Systematic Literature Review of Types of Interventions to Instruct Self-Advocacy Skills to Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

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Since self-advocacy is an important skill for high schoolers and adults with developmental disabilities (DD), it is imperative that teachers, case managers, and service providers are equipped with best practices to teach self-advocacy skills to high schoolers and adults with DD. Our purpose is to explore the types of effective interventions and outcome measures related to self-advocacy that have been researched with teenagers and adults with developmental disabilities. The main question guiding this systematic review is as follows: for high schoolers and adults with developmental disabilities, what instructional methods for self-advocacy skills have been used to promote accuracy, frequency, generalization, and/or maintenance of self-advocacy skills? A secondary question of this systematic review was what types of outcome measures have been used to measure self-advocacy skills for high schoolers and adults with DD?

BACKGROUND/DEFINITIONS:

The definition of self-advocacy used for this study was based on Miller and Keys (1996), which outlines the following four principles of self-advocacy:

1.) Self-advocacy involves an individual increasing his/her awareness of his/her social and political situation. This increased awareness leads to a sense of empowerment for individuals with DD.

2.) This sense of empowerment emphasizes a person's strengths and potential over his/her weaknesses.

3.) Being involved in a community organization can improve an individual's capacity for self-advocacy.

4.) People with disabilities should take an active rather than passive role in collaborating with their advisors and service providers.

The definition for developmental disability (DD) used in this study was based on the Developmentally Disabled Assistance and Bill of Rights Act's (DD Act of 2000) definition. It was assumed if articles stated that a participant had "developmental disability," "mental retardation," "intellectual disability," or "autism," then they fit the definition of developmental disability

DATA SOURCES:
The following databases were searched for this systematic literature review: PsychINFO, ERIC, Professional Development, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, Educational Source, Academic Search Premier.

STUDY APPRAISAL AND SYNTHESIS METHODS:
The twelve studies included in this review were compared based on their design (single subject or group), What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) methodological quality, types of instructional methods, and self-advocacy outcomes.

RESULTS:
Several methods of effective self-advocacy instruction and outcomes were identified. The most common types of outcomes were knowledge of self-advocacy, participation in meetings, and role-play. The most common types of instructional methods were group discussions, role-play, and videos. However, only one of the included studies met the WWC standards without reservations, and only one met the WWC with reservations.

LIMITATIONS:
This study only included published studies in the English language.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF KEY FINDINGS:
When teaching self-advocacy, many types of instructional methods and curriculum are available. Due to the limited number of studies included in this review, future

People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are doing it

Study	Treatment Components										Outcome Assessments			
	Visiting community locations	Advocacy Workshops	Written/picture scripts	PowerPoints	Group Discussions	Playing Games	Advocacy Leaders' Speeches	Paper-based	Role Playing	Watching Videos	Paper-Based or interview (knowledge)	Behavioral—Role Play	Behavioral—Authentic	Behavioral—Goal Attainment
Mazzotti et al. (2015)		x	x						x			x	x	
Schelling & Rao (2013)									x	x	x	x	x	
Cease-Cook et al. (2013)										x		x	x	
Snyder (2002)		x			x			x	x	x		x	x	
Feldman et al. (2012)			x	x	x					x	x	x	x	
Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2009)					x			x				x		
Tardif-Williams et al. (2007)					x	x			x	x		x		
Abery et al. (1995)					x			x			x	x		
*Sievert et al. (1988)					x				x	x	x		x	
*Kramer et al. (2014)				x	x	x		x	x		x			x
*Balcazar et al. (1996)	x				x		x						x	
*Balcazar et al. (1994)	x					x							x	
Total	1	1	2	3	8	3	1	4	6	6	5	8	7	1

Reference	Videos Used?	Group or 1:1 instruction or both?	Maintenance?	Generalization?	WWC Rating
Mazzotti et al. (2015)	No	Individual	Yes	Yes	Does Not Meet
Schelling & Rao (2013)	Yes	Group	No	Yes	Does Not Meet
Cease-Cook et al. (2013)	Yes	Individual	Yes	Yes	Meets with Reservations
Snyder (2002)	Yes	Both	No	Yes	Does Not Meet
*Sievert et al. (1988)	Yes	Both	Yes	Yes	Does Not Meet
*Kramer et al. (2014)	Not mentioned	Group	No	No	Does Not Meet
Feldman et al. (2012)	Yes	Group	No	Yes	Meets without Reservations
Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2009)	No	Group	No	No	Does Not Meet
Tardif-Williams et al. (2007)	Yes	Both	No	Yes	Does Not Meet
*Balcazar et al. (1996)	No	Group	No	No	Does Not Meet
Abery et al. (1995)	Not mentioned	Group	Yes	Yes	Does Not Meet
*Balcazar et al. (1994)	No	Group	No	No	Does Not Meet