



Center for Early Education and Development



Addressing the Needs of Young Children Who Engage in Challenging Behaviors

Tip Sheets

Maintenance and Generalization

What is meant by maintenance and generalization?

- Maintenance refers to the extent to which a child continues to perform a skill or behavior over time. Generalization refers to the extent to which a child performs a skill or behavior in different settings, with different people, and with different materials.

Why do maintenance and generalization need to be programmed into an intervention plan?

- Without maintenance and generalization, the skills and behaviors learned in an intervention plan may not be useful in the long term or in real-world settings.
- Programming maintenance and generalization into an intervention plan helps ensure that the child can use the skills and behaviors learned in the intervention plan in a variety of settings and with a variety of people.

How do I incorporate goals of maintenance and generalization into an intervention plan?

- Set specific goals for maintenance and generalization in the intervention plan.
- Use a variety of settings, people, and materials to practice the skills and behaviors.
- Use prompts and cues to help the child maintain the skills and behaviors.
- Use reinforcement to encourage the child to maintain and generalize the skills and behaviors.
- Monitor the child's performance over time to ensure maintenance and generalization.

