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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF MONITORING OF BEHAVIOUR
BY DELINQUENT GIRLS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

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ABSTRACT

The use of the methods of applied behaviour analysis to provide the basis of treatment programmes for delinquent youth has expanded over the past decade. These techniques appear to be adaptable to a wide variety of residential and community based settings. The token economy probably enjoys the widest use of all the programme alternatives. It has been found however, that when token programmes have been withdrawn, the maintenance of the behaviour change typically deteriorates. In an attempt to overcome this, self evaluation procedures can be an effective aid in maintaining behaviour after reinforcement contingencies have been withdrawn. This thesis reports on the introduction of behavioural self evaluation into a token programme with delinquent girls in a residential setting. In order to develop an accurate behavioural self evaluation and reporting procedure which established and maintained appropriate levels of behaviour, a matching procedure initially with contingent points for both accuracy of matching and behavioural performance was used. Girls rapidly learned to accurately assess their behaviour and maintain both assessments and behaviour at criterion levels. The matching procedure was withdrawn after criteria levels of 80 percent accuracy were maintained. Random checks that followed revealed accuracy and behavioural performance were maintained during periods of contingent reinforcement, and for a short period after reinforcement was withdrawn.

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