

Instantaneous Time Sampling – Instructions

Purpose

- ITS is used to gather quantitative data regarding how many times ADHD behaviours are recorded during a 10-minute time period (frequency).
- It may be used for comparison between behaviours displayed by the target (T) and comparison student (C) (a non-ADHD peer previously nominated by the class teacher).
- This type of recording can be used for 1, 2 or 3 × 10-minute periods (or even more), or for part of a 10-minute period, for example during an assembly which lasts 25 minutes recordings could be taken throughout.

Description of instrument

- The ITS schedule includes a table listing all 18 ADHD DSM-IV criteria, subdivided into the three core behaviour categories.
- There are three recording boxes on the sheet each consisting of a 10-minute time line with 20 cells for behaviour recordings for both the target student and the comparison student at 30-second intervals.
- The analysis section is divided into three behaviour columns for both the target and comparison students.

Procedure

- Familiarise yourself with DSM-IV criteria for ADHD.
- Remain as unobtrusive as possible and ideally take no part in the lesson.
- Record on the sheet: the name of the target student and comparison; the date and time; brief details regarding context and setting, including the number in the group (i.e. class group, whole school, etc.) and if there is just a teacher or whether any support is given (e.g. TA offering general support or SSA supporting one particular child).
- If planning to use 3 × 10-minute periods in a lesson (start, middle and end) it is helpful to know the approximate time the lesson will end. If a lesson is timed for an hour it is relatively easy to spread out the three 10-minute recording periods evenly over the course of the hour.
- Using a watch with a second hand, preferably attached to a clipboard, take a 'snapshot' recording every 30 seconds. In practice look at both students at the same 30-second intervals and record the appropriate behaviour category by referring to the 18 DSM-IV ADHD behaviour categories listed at the top of the sheet (page 37). If none is evident, record as 0.
- Record what is happening *at that particular time*, not what has gone on in the meantime.
- Recordings are summarised at a later date in the analysis section. The total numbers of recordings are calculated for each of the three behaviour categories for both students.



Figure 4.2 Instantaneous time sampling instructions

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