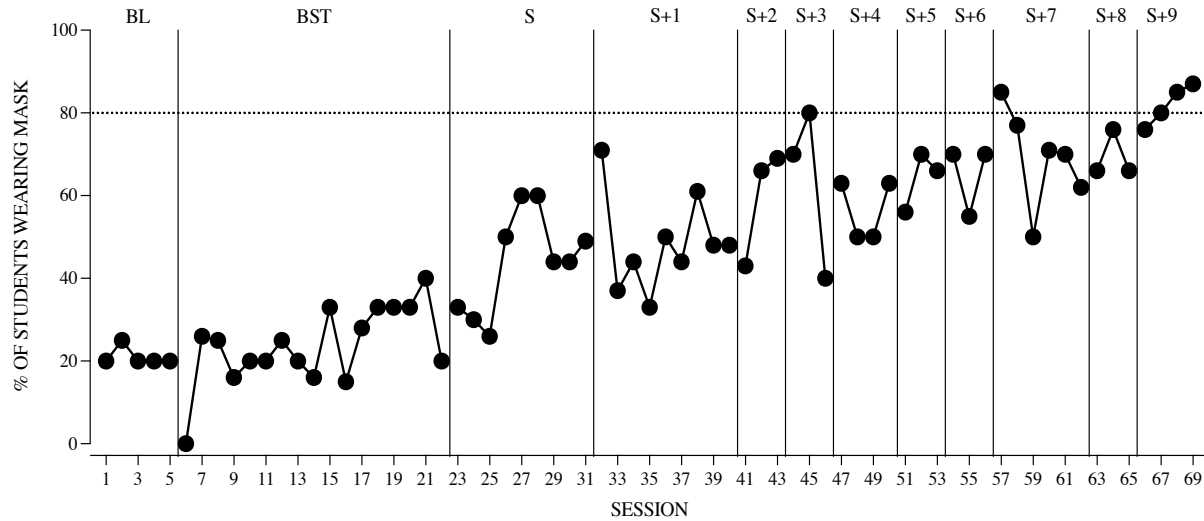


Figure 1. Percentage of student mask-wearing across the treatment evaluation

### References

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, May 3). *Children and youth with special healthcare needs*. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Children-and-Youth-with-Special-Healthcare-Needs>
- Chow, J. C., & Gilmour, A. F. (2016). Designing and implementing group contingencies in the classroom: A teacher's guide. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 48*(3), 137-143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059915618197>
- Miltenberger, R. G. (2008). *Behavior Modification: Principles and Procedures* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth.

## Behavior Skills Training: Morning Message Treatment Integrity Data Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Session: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions	
Teacher turns on computer and records session	(YES/NO)
Teacher has everyone seated for morning message	(YES/NO)
Teacher says, "Okay everyone, today we are going to learn and practice how to put on our mask"	(YES/NO)
<p>"Masks are important to keep everyone safe!"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•After a couple of days, you may try choral responding here</li> <li>•"Masks are important to keep everyone _____ "</li> </ul>	(YES/NO)
<p>Teacher engages in some active responding with students about masks: (examples below)</p> <p>"Do your teachers wear a mask?"</p> <p>"How many masks can you count?"</p> <p>"Do your parents wear a mask?"</p> <p>"Does the bus driver wear a mask?"</p>	<p>_____ / _____</p> <p>Correct                  Incorrect</p>
Model	
Teacher says, "Okay, now everyone watch Ms. Kaitie do it."	(YES/NO)
Teacher models how to wear a mask while explaining the steps verbally	
1. Grab the mask	(YES/NO)
2. Put mask around ears	(YES/NO)
3. Put mask over nose	(YES/NO)
4. Pinch the top of your nose	(YES/NO)
5. "Yay! I'm wearing my mask!"	(YES/NO)

Rehearsal	
Teacher says, "Okay, now I want everyone to try putting their masks on!"	(YES/NO)
"I can help you if you need help"	(YES/NO)
Teacher has all students practice putting mask on and provide prompts/ assistance as needed	_____ / _____ Correct          Incorrect
Feedback	
Teacher provides praise for correct mask wearing/ attempts to put on mask/ any other appropriate mask behavior	_____ / _____ Correct          Incorrect
Teacher provides corrective feedback to students putting mask on incorrectly	_____ / _____ Correct          Incorrect
Teacher says, "YAY!!! Everyone is wearing a mask!" Great job everyone!	YES/NO
Teacher collects data on # of students that put mask on independently (e.g., no prompts or assistance)	YES/NO
No other prompts or instructions are delivered the rest of day	YES/NO
Teacher collects data at: •8:30 •9:00 •9:30	_____ / _____ Correct          Incorrect

$$\frac{\text{Correct}}{\text{Total}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{_____}} * 100 = \text{_____} \% \text{ Treatment Integrity}$$

