Precorrection:
A Step-by-Step Guide for Virtual Learning Environments

What is precorrection?
Precorrection is a proactive strategy to support behavior by identifying instructional contexts in which problem behavior occurs and making adjustments in advance to support appropriate behavior. Precorrection is used when teachers identify predictable times during a virtual lesson in which students may benefit from additional guidance or support. Precorrection can be as simple as reminding students before beginning the lesson of the expectation to "mute" themselves when someone else is talking or prompting students as they log into the virtual classroom to put other toys or electronics away before instruction begins.

How do I use this strategy in the virtual classroom?
In the table below, we provide the steps for how to get started with precorrection in a virtual learning environment. Following the steps are a few quick tips and two illustrations, one for an elementary age student and for a middle or high school age student.

Steps	Description
1	Identify a virtual learning activity or setting and anticipated problem behaviors.
2	Determine the expected behaviors.
3	Adjust the virtual environment to set students up for success.
4	Provide opportunities to practice expected behaviors.
5	Provide immediate and specific reinforcement to students engaging in expected behavior.
6	Develop a prompting plan to regularly remind students of the expected behavior.
7	Develop a monitoring plan to determine the effectiveness of the precorrection plan.
8	Offer students an opportunity to give feedback on this strategy.

Quick Tips for Success:
- Use an integrated lesson plan to identify opportunities to utilize this strategy in your lesson each day. An integrated lesson plan template is available at ci3t.org/imp.
- Post your virtual learning expectation matrix as your virtual background, so students can see the expectations unless you are sharing a different screen. A sample virtual expectation matrix is available at ci3t.org/covid.

- If utilizing break out rooms for group work, first share your screen with a slide of expectations for the specific activity and broadcast messages as reminders of the expectations.
- Review expectations often prior to activities where problem behavior may occur.
- Provide verbal or chat acknowledgements (behavior specific praise) to students who meet expectations. Keep in mind that some students prefer public recognition while others find private praise more meaningful. You can find additional examples and ideas for BSP in the virtual environment at ci3t.org/covid in the "resources for educators" section.
- To give students an opportunity to provide feedback, consider using the student social validity forms from ci3t.org/pl.

Using Precorrection in a Virtual Learning Environment

Example: With an elementary-age student…

Step 1. Sylvia is often late when coming back after a break during a virtual lesson. She is excited about the break and often forgets to watch the time. This causes a disruption in Sylvia's learning as she misses the initial directions and then has to wait a few minutes for her teacher, Mrs. Manley, to get the other students started and return to share the instructions with Sylvia.

Step 2. Mrs. Manley would like all students to log in on time for all virtual learning activities.

Step 3. Mrs. Manley reviewed the teaching she had done of this expectation. Mrs. Manley noted she was not providing a visual support to help Sylvia or the other students monitor their time. Sylvia's teacher decided to display a visual timer on her screen and share her screen during breaks, so students would have a prompt to help them monitor their time more effectively.

Step 4. Mrs. Manley scheduled a time to meet with Sylvia and her parents in the virtual classroom, after other students had logged out for the day. Mrs. Manley showed them the timer slide and practiced with Sylvia how she could independently manage her breaks by coming back to check her remaining break time on the screen. They all brainstormed different activities (e.g., using the restroom, getting a snack) that would fit in the amount of time on the timer.

Step 5. The next day Mrs. Manley put the timer slide up and privately messaged Sylvia to remind her of their practice the day prior. When Sylvia returned on time from the break, Mrs. Manley provided behavior specific praise. "Thank you for returning on time from your break! Look how much more time we have to learn together now!"

Step 6. Before the start of each break, Mrs. Manley privately messaged Sylvia to remind her of the expectation to return on time. "Have fun on your break, Sylvia, and remember to check the timer slide regularly so you return promptly for our next activity!"

Step 7. To see if the daily precorrection was helpful, Mrs. Manley timed how long after the timer slide ended it took for Sylvia to return to the virtual classroom after a break. Zero minutes meant that Sylvia was present when the timer reached zero minutes remaining. The teacher graphed the number of minutes she returned after the timer ended after each break to monitor Sylvia's progress for the next two weeks. The teacher also set criteria for reteaching in case this support was not enough to help Sylvia remember to return to the virtual class on time.

Step 8. At the end of the first week, Mrs. Manley met with Sylvia and her teacher. They reviewed her time to return to class, the asked Sylvia how she felt about precorrection and if she found the timer helpful to meet the expectation to return on time. Mrs. Manley also provided a social validity form to gather data from all students in the class.

Using Precorrection in a Virtual Learning Environment

Example: With a middle or high school student…

Step 1. Nathan was having a challenge during the math period. He would frequently get off task and use his phone during instruction. Other times, the teacher, Mr. Common noticed Nathan was watching other things on the screen as he was giving instructions.

Step 2. Mr. Common decided it was important that Nathan was focused during instructional time and when he was giving directions. Mr. Common wanted Nathan to meet the expectation of phones being away and out of sight during class to maximize instructional time.

Step 3. Mr. Common decided to let Nathan know he would support him in staying focused during instruction. "Hey, I noticed it might be hard for you to limit the use of other devices during class, especially when I'm giving directions. To help make sure you hear directions, I am going to remind everyone to put their phones away and to keep our class screen maximized when we're learning together." Mr. Common also made sure his virtual classroom expectation matrix was visible during this time which included the expectation to have phones put away unless they were being used for instruction.

Step 4. Mr. Common met with Nathan in a breakout room to talk about the use of precorrection to support his engagement. He informed Nathan that he would remind everyone to put away and charge their devices at the beginning of class to avoid distractions and be ready to work in groups after instructions. Nathan and Mr. Common practiced the procedure of putting away and charging his device at the beginning of class. Mr. Common gave Nathan the opportunity to put his phone away and show where he would put it during class time. Nathan now had a plan for where to leave his phone during instructional times.

Step 5. Mr. Common thanked everyone for being fully engaged in the virtual classroom and having all other devices and distractions put away. He also noticed Nathan was paying attention to his directions. Mr. Common sent Nathan a private message saying, "Nathan, thank you so much for being fully engaged in this lesson and having your phone away! You asked very thoughtful questions that I think will benefit the whole class!" Mr. Common continued to provide behavior specific praise to the class, as a whole, and Nathan, individually, when he

could tell students were fully engaged and had their phones or other devices put away with statements such as, "Thank you for having your phones away and looking at our class screen as we go through the discussion. I appreciate you giving me your full attention!"

Step 6. To remind Nathan before the beginning of the day, Mr. Common greeted him as he logged on the call and noticed Nathan had the class screen pulled up. "Good morning Nathan! Thank you for being ready on our main screen today and having your phone charging for use later, we will be doing some visual practice I think you'll enjoy!"

Step 7. Mr. Common and Nathan talked about a plan to check on how the reminders worked to support Nathan to stay more focused in class. Nathan tallied on a post-it next to his computer when he kept his devices put away the whole instructional block, unless used for instruction. Nathan shared this with Mr. Common at the end of the day, and they talked about how it was working.

Step 8. After a full week, Nathan and Mr. Common reviewed how Nathan did with the new precorrection plan. They decided to make some adjustments, as Nathan did not need any prompting at the beginning of the day anymore, but still needed a reminder later in the day when there were more tasks assigned and Mr. Common was giving instructions. Mr. Common asked Nathan to complete a social validity form using an online survey tool so they could gather data on his opinion about precorrection. His teacher continued to provide precorrection to all students before providing directions.

Watch a brief introduction to precorrection here and watch the updated video for virtual learning environments here.

Reference: Austin, K. S., Lane, K. S., Pérez-Clark, P., Allen, G. E., Oakes, W. P., Lane, K. L., Menzies, H. M. (2020, August). *Precorrection: A step-by-step guide for virtual learning*. Ci3T Strategic Leadership Team. www.ci3t.org

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