

# European Autism Congress

March 14-15, 2019 | Zagreb, Croatia

## Preference for a reflexive conditioned motivating operation predicting removal of a positive reinforcer

Countdown timers have been used in several studies to enhance the effectiveness of treatments for problem behavior maintained by socially mediated reinforcers. Countdown timers that predict reinforcer removal or unavailability, or pending task onset can be viewed as conditioned reflexive motivating operations (CMO-R) that signal a worsening situation. However, it is unclear why they would enhance treatment effectiveness. This study replicated a study by Mace, Shapiro and Mace (1998) that used a countdown timer to signal reinforcer removal and task onset. In the present study, a functional analysis conducted with a 5-year-old boy with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) found that his problem behavior was maintained by un-signalized removal of an iPad followed by introduction of a task. A 2-min countdown timer set prior to iPad removal and task onset reduced problem behavior compared to these un-signalized events. A post-treatment preference assessment found that the boy preferred signalized iPad removal and over un-signalized iPad removal.

### Biography

Ed. S Anja Jelaska holds positions as Director in Center for Autism Split, Croatia and General Manager in the first clinic specialized for children and youth with ASD in Croatia "Blue Light". She developed clinical programs for children with autism and other developmental disabilities that served as nationally recognized for research and Post-graduate training under the supervision of one of the most cited expert in the field of ABA Prof. Charles F Mace. She was Program Director in one of the biggest schools for children with ASD in Saudi Arabia, Shamah Autism Center and Case Manager in Stepping Stones UAE. Her research is concentrated on the functional analysis of severe behavior disorders.

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