CHAPTER 2

SMARTS Overview

SMARTS is a flexible strategy that can be used as a standalone intervention or as a component in a broader, multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for students struggling with a range of challenging behaviors. In this chapter, we:

- Introduce you to our SMARTS student, Mac D; Alex, the school social worker; Teacher Fields; and Rainbow Ridge Elementary.
- Discuss how SMARTS can be used as a stand-alone intervention as well as a component in a schoolwide MTSS.
- Provide an overview of the SMARTS intervention, including the three phases (i.e., Student Training; Student Self- and Teacher Monitoring; Processing Self- and Teacher Data).
- Examine how SMARTS provides students with repeated opportunities to practice the five SM skills previously listed in Chapter 1 (Self-Assessment, Goal Setting, Self-Monitoring, Self-Recording, and Self-Evaluation).
- Explain SMARTS Bucks and Mini-SMARTS Store as a behavior-support option to improve student engagement during Phase I: SMARTS Student Training.
- Provide case examples of implementing SMARTS with several different elementary students.

Before we take a deeper dive into providing an overview of the basics of the SMARTS intervention, let us briefly introduce you to Mac D, our SMARTS student avatar, and Alex, the school social worker at Rainbow Ridge Elementary. Mac is a student scholar in Teacher Fields's classroom at Rainbow Ridge Elementary. Recently, Mac D and Teacher Fields have been working with Alex to learn SM skills using the SMARTS intervention.

MEET MAC D, RAINBOW RIDGE ELEMENTARY, TEACHER FIELDS, AND SOCIAL WORKER ALEX

Meet Mac D, our avatar pal who we will be following, as well as a few other peers who are engaging in SMARTS throughout the rest of this book. Mac D is a unique fifth-grade student in Jamie Fields's class, who brings a mix of challenges and humor to the classroom. Mac has some difficulty with effortful attention, a tendency to be off task, and faces academic hurdles but also finds joy in playfulness and humor. Mac has a group of friends but also encounters typical peer difficulties at school. Known for occasionally challenging authority, Mac's spirited nature adds a dynamic element to the school environment.

Mac D attends Rainbow Ridge Elementary, a vibrant and diverse school nestled in the foothills of Mount Harmony. At Rainbow Ridge, teachers have implemented a MTSS to effectively cater to varied student needs. In the universal tier of interventions at Rainbow Ridge, all students are screened for risk factors each fall and spring semester. The screening data are used to identify areas of concern and select interventions to mitigate those concerns. For example, the data support that all students benefit from daily social skills instruction. The data also identify students at increased levels of risk, and Rainbow Ridge teachers employ differentiated instructional techniques, utilize small-group activities, and rely on curriculum-based assessments to ensure that each student receives the necessary support to succeed. In addition, the data emphasize the use of positive behavior-reinforcement strategies in the classroom and support teacher classroom-management training to prevent and reduce behavior challenges in the classroom.

Despite the success of these universal interventions, Rainbow Ridge Elementary faces challenges in implementing targeted interventions for students like Mac D who require more specialized support. Limited resources, including a shortage of trained staff and counseling services, have hindered the school staff's ability to provide individualized attention to students with complex behavioral or learning needs. Overall, Rainbow Ridge Elementary strives to create a nurturing and enriching environment for all students, even as they navigate the obstacles presented by the implementation of targeted interventions. As a means of helping Mac learn new skills in a manner that aligns with the values of Rainbow Ridge faculty and culture, the school's social worker, Alex, sought to find an intervention that imparts skills for students in goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-regulation skills in a way that supports autonomy.

After a brief literature search of many targeted intervention programs, Alex found SMARTS—or Self-Monitoring And Regulation Training Strategies—a research-based program that emphasizes goal setting and self-monitoring skills in an autonomy-supportive manner. Alex really liked that SMARTS promotes autonomy support and directly involves students in the intervention, and that SMARTS includes self-regulation techniques such as deep breathing, body scanning, and guided mindfulness or relaxation practices. After locating SMARTS and reviewing the evidence of its effectiveness, Alex

decided to take the intervention to the school's principal. The first question from the principal was, "Will SMARTS work with the existing MTSS that we are building to support our students?" The answer to that question is, absolutely.

IS SMARTS A STANDALONE INTERVENTION OR PART OF A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS?

SMARTS can be used as a stand-alone intervention for students struggling with a multitude of behavioral health challenges, and, as we discuss in Chapter 3, SMARTS is also designed to be one element in a continuum of interventions for a MTSS.

To begin, the SMARTS intervention is broken into three distinct phases:

- Phase I: Student Training
- Phase II: Student Self- and Teacher Monitoring
- Phase III: Processing Self- and Teacher Data

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, prior research has listed a SM intervention to have as many as 11 distinct steps. However, our work with SMARTS has found a much simpler framework that consists of five steps, which is a combination of the most effective processes described in Chapter 1. To boil it down, our work with SMARTS and through reviewing the work of other researchers in this area (Briesch & Chafouleas, 2009; Lane et al., 2011; Thompson, 2010, 2012, 2014) has found that the intervention is best defined as students engaging in the basic steps detailed in Table 2.1.

During the self-assessment stage, students identify a challenge they are having in the classroom. Next, students define a goal to reduce the challenge and increase the use of replacement behavior(s) in place of the challenging behavior(s). Once students have a goal, the self-monitoring stage is where students prompt themselves, reflect upon their behaviors, and determine whether the behaviors aligned with their goals. The self-recording stage consists of students documenting their observations (usually on a goal sheet with predefined time intervals). Finally, during the self-evaluation stage, students aggregate their observations across multiple days and compare their performances with their predetermined goals. The self-evaluation stage includes graphing observations, equating current data with prior self- and concurrent teacher observations, and students use the data to formulate a new performance goal with support from a trusted adult. Each phase is described in greater detail in the following sections.

SMARTS Fact

SMARTS can be used as an individual intervention with a single student or used as a group intervention with a small group of students. It can also be integrated into a schoolwide MTSS.

TABLE 2.1. SMARTS Phases and Intervention Elements

SMARTS phases	SMARTS intervention elements	Description
Phase I SMARTS Student Training	1. Self-assessment	A process whereby Alex and Mac D discuss the most challenging experiences that Mac is having in the classroom. The focus is on what Mac can do to reduce challenges and improve the likelihood of achieving an outcome that Mac wants to achieve.
	2. Goal setting	A process whereby Alex and Mac D frame the challenge as an observable and measurable goal that, if achieved, will help Mac experience the success that Mac identified in the self-assessment process.
Phase II SMARTS Student Self- and Teacher Monitoring	3. Self-monitoring	A process whereby Mac reflects upon whether their behavior meets the stated goal during the time frame identified during the goal-setting process.
	4. Self-recording	A process whereby Mac and their teacher, Jamie Fields, record whether the behavioral reflection met the goal over the week by marking *yes*, or whether Mac's choices *sometimes* met the goal during the time frame, or whether Mac's choices did not reflect the goal by selecting *no*.
Phase III SMARTS Processing Self- and Teacher Data	5. Self-evaluation	A process whereby Mac and Alex sit down to review the data, convert the data into percentages, graph the percentages over each of the days of that week, and review whether Mac achieved their goal. Mac and Alex also review Mac's teacher data to see if they agreed and then examine why their responses may have differed.

PHASE I: SMARTS STUDENT TRAINING

Most interesting in our work to understand the landscape of self-monitoring interventions is that our research literature provides very little detail about the best approaches for training students to SM. In a meta-analysis of over 79 independent single-case and group studies of SM interventions, we found 71 of the studies reported training procedures or practices to train students. Furthermore, student training was one of the more important aspects of a successful outcome (Smith et al., 2022), but our review also found very little consistency in how students were trained in SM. A unique feature of the SMARTS intervention is explicit instruction and guided lessons about how to teach and to reinforce necessary skills and concepts for successful SM.

What Is It?

SMARTS Phase I focuses on teaching students to identify challenges they are having at school and alternative strategies or replacement behaviors to help them achieve their goals, and then write goals to reduce their challenging behaviors or increase the use of more acceptable or prosocial behaviors.

During Phase I: SMARTS Student Training, small-group facilitation will occur. Ideally, groups will have three to six students per group; however, SMARTS can be used with only an individual student. That is, if you have a student who adamantly insists on a one-on-one experience, SMARTS can be used this way without the need to make any adjustments. We know that time is precious, and we can often meet targeted youth needs in a group, which has several advantages. First, students learn from each other in a group setting, and second, small groups are an efficient means of teaching skills. Throughout this training phase, school-support personnel teach the 10 scripted SMARTS lessons presented in the following list and provided in full in Chapter 7. Please note: For the purposes of this book, we refer to anyone who is leading small groups or processing with students as a SMARTS facilitator or a group facilitator. In a school setting, this may be a counselor, social worker, school psychologist, or teacher.

The SMARTS curriculum uses a SAFE format (Durlak et al., 2011) to consistently and predictably organize lesson contents. By SAFE, we mean that SMARTS lessons include:

- *Sequencing* of basic concepts that are addressed early, revisited, and even reassembled into more complex strategies in later lessons
- *Active* experiences to encourage learning and engagement
- *Focused* lessons on a topic needed for each student to develop an individualized goal and learn skills for SM
- *Exposure* to concepts in a small-group format with routine iterative follow-up feedback sessions that provide an opportunity to return to those basic concepts

SMARTS lessons also have a predictable structure, which increases students' capacity to know what is next and focus instead on engagement and understanding. In our repeated experience and observations, each lesson takes approximately 40–50 minutes and includes an introduction, an activity, and a reflection. In Table 2.2, we break down each SMARTS lesson, the essential reason it is included, and the basic resources and time commitments that can be expected.

Why Is It Important?

A 2010 meta-analysis of 213 school-based studies of social and behavioral support interventions established that interventions that organized lesson plans for student training using SAFE (Sequenced, Active, Focused, Exposure) were shown to significantly improve students' social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviors, and academic performances when compared to school-based interventions without SAFE features.

TABLE 2.2. SMARTS Lesson Purpose, Resources, and Time Commitment

Lesson	Purpose	Resources and time commitment
0—Pre-meeting	Provide students time to meet one another and the group facilitator(s) while establishing group expectations and design.	• 20–30 minutes • Chart paper • SMARTS Jar and tokens • Markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student
1—Assessing and defining problems	Assist students with identifying the problems they encounter at school and what behaviors contribute to the problem(s) students self-disclose. After identifying problems, students begin to reflect on their behaviors using motivational interview prompts and brainstorming about replacement behaviors.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • SMARTS Jar and tokens • Problem Reflection Worksheet (Form 7.1)
2—Generating alternative solutions	Teach students how to think about, create, and monitor goals that follow a SMART formula: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Replacement Behavior Worksheet (Form 7.2) • Examples of Problem Behaviors and Replacement Strategies (Form 7.3) cut into strips • SMARTS Jar and tokens
3—Writing measurable goals to implement the solution	Students learn how to write observable and measurable goals in the contexts of others and themselves. By the end of this lesson, students will have begun constructing their own goal following a SMARTS formula.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Practice Goal Monitoring Worksheet (Form 7.4) • Defining a Goal Worksheet (Form 7.5) • Observable Behavior Goal Bank (Form 7.6) • Completed worksheets from Lessons 1 and 2 • Clock • SMARTS Jar and tokens • Computer or pad to watch short video

(continued)

TABLE 2.2. *(continued)*

Lesson	Purpose	Resources and time commitment
4—Observing and recording progress	Students will learn how to revise their goals to be specific, realistic, and measurable. In addition, students will focus on their replacement behavior(s) to meet their goal. Following Lesson 4, students will record their goal progress for three days.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Goal Self-Monitoring Worksheet (Form 7.7)—three per student • List of Sample Goals (Form 7.8) • Optional: your own Goal Self-Monitoring Worksheet as an example • Defining a Goal Worksheet (Form 7.5) • SMARTS Jar and tokens
5—Using data and graphs to evaluate progress	In Lesson 5, facilitators will teach students how to graph their goal progress and use graphing techniques to measure their goal progress. This lesson begins to provide students with concrete techniques in self-monitoring.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Pencils • Three completed Gold Self-Monitoring Worksheets (Form 7.7) for each student • Self-Monitoring Graph (Form 7.9) • Example Goal Self-Monitoring Worksheet • Example Self-Monitoring Graph • Marble jar and marbles • SMARTS Jar and tokens
6—Taking the perspective of others	Facilitators will work with students to define and understand what perspective is for humans, and what it means to look at a situation through another person's perspective.	• 40–45 minutes • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Completed Teacher Goal Input (Form 7.10) for each student • Copies of Values Cards (Form 7.11) • Paper with either pencils or pens • SMARTS Jar and tokens
7—Reframing mistakes as part of learning	Learning does not exist without making mistakes and experiencing failure. In this lesson, students will learn how to see and use experiences with mistakes and failure as an opportunity to learn how to be proactive rather than reactive.	• 40–45 minutes • Pencils • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Michael Jordan Nike commercial: *http://behindthehustle.com/2011/09/michael-jordan-succeeded-because-he-failed* • Also search for Michael Jordan Nike commercial failure • Michael Jordan's story of failure (Form 7.12) • Reframing Failure/Mistakes as Part of Learning Worksheet (Form 7.13) • SMARTS Jar and tokens

(continued)

TABLE 2.2. *(continued)*

Lesson	Purpose	Resources and time commitment
8—Internal responses to problems	Teach students about physiological responses to internal and external stimuli, and about how these responses impact students' behaviors. Students will learn how to take their own pulse and how to use breathing exercises to reduce their pulse speed.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Deep Breathing and Heart Rate Recording Worksheet (Form 7.14) • For the "Houston, we have a problem" clip, use this: *www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3J1AO9z0tA* • Also search for "Houston we have a problem," Apollo 13 (3-minute clip) • SMARTS Jar and tokens
9—External responses to problems	Building on Lesson 8, students will learn about internal responses to external stimuli. To aid in Lesson 9's teaching, students will continue to practice the breathing exercises from the previous lesson and learn how to pair breathing with muscle relaxation techniques.	• 40–45 minutes • Poster paper and markers • SMARTS folder, one for each student • Deep Breathing and Heart Rate Recording Worksheet (Form 7.14) in SMARTS folder • Muscle Relaxation Script (Form 7.15) • Clock/timer • SMARTS Jar and tokens

Phase I with Mac and Alex

During Phase I, Mac meets with Alex and the rest of their SMARTS group. Throughout the first few lessons, Mac starts to note and think about what challenges they face in the classroom with validation and support from Alex and with the rest of the SMARTS group offering feedback. Mac can identify the desire and need to work on their purposeful attention during class and decrease their impulsivity with challenging teachers' authority. With Alex's help, Mac writes and refines a SMART goal to monitor their personal goal, which is to decrease the previously stated behaviors and replace them with new ones learned in the later SMARTS lessons.

PHASE II: SMARTS STUDENT SELF- AND TEACHER MONITORING

During the monitoring phase, both students and teachers will monitor the individualized goals developed by each student for behavioral performance and goal achievement using the SMARTS forms included in this manual or on the SMARTS web-based app. The

What Is It?

SMARTS Phase II is focused on student self-monitoring while teachers also report on students' goal performances at the same time. Students can use the paper-based self-monitoring sheets included in Chapter 8 of this manual or the SMARTS web-based app.

SMARTS app uses pop-up prompts for the students and teacher to rate goal performances within the class period or a set period in the school day. Participating SMARTS students begin each day by responding to three prompts, monitoring (1) how they slept the night before, (2) how they are feeling, and (3) how ready—on a scale of 1 to 10—they are to accomplish their goals. Then, throughout class periods each day, students and teachers select one of three response options (yes, sometimes, or no) corresponding to the students' goal performances during the previous class period. Teachers are familiar with recording students' behavior performances, as other selective behavior-support strategies rely on a similar approach (e.g., Check-In/Check-Out). However, unique to SMARTS and not addressed by existing behavioral-support programs, SMARTS students self-monitor their own progress, using the web-based application or physical worksheets to chart and record progress, view teacher perceptions of their progress, use those charts and data to review their performances weekly with student-support personnel (e.g., counselors, school psychologists, social workers) during the processing phase, and compare them to their teachers' perceptions.

Phase II with Mac, Alex, and Jamie

During Phase II, Mac and their teacher, Jamie Fields, have a short meeting to discuss what goal Mac has decided on, and both agree to monitor and record Mac's goal progress individually. Mac begins monitoring their behaviors in the classroom and completing a goal-monitoring sheet. After the first few days, Mac notices they are marking their progress mainly with *no* and *sometimes*. Mac decides to make a small change to their goal after telling Alex and Teacher Fields. Together, the three start noticing progress.

PHASE III: PROCESSING SELF- AND TEACHER DATA

During the processing phase, SMARTS facilitators meet with participating students in a group or individually for approximately 10–15 minutes each week. During this time, they review and discuss the results of the students- and teacher-reported observations collected throughout the week on the SMARTS web-based platform or with the forms included in this manual. Using the percentages and graphs available, SMARTS students compare self- and teacher-observational data. The SMARTS processing forms provide motivational prompts to review the data and guide the conversation (see Chapter 9 for a discussion on processing and associated forms). The prompts help students examine similarities and differences between their performances and their goal progress as marked

What Is It?

SMARTS Phase III is focused on reviewing and comparing student goals with their own performance data and with concurrent teacher data to identify areas of overlap and agreement, as well as areas of discrepancy or differences, and to explore reasons for why there are agreements or differences.

by self- and teacher-monitoring data. Students are asked to reflect on behaviors that may have contributed to possible discrepancies or successes. Using the processing prompts and collected data, students can compare (1) their current goals to (2) their prior goals and self-recorded performance data as well as to concurrent teacher data. During the processing phase, students are encouraged to identify areas where their self-monitoring data and the teacher-monitoring data overlap or agree and connect to what was going right on those days. Alternatively, during the processing phase, students can review areas of difference or discrepancy between their own views of goal performance and those of their teachers and connect to reasons why the data may differ. Using the conversational prompts provided here in the processing documents in this manual, students then work to revise their individual goals. To revise their goals, students may need to add more specific language, revise percentages, or indicate alternative replacement behaviors that may help them to achieve their goals. The students can share their revised goals with the teachers and SMARTS facilitators. These updates should be entered into the SMARTS web-based application or a revised self-monitoring sheet provided in this manual. The SMARTS self-monitoring and processing procedures are repeated iteratively to provide additional opportunities for students to practice, receive feedback, and refine explicitly defined behavioral expectations.

In essence, although SMARTS has three distinct phases, as shown in Figure 2.1, these phases can be overlaid or integrated. By that, we mean to say that Lesson 0 sets the tone for your SMARTS groups, Lessons 1–4 give students the needed skills to begin Phase II's daily self-monitoring and teacher ratings of student goal performances. Subsequent Lessons 5–9 can be covered weekly while Phase II's self- and teacher monitoring occurs and Phase III's weekly processing of the self- and teacher data can occur. Alternatively, a student-support person deploying SMARTS can opt to train students in all lessons before beginning Phases II and III.

Phase III with Mac and Alex

During Phase II, Mac and Alex begin meeting individually once a week to review and discuss Mac's goal-monitoring data, in addition to the data Mac's teacher was tracking. As previously noted, Mac felt they were not reaching their goal and had worked with Alex and Teacher Fields to refine the goal a little. Mac was surprised to discover that there were some days when they did not feel they were making progress on their goal and put *sometimes* when their teacher had noted *yes* that Mac was reaching their goal on that day. This surprised Mac, leading to a discussion with Alex about why Mac and

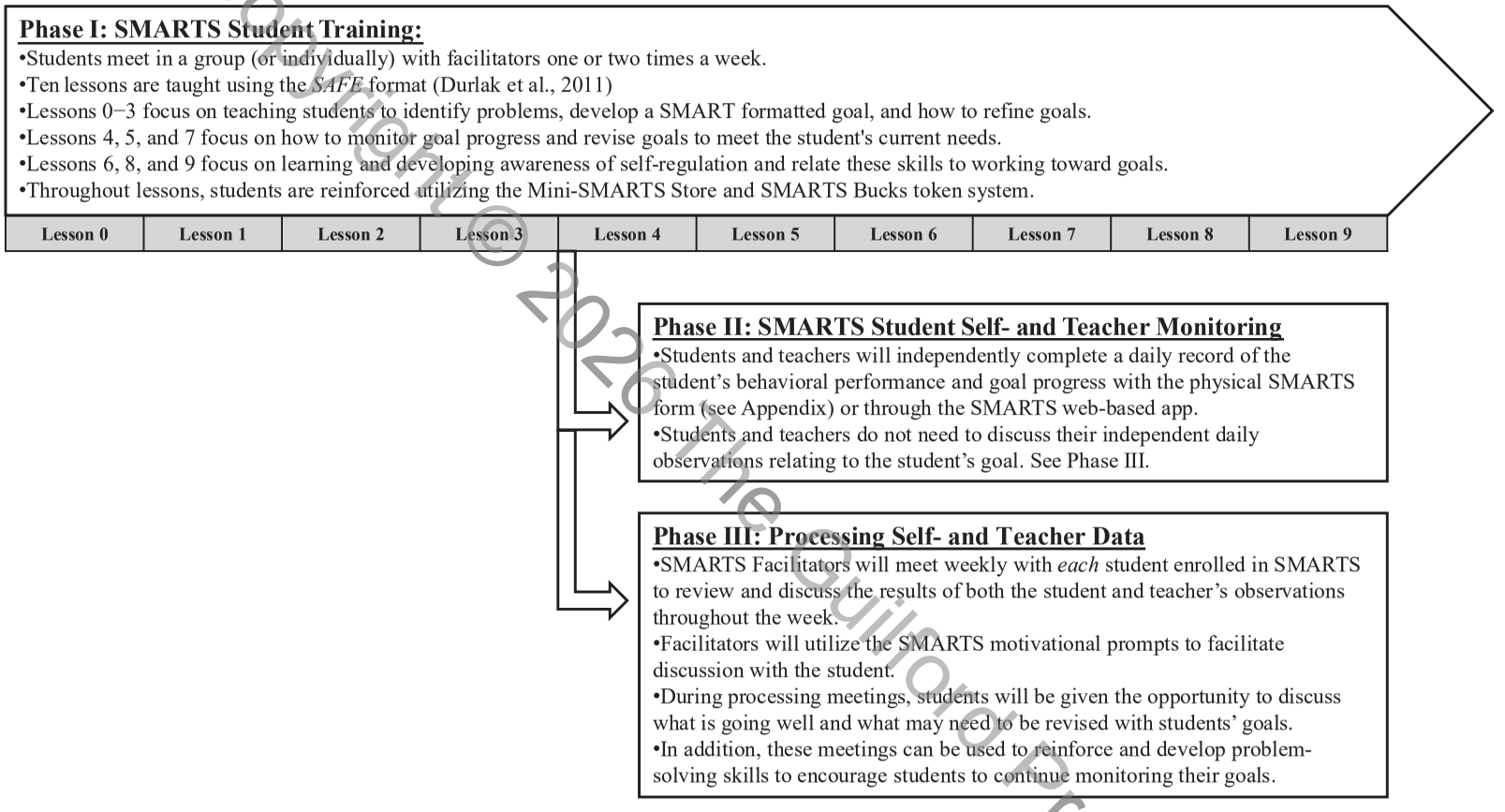

FIGURE 2.1. Three phases of SMARTS.

Teacher Fields may have had different ratings for those days. As the weeks progressed, Mac and Alex noticed that there was usually at least one day each week that Mac and Teacher Fields differed in their ratings. Based on the notes Mac's teacher left for each day and on their processing discussions, Mac began to realize that they had a habit of being hard on themselves and thought Jamie Fields did not like them. This helped Mac and Alex discover that one of the reasons Mac acted out in class was because they assumed Teacher Fields wouldn't like them and wanted some positive attention to compensate for this fear.

SMARTS BUCKS AND THE MINI-SMARTS STORE: A SMARTS SUPPORT PLAN

Because students who are participating in the SMARTS program struggle with choices at times, we recognize that facilitating a small group with three to five challenged students can be challenging. Therefore, the SMARTS intervention dovetails well with an incentive program to promote student success. During each lesson, students have opportunities to earn SMARTS Bucks. Students can spend the SMARTS Bucks in the Mini-SMARTS Store at the end of each session. To receive SMARTS Bucks, the SMARTS group students should display positive participation and expected behaviors. These behaviors can be defined and agreed upon by group members when creating the group rules using the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) procedures during the first group meeting. When the group facilitator notices students displaying actions that reflect the agreed-upon expectations, students will be provided with SMARTS Bucks. At the end of each lesson, they can use their earned SMARTS Bucks to purchase what is available in the Mini-SMARTS Store or save them for a bigger item later that requires more SMARTS Bucks.

What Is It?

To assist with successful student training and small groups for SMARTS, we suggest implementing a token economy using SMARTS Bucks and the Mini-SMARTS Store. If your school or classroom already has a token economy, then use the system you already have in place.

Students can also work together toward a group incentive. This can be done by tallying the SMARTS Bucks earned individually at the end of each lesson and adding them to a group tally. Together, the group can identify a group goal (e.g., time outside, donut party, game time during group) that can occur once the identified goal amount is earned. It is good practice to ask students what items they wish to have included within the Mini-SMARTS Store. Define some parameters and use free rewards such as iPad time or game time to help keep the incentive program within a reasonable budget. Students can brainstorm individual items and bigger items to save up for, along with possible ideas for group incentives.

SMARTS IMPLEMENTATION CASE STUDIES

Here we provide three SMARTS implementation case examples of students in Mac D's SMARTS group at Rainbow Ridge. Each of Mac's group members (Devin, Remi, and Jasmine) have different challenges, such as challenging behaviors, attentional problems, and internalizing symptoms. Afterward, we work on Mac's SMARTS implementation in their group.

SMARTS Fact

The average effect size of using a self-monitoring intervention with elementary students who exhibit challenging behaviors is in the moderate to large range. Bruhn and colleagues (2015) found an average effect size of 0.73 for self-monitoring interventions across different behavioral outcomes.

Case Study: Regular Education Student with Challenging Behaviors

Devin is a fifth-grade boy in the gifted program at Rainbow Ridge Elementary. He was referred to participate in the SMARTS groups because of scores on a universal screening measure indicating defiant and challenging externalizing behaviors, along with a low ability for self-regulation. Devin is usually very talkative, outgoing, and often a natural leader with his peers. He is not often challenged by peers, who seem worried to upset him because of a history of outbursts and two fights. Devin is a good student to have on your side in groups or in classroom discussions if he likes or is good at the topic. When he is not invested in the activity, he can be stubborn and refuse to complete the work.

Phase I

During Phase I of the SMARTS intervention, Devin participated in a group to learn the SMARTS curriculum facilitated by Alex. Because of problems with another participating peer, Alex decided to have two smaller groups instead of combining Devin with his opposing peer. This promoted a much smoother group dynamic moving forward. Having a milieu with limited distractions (i.e., other students or educators) helped to keep Devin on track with fewer audience members to challenge authority. Giving Devin helping or leadership opportunities also promoted his buy-in and cooperation. Before group meetings, Alex helped Devin to recognize how his emotions can impact his behaviors. Alex also noted his natural leadership skills and how they can impact others. Alex worked to help Devin to be aware of his feelings, communicate his needs in productive ways, and reduce challenging behaviors during group facilitation.

Community-building efforts are vital for successful group facilitation but can be challenging when working with students with defiant behaviors. Efforts to utilize engaging icebreakers and regular community check-ins that Devin and other students would find interesting occurred throughout the training phase. Alex wanted to make sure Devin was engaged, included, and intrigued by the examples they used and the stories

Alex shared, finding ways to link to basketball and his love for the saxophone and band class. To help define group rules and expectations for the MOU, Alex included Devin and other group members in brainstorming and decision making. Referring to these rules at the beginning of groups and when necessary to help keep Devin and other group members on track was useful. These efforts were vital for students like Devin with challenging behaviors because they felt ownership in the rules and were successfully able to be redirected with reduced negative confrontation.

Prior to beginning each lesson, group facilitators made efforts with Devin to review what would be happening in the group and ways that he could contribute. This helped to partner Devin with the agenda and create mutual efforts. Finding ways to include Devin in activities and acknowledging his strengths helped to keep him more cooperative throughout each group lesson.

Devin was a student who ultimately desired attention and would act out or push authority to gain this response. As the SMARTS facilitator, Alex used this to their benefit and praised Devin regularly in the group environment. He earned praise for working independently, being a respectable group member, and for good ideas and goal progress. Alex used planned ignoring techniques whenever possible to avoid giving attention to any negative attention-seeking behaviors, as long as safety wasn't a concern. Because of Devin's defiant behaviors, he had one incident in which he completed the assignment one-on-one with Alex instead of working with the group, but this was not a repeat behavior. Ideally, to help Devin flourish, Alex aimed to provide at least five positives and moments of praise for every negative remark or correction.

Activities within the SMARTS program can be adjusted to meet students' unique needs. For Devin, it was helpful to make the lessons and activities very interactive to promote strong participation and buy-in. Devin enjoyed using the smartboard in the room, so Alex utilized this tool to promote engagement and keep activities interactive. Alex gave Devin the opportunity for input and choice within the curriculum, including picking different tasks or stories that were of interest to him. Allowing Devin voice and choice, such as tailoring examples to his hobbies and interests, likely helped with his engagement.

The SMARTS program introduces an incentive program that proved useful in group facilitation and in working with Devin. Devin and other group members were consulted about what items would be motivating to work toward within the SMARTS Bucks behavior support plan (BSP). Alex stocked the store with spicy chips, fidget toys, and stylish pens and pencils, along with bigger prizes students could save their SMARTS Bucks for (e.g., board games) to promote motivation. SMARTS Bucks could also be used for nonmonetary rewards (e.g., free time, choice of activity, or one-on-one attention). It was important to praise Devin often and regularly for his participation and good insights. Alex used SMARTS Bucks to reward Devin and other group members for giving positive attention in groups and for efforts toward their identified goals. Students were rewarded individually and as a group, leading to a donut party for Devin and his group mem-

bers. The SMARTS incentive program was helpful with acknowledging participation and efforts, giving quick feedback, and promoting future positive efforts.

Phase II

During Phase II, Devin and his teacher began monitoring his identified SMARTS goal. Alex checked in with Devin and his teacher to ensure that both monitored Devin's behaviors regularly. In addition, the SMARTS website/app sent automated email reminders to Devin's teacher, as teachers' participation is so important. Devin desired attention, so it was important to focus on the positive things he did. Alex used SMARTS Bucks to reward regular monitoring of his identified goal, hoping it would increase that behavior.

Phase III

During Phase III, Alex began to process with Devin about the monitoring data that was accruing. Alex met with Devin regularly, once a week, during the processing phase. Between group meetings and processing, someone checked on Devin at least two times per week. During the monitoring phase, Alex worked with Devin to become self-aware of his behaviors and how his efforts impact his outcomes. In addition, Alex, in coordination with Devin, looked at how he assessed his behaviors and what factors could promote or detour from a successful day (i.e., sleep, peer issues, preparedness). The processing phase offered a great opportunity to use relational skills to promote Devin's autonomy, motivation, and progress.

Students within the group varied in their processing experiences. Some students exhibited high internalizing behaviors and could be very hard on themselves. Others, like Devin, displayed more externalizing behaviors, blaming others for their difficulties and frustrations. Regardless of the experience, the processing phase provided an opportunity to look at Devin's perceived efforts toward his goal along with what was happening in his various classes. Alex found that Devin was very sensitive to negative feedback and often saw himself as "never good enough." He believed his previous teachers did not like him and, in the beginning, had a difficult time looking at the discrepancy of data on some days and was often less cooperative with the teachers he thought did not like him. Devin's teacher championed for Devin, and the data indicated that Devin seemed willing to give more effort. He was assessed as successful with meeting his goals in class, unlike in previous years when Devin did not feel as connected to his teachers. The data Devin and his teacher provided were great insight into what made Devin shine.

Devin was given praise regularly throughout the processing phase while discussing outcomes openly and respectfully. Alex used specific praise to explicitly share with Devin the ways that he has strengths, strong efforts, and displays leadership. For students who have experienced trauma or mental health issues, the use of praise is fundamental to

offset difficult responsive behaviors. In addition, learning this information through the SMARTS intervention, the school gave a more coordinated effort to praise Devin intentionally and regularly in each of his classes.

Case Study: Student with Attentional Challenges

Remi is a fourth grader enrolled in special education at Rainbow Ridge Elementary. He was referred to participate in a SMARTS group because of scores on a universal screening measure indicating academic issues from ADHD behaviors and low ability for self-regulation.

SMARTS Fact

The average effect size of using a self-monitoring intervention with elementary students who exhibit attentional challenges is in the moderate to large range. Reid and colleagues (2005) found an average effect size of 0.83 for self-monitoring interventions used with elementary students with attentional difficulties.

Remi has experienced some significant familial trauma, leading Remi to live with his aunt. He is usually very talkative, and his enthusiasm, coupled with ADHD, often causes him to interrupt others and talk over others. Remi particularly struggles with group-work activities in lessons, as the other children become annoyed when they are interrupted. This leads to some conflicts with Remi's peers as they quickly correct him, which often feels like a form of rejection. Remi becomes extremely upset during disagreements with his peers and has had numerous incidents of verbal altercations and one incident of property destruction.

Phase I

During Phase I of the SMARTS intervention, Remi participated in a group to learn the SMARTS curriculum. Remi is aware that his ADHD symptoms are causing problems for him at school and at home and wants to work on a plan to help curb these impulsive behaviors.

Because of common problems with peers, Remi participated with two fifth graders and only one other fourth grader, instead of combining Remi with peers only from fourth grade who may be a distraction. This promoted a conducive group dynamic that allowed Remi to practice his new SMARTS skills. Because of Remi's peer frustrations, it was extra important to build a strong community within his group. Alex made efforts to utilize engaging ice breakers (i.e., Two Truths and a Lie; Would You Rather?; High/Low/Buffalo) that Alex thought would be engaging to Remi and other group members. Alex also maintained regular community check-ins, which gave Remi designated times that he could talk within the group, promoting successful engagement.

Remi and the rest of the SMARTS group helped to create a MOU to define group rules and expectations. Alex referred to these at the beginning of each group and as

needed because of adverse behaviors from Remi or others. These efforts are vital for students like Remi who have attentional challenges because they create a few clear, concise rules that can be referred to regularly. It can be especially beneficial for students with attentional issues to have a visual format of these rules, so printing the MOU to refer to at each meeting may be ideal. This structure provides an opportunity for Remi to participate and talk within the group, while also creating a well-thought-out way to redirect undesirable behaviors as necessary throughout facilitation.

It was important to provide a learning environment that was conducive to Remi's success. An environment with reduced distractions (e.g., other students, open doors or windows) helped keep him on track. Helping Remi to assess his needs and communicate preferences (i.e., individual or group work) in a conducive manner allowed him to focus. Alex reviewed with Remi what would happen in the group before each session. Alex also wrote the agenda in small steps, one activity at a time, to avoid overwhelming or distracting Remi's group participation. This advanced warning helped to ensure the communication of clear expectations and promote smooth transitions between activities.

Activities within the SMARTS program were adjusted to meet students' unique needs. For Remi, it was helpful to have sticky notes with the agenda written as a checklist to create a visual prompt for task completion. For others, having it written on the whiteboard is often helpful. The SMARTS curriculum offered opportunities for Remi to have choices, including picking different activities or story examples that may be of more interest to him. Giving Remi this voice and choice helped to increase his engagement and cooperation.

Alex used SMARTS Bucks to reward Remi, other individual group members, and the group as a whole. Remi's group wanted to use SMARTS Bucks in the Mini-SMARTS Store to "purchase" stocked items (i.e., Cheetos, Starburst candy, Rubik's Cubes, dinosaur pencils, and colorful pens). The group worked toward a goal together to earn group rewards and incentives. This provided a great opportunity for community building when they earned a donut party and some extra time outside for mindfulness activities. Remi and other group members enjoyed the extra time to play games and practice mindfulness skills as an incentive for their hard work and goal progress.

Phase II

During Phase II, Remi and his teacher began monitoring Remi's identified goal. Alex reminded both Remi and his teacher to ensure that both were monitoring Remi's progress regularly. The SMARTS website and app also provided email reminders to Remi's teacher to monitor Remi's goals. This is especially true for students like Remi, who can display significant ADHD symptoms. Remi desired attention and would make big efforts to get attention during the group sessions, and he would often get off track from the agenda. It was important to give Remi attention for things that moved him toward his goals and ultimate success. Alex worked to engage Remi by noticing his strengths and

efforts. Alex used SMARTS Bucks to reward the regular monitoring of Remi's identified goal, hoping it would increase those prosocial and focused behaviors.

Phase III

During Phase III, Alex processed with Remi about the monitoring data that accumulated. Between group lessons and processing, Remi had contact at least two to three times per week, with time to process at least once for 10–15 minutes each week. Truthfully, Remi could have benefited from being more consistent with monitoring his goal. Remi was restricted from his iPad and had to use paper forms for a short period of group participation. During this time, Remi lost a couple of the printed forms. A more consistent routine with paper forms, such as keeping them in one spot in the classroom or on a special clipboard, might have helped solve this problem. Ideally, both Remi and his teacher would have documented throughout every day to get a true representation of Remi's overall performance. Alex learned to make time during groups to remind students to monitor, and letting them enter their monitoring data at the beginning of groups was helpful to promote successful monitoring. Alex checked in with Remi regularly to encourage him and to use specific praise. This provided a great opportunity to use relational skills to promote Remi's sense of autonomy, motivation, and progress.

Students within this group varied in their processing experiences. Remi exhibited mostly externalizing behaviors, especially in the group. However, Remi was very hard on himself during one-on-one conversations. Alex processed regularly with Remi, which gave him the opportunity to look at his efforts with goal attainment along with what was happening within the classroom. Alex found that, with Remi, despite not enjoying reading, he received high marks in his writing lessons, probably because of both Remi's strengths in creative writing and his appreciation for how his teacher structured writing time. This information became helpful for school staff, as they utilized Remi's favorite subject in a couple of processing sessions that included his teacher and assisted in creating new opportunities for Remi to practice self-regulation through journaling, writing, and poetry.

Students like Remi, with attentional-challenging behaviors, may especially benefit from individualized attention during the processing phase. Remi received regular opportunities for attention by working toward his identified goals. Processing with Remi included conversations using SMARTS data to show certain times of the day that seemed to be more challenging and how sleep impacted his behaviors. Alex discussed strategies to promote success with the challenges of living with ADHD symptoms and gave attention to the efforts that Remi was making toward his goal and academic successes. Remi and other students benefited from receiving positive attention for their efforts. It was crucial to praise Remi intentionally and frequently throughout each phase, especially the processing phase. This provided a one-on-one environment to discuss data-driven observations, packaged heavily with positivity and praise. Alex praised Remi heavily for

participating in and following group norms and expectations, using specific praise to explicitly communicate ways that Remi and other group members displayed strengths, positivity, and robust efforts.

Case Study: Student with Internalizing Symptoms

Jasmine is a fourth-grade girl in the same class as Remi. She was referred to participate in the SMARTS groups because of scores on a universal screening measure indicating academic issues from a lack of classroom academic engagement. In addition, she scored low on her ability for self-regulation, and she often shuts down and avoids difficult topics and situations.

Jasmine seems to lack enthusiasm for her schoolwork and appears to hide from social engagement and strong academic pursuits. Jasmine currently lives with her mom, who has struggled with drug addiction in the past. Jasmine never knew her father but learned of his untimely death 2 years ago. Her grades have dropped since third grade, and she hasn't sought out solutions to make improvements. Jasmine's past and present teachers are concerned about her, describing her as quiet and sad. Her teachers believe Jasmine does not anticipate a bright future. When Jasmine gets upset, she typically cries and is very hard on herself. She often asks to go to the counselor's office, and her emotions overshadow her academic pursuits. Jasmine has a known history of foster care and depressive symptoms, and she recently engaged in her first instance of self-harm.

SMARTS Fact

The average effect size of using a self-monitoring intervention with elementary students who exhibit challenging behaviors is in the moderate range. Pendergast and colleagues (2017) found an average effect size ranging from 0.50 to 0.70 for self-monitoring interventions with students experiencing internalizing symptoms.

Phase I

During Phase I of the SMARTS intervention, Jasmine participated in a group to learn the SMARTS curriculum, identified a possible problem, and developed a goal to promote improvement. Having the group agenda written on the whiteboard each session was helpful to keep Jasmine feeling safe and informed. Alex was intentional in creating a structured, safe, and trustworthy environment and was mindful of her internalizing behaviors. This led to support and encouragement for Jasmine to help keep her on track. To run the group tailored to Jasmine's needs, Alex supported her to assess her own needs and communicate acceptable choices for comfortable engagement. Jasmine got to choose how much she shared with the group and what she shared individually with Alex. Alex did learn that Jasmine was a great reader and quietly had pride in this skill. With no other group member comfortable with reading aloud, Alex worked with this knowledge and asked Jasmine before the lessons if she was feeling up to reading the included

SMARTS stories or examples. Jasmine was praised for her efforts when she did. On days she wasn't feeling up to it, Alex respected her wishes and took on this task instead.

Alex made efforts to use ice breakers that felt safe for Jasmine, often letting other students share before asking Jasmine to share. Alex also typically prepped Jasmine prior to group sessions so she had time to think about what she wanted to share. Alex had regular community check-ins within the group, which created a safe and structured environment for Jasmine to share. The SMARTS group created an MOU to define group rules and expectations, using input from Jasmine and other group members. Alex was intentional to get group goals developed around confidentiality and respect for one another, which this group respected marvelously throughout participation. The MOU rules were referred to at the beginning of each group and as needed throughout facilitation. Alex made efforts to redirect behaviors quietly or privately, when possible, instead of drawing undue attention to Jasmine or other group members. This was especially helpful for Jasmine, who was sensitive to corrections and to what her peers were thinking about her. Alex made effort with Jasmine to review what would happen in the group session prior to it beginning. Alex would often prepare Jasmine for upcoming group activities and give examples of Jasmine's strengths that could be used in those group situations. This helped her to gain confidence. This advanced warning also helped promote smooth transitions between activities.

Activities within the SMARTS program were adjusted to meet the unique needs of students. For Jasmine, it was helpful to let her write down lesson activities and let other participants go before her in discussions. This allowed Jasmine to gradually gain comfort with group participation, offset her associated anxiety, and build her confidence. There are opportunities for these choices within the curriculum. Jasmine had input in various activities and stories that were of more interest to her. She loved the story of Diamond and Amy, as she had similar friendship issues. She also shared with Alex that she liked having these choices and creating feelings of autonomy. Allowing Jasmine and other group members to have this voice and choice likely promoted student engagement.

Alex used SMARTS Bucks to reward Jasmine for participating in groups and for giving attention to her identified goal. SMARTS Bucks were used to reward Jasmine and other group members individually and as a group. Jasmine used SMARTS Bucks in the Mini-SMARTS Store by "purchasing" stocked items, including chips, candy, hair clips, and smiley-face pens. The group worked toward a bigger community goal they identified, including some extra time in the group to talk and listen to music, as well as a donut party, which imparted great opportunity for community building. Using the incentive program tied to the SMARTS program was especially helpful for Jasmine, who often reverted to internalizing behaviors. Jasmine had experienced several difficult struggles in her childhood and was often very hard on herself. She would devalue the positive impact she could have on her world and on others. The SMARTS incentive program allowed an opportunity to reiterate Jasmine's strengths and how others appreciated her participation. Because Jasmine is sensitive to a lot of attention, Alex often waited to go

into detail in front of others. Alex would often praise Jasmine individually first and then with the group, per her comfort levels. This allowed Jasmine some control over the narrative others were hearing about her and did not put her as the center of attention, causing her discomfort.

Phase II

During Phase II, Jasmine and her teacher began monitoring Jasmine's identified goal. Alex wanted to ensure that Jasmine and her teacher would monitor regularly. Feedback is especially important for students displaying internalizing behaviors because they can often revert to a strong negativity bias and lack confidence in themselves. Offering Jasmine positive input and encouragement promoted her efficacy and success. It was important to meet regularly with Jasmine during the monitoring phase. Between the group lessons, processing, and additional one-on-one time before group, Jasmine had contact at least two times per week. This provided a great opportunity to build relational skills while promoting her autonomy, motivation, and progress.

Phase III

During Phase III, Alex and Jasmine processed the monitoring data that were accruing. Jasmine exhibited high internalizing behaviors and was very hard on herself. She rarely blamed others for her struggles, and her self-critique often paralyzed her. Students with internalizing behaviors, like Jasmine, may especially benefit from individualized attention during the processing phase to observe strengths and success. Jasmine and Alex sometimes met up to three times per week to get support.

Alex used the processing phase with Jasmine to praise her efforts and to compare her monitoring data with what her teacher reported. Alex found that Jasmine often rated herself lower than her teacher. Jasmine struggled to hear that she had a habit of withdrawing from classroom participation, which hindered her goal attainment. However, she improved in these efforts throughout participation. Information gathered through the processing phase helped to inform Jasmine's teacher about the importance of praise and encouragement with Jasmine. What seemed like a lack of interest was low confidence and self-worth.

Alex gave Jasmine regular positive attention for working toward her identified goal. Jasmine required comfort during some reporting periods when she did not feel things had gone as well as desired. In addition, Alex processed with Jasmine about her internalizing behaviors and had conversations using the data that showcased positive remarks made by her teacher and the extracurricular teachers when Jasmine was engaged in the classroom and about discrepancies when she was a tougher critic on herself than the teachers reported. Alex used specific praise to explicitly communicate with Jasmine about her notable strengths, positivity, and strong efforts. For students like Jasmine who

have experienced trauma or mental health issues, the use of praise is fundamental. These check-ins provided a great opportunity to use relational skills to promote autonomy, motivation, and progress. Jasmine showed some great improvement throughout the processing sessions. She adjusted her goal by increasing from 75 to 80% of the time and by adding specific coping skills that she could use to help promote her goal of increased emotional regulation. For Jasmine, the SMARTS intervention had a significant impact. Therefore, it was decided to continue monitoring Jasmine's goal and using the processing sessions through the end of the school year to promote continued success.

SUMMARY

Research suggests that an SM intervention is effective at helping students with externalizing, academic, internalizing, and other types of challenges. The research also shows that SM is helpful for students in lower- and upper-elementary grades and for older students. Although it is impossible to provide case studies for every type of student or scenario that would fit an SM intervention or how we would modify the intervention to fit a student's need, hopefully the few case studies we have provided show how SMARTS works, what steps are essential to making SMARTS work, and how it may need to be altered to fit different students' needs. SMARTS is designed to meet students' individual needs and can be modified to support all students, regardless of their needs.

RECAP OF ACCOMMODATIONS ALEX USED WITH MAC D'S GROUP

- Created a visible agenda for students to see on a whiteboard and on sticky notes.
- Met with some group members for regular check-ins, in addition to processing meetings.
- Kept the group size to only four students and picked group members based on current rapports and relationships among the students. For example, Devin needed to be in a group separate from someone in his class, and Remi was with a group that included only one other fourth grader due to potential peer distractions.