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Parenting Wisely: Child

Parent Group Curriculum: Instructor's Guide

Parenting Wisely™
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Introduction

Several controlled evaluations have demonstrated that Parenting Wisely on its own without the involvement of a therapist can achieve strong clinical outcomes. This raises an interesting question. If the program is quite effective on its own, could clinical outcomes be enhanced if the program is used by a competent clinician seeking to engage parents more deeply into the content of the program? One advantage of having strong treatment content delivered automatically by the CD, is the service provider's attention can be freed up to focus more on engagement strategies and such things as warmth, empathy, responsiveness and humour, which research has identified as important therapist variables for creating therapeutic alliance and promoting effective outcomes. The purpose of this curriculum and instructors manual is to give service providers a number of methods for engaging families more deeply into the therapeutic content of Parenting Wisely. The curriculum is written as a guide for conducting group-based parent training, but it can also be used as a guide for doing individual work with families either in clinical sessions following parents' use of the Parenting Wisely program on their own or as a session by session guide where the parent and service provider could use the CD-ROM program together.

Individual Work with Families

Many parents are not willing to participate in a group-based program. The Parenting Wisely program is versatile and can be used by parents in a number of different ways. In our centre after initial contact has been made with a family we frequently set up an appointment for the family to use the Parenting Wisely program on its own before the family returns for their second appointment with a therapist. Our experience suggests that parents tend to be more willing to discuss their parenting methods after using the program, as it helps to convince them their children's behaviour and their parenting practices are connected. Individual work has the advantage of proceeding at what ever pace is needed by the parent. Individual use of the program immediately after first contact is also advantageous if the family drops out of treatment prematurely since they will already received a strong dose of an evidence-based intervention.

This early use of Parenting Wisely often results in fairly quick improvements in child behaviour and family functioning. About 50% of the time there is a substantial improvement on child behaviour measures a few weeks after parents have used Parenting Wisely (Kacir and Gordon, 1997). These improvements are sometimes due to subtle changes in parent behaviour that can occur without the parents making a conscious effort at changing their behaviour. Unfortunately the parents do not always report this improvement anecdotally nor do they attribute the gains to their use of the Parenting Wisely program. This can be a problem. If parents do not attribute the improvements to their use of the program then they are less likely to maintain these improvements long term.

We find it helpful to have parents complete an objective outcome measure at first contact and then again a few weeks after they have used the Parenting Wisely program. If there is a discrepancy between the parent's anecdotal reports and the outcome measure we point this out and ask parents to reflect on what might have led to this improvement. One spontaneous improvement we often see is parents tend to yell less frequently at their children following use of Parenting Wisely. If parents are asked to reflect on this they often acknowledge they are yelling less frequently. We also ask parents if they are feeling more confident in their parenting. Many parents then state that they are more confident because they now have a greater number of options for dealing with difficult behaviour. If a parent is more confident in their use of effective discipline their children are less likely to test them. Quite a few parents tell us they did not learn much that was new from the program but they found it affirmed many things they already do. For some parents using the CD may prompt greater use of effective parenting skills. It is important for parents to be made aware that their attitudinal and behavioural changes account for the child's improvement otherwise these gains are less likely to endure.

It is important for the family to be given a copy of the workbook. In the research conducted on Parenting Wisely families were always given a copy of the workbook and encouraged to use it. Service providers should work at becoming very familiar with the content of the workbook so that they can instruct and discuss this material with parents and give home practice assignments. For families who will not show for office appointments the program can be taken into the family home on a laptop. If the therapist has strong engagement skills this can decrease dropout rates substantially. This has the advantage of giving the service provider an opportunity to observe the family in their natural environment plus it can increase the generalization of skills to the family's home.

The group curriculum can be used as a guide for conducting individual sessions using the CD together with parents. Service

providers should be cautious in their interactions and not interfere too much as the parents use the CD, as this may cause defensiveness and to stifle discussion among family members. Individual use without a therapist is especially helpful for parents who do not quickly form a trusting relationship with therapists, as their defensiveness when using the program with a therapist's assistance may impair their learning. It may be better to wait for family members to invite input from the practitioner. When practitioners are present we have found that it often takes as much time to use the CD and curriculum individually with parents as it does to complete the program in parenting groups. After each individual session is completed the parent should be given a specific home practice assignment either from the curriculum or from the workbook to be completed before the next session. If parents do not complete the home practice service provider should avoid communicating disapproval or that the parent has in some way failed. The service provider can explore what happened that interfered with the home practice and do some problem solving around completing the assignment or come up with a better plan for the next assignment.

Once a skill has been mastered in the home environment you can increase treatment generalization by having the parent practice the same skill again in other settings such as a store, a park or at a grandparent's home. In some cases, the highest risk families may need up to 50 to 60 hours of supportive intervention to become adequately adept in using effective parenting practices. Service providers who are using the CD with parents in individual sessions should feel free to change the order of material covered to meet the most pressing treatment goals of the parent.

Conducting Role-plays

There are more opportunities for role-plays when practitioners are working individually with families. Role-plays provide opportunities for the parents to practice skills and provide the practitioner opportunities to assess how well the parent understands and can apply the skills being taught. The tone used in engaging parents in role-plays needs to be positive and supportive without being condescending. Avoid prompting parents' anxiety by making statements such as, "this may feel awkward or uncomfortable." It is better to acknowledge these feelings after the role-play is completed, when you praise and thank the parents for participating in practice that will increase the effectiveness of the program. Although some parents may express hesitation about role-plays if the practitioner acts in a confident matter of fact manner most parents can be enticed into role-plays with little difficulty. Practitioners can provide an additional rationale for role-plays by pointing out that it is a good idea for parents to practice skills before they try them out with their families. It also may be helpful to explain that knowledge based on information or head knowledge can often be superficial. For example you can't learn to ride a bike or learn how to climb mountains by reading a book. There is a behavioural dimension to these skills that can only be learned by experience and practice. The Parenting Wisely program seeks to teach parents a type of knowledge or wisdom that is based not on information but on what they do. With parenting what you know is not as important as what you do.

The steps in conducting role-plays are covered in chart I. In setting up role-plays practitioners and parents can refer together to various skills described in the workbook. The workbook introduces each skill by describing the purpose of the skill followed by a list of Advantages of how the skill will benefit parents and their families. Next the skill is broken down into numbered How to use steps. The workbook then provides several examples of the skill. It is often a good idea to use the scenes depicted on the CD-ROM for the role-plays. These visual examples will be fresh in parent's minds. Using practice related to the scenes will likely help parents to remember what they are being taught. The practitioner should play the role of the parents first to demonstrate the skill while the parent plays the role of the child. After modeling the skill the practitioner should review each step of the skill demonstrated in the role-play. The parent should be given another opportunity to ask questions before it is their turn to practice the skill. Especially in the beginning parents should be given constant encouragement for each step in the role play. The practitioner should not point out any errors or omissions. Instead the practitioner should enthusiastically praise each component of the role-play the parent did correctly. Then parents can then be asked to repeat the role-play and make it even stronger as the practitioner prompts the parent to add in the missing component.

Chart I: Steps for Role-Plays

1. Discuss purpose of skill with parent
2. Discuss advantages of skill
3. Discuss steps of skill
4. Practitioner demonstrates skill in role-play
5. Practitioner reviews the steps covered in role-play
6. Parents has opportunity to ask questions
7. Parent practices skill in role-play with practitioner providing frequent encouragement and enthusiastic praise for each step
8. Practitioners should ignore any mistakes or omissions
9. Practitioner prompts parent to add in any missing components in a second role play to make the skill even stronger.

In two parent families parents can be encouraged to praise and encourage each other in order to develop a positive and supportive relationship with each other. In role-plays parents frequently focus on what their partner did wrong or missed. The practitioner should interrupt any criticisms by saying, “We can practice that later, right now let focus on what _____ did right.” After the parent praises what was done correctly the practitioner should summarize what was done well. At this point the parents can be asked to do the role-play again and the practitioner prompts them to add in any steps that were missed previously. After each role-play parents are again encouraged to praise each other on what they did well. Parents can be prompted to give specific positive feedback: “OK dad, was mom specific, was she immediate, did she show enthusiasm? Yes she did a great job on all those things. Give her a hug.”

Child Maltreatment

For families where there are concerns about child maltreatment individual use of Parenting Wisely is appropriate as immediately as possible after these families are first identified by child protection agencies. Individual use of Parenting Wisely has been shown to reduce use of violence in families for both children and spouses (Rolland-Stanar, Gordon, & Carlston, 2001). Immediate individual use of the program is an ideal starting place for a more comprehensive family intervention. Individual use has been shown to decrease family stressed which may play a critical role in child abuse. Parents who maltreat their children frequently misinterpret child as being personally and deliberately being malicious towards them. Individual use of Parenting Wisely can quickly address these cognitive distortions. The communication and problem solving skills may also reduce the likelihood of family violence. A second more intensive use of Parenting Wisely either with a practitioner who has developed competence in individual work with families or in a group setting will help to maintain reductions in child maltreatment.

Facilitating the Group Program

Most people who dropout of group do so prior to the first session. This dropout rate can be reduced substantially if parents receive a home visit prior to the group to establish rapport and to go over the rationale for the group program (Szapocznik et al, 1988). Providing snacks may help promote attendance. Mid week phone calls to check in with the parents can substantially decrease dropout.

When first leading groups we suggest you review the material on the CD on your own before each session. This will help you to interact with the program more effectively during the class. Look for places where you can highlight important points. As parents are engaged in discussions generated by the CD you can look for natural opportunities to discuss some of the session material described in this curriculum.

One person can effectively run groups, but having 2 leaders is ideal. When you have two group leaders it may be preferable to sit on opposite sides of the group to facilitate eye contact and non-verbal communication. A male and female leader is best for mixed groups of parents. Father attendance is greatly increased when the entire group is composed (and advertised) of fathers, and of course led by a father.

Before watching the problem video you may wish to have a brief discussion of problems parents have encountered in their own families that are related to this session. You should try to keep this discussion brief, as there will be many opportunities for discussion throughout the class. Poll the class as to which of the solutions they would be most likely to use with their family. Let parents know they cannot always tell which choice will turn out to be the most effective solution. The program was designed to promote discussion not as a test where parents should be able to identify the correct solution prior to watching the video segments. The class should always watch at least one of the ineffective solutions before moving on to the correct solution. You may wish to tell parents they will often learn more by watching the ineffective solutions rather than just the effective choices. You can also point out that all parents have their bad days where we make ineffective choices.

You do not need to click on all the definitions throughout the course, but we recommend you do so at least six times at different times of the course. After the parents are more familiar with the program you can ask the class to define some of the terms first and then click on the definition to check for accuracy. The definitions include audio examples, which will help parents see how the skill is implemented. These examples are more easily retained than the definitions for most parents. As you move through the questions don't always expect a quick correct answer. Play the devil's advocate at times to promote discussion. If a particular question has already been adequately discussed, acknowledge this and proceed immediately to the next question.

Group leaders can occasionally use self-disclosure to help normalize the frustrations we all have sometimes in dealing with children. I tell parents that there have been times when I have been angry and yelled at my children. There have also been times when I have given punishments even though I had not been clear and specific about my expectations ahead of time. This may appease my anger, but it is not an effective approach to parenting. It may be a good idea to describe times where you tried a recommended strategy and it failed. You can role model how you coped with failure and describe other things you tried to deal with that situation. Self-disclosure about personal weaknesses should not be used too frequently as it can undermine your credibility.

When a parent asks questions or poses difficulties, you may defer answering right away and ask if the group has any thoughts on that question. You want to communicate that you are confident, knowledgeable, but not arrogant. The professional does not always have to have the "right answer." Letting group members provide good answers empowers the group and increases their participation. Look for opportunities to empower parents whenever you can. When group members do make good contributions reinforce their statements and invite other parents to comment on what has been said. Praise that comes from other parents often has a stronger reinforcing effect than praise from a therapist. Empowering parents helps to increase their self-confidence and therefore their effectiveness with their children. This sense of empowerment encourages them to endure and stay involved with their children during difficult times.

It is wise to keep didactic sections relatively short as too much teaching can increase resistance. Look for opportunities to intersperse teaching with group discussions. Some indirect teaching can be done by telling stories of your work with other families or how you have used these types of strategies in your own life. Discussion questions have been put into bold type

to help group facilitators locate and uses these questions to promote group discussion.

Be cautious about confronting parents as this usually leads to the person dropping out of treatment. Usually a better tactic is to be empathic and commiserate with parents about how frustrating and difficult their situation is. While being empathic avoid labelling anybody in the family as deliberately malicious. Try to reframe conflicts and problems as victimising everyone in the family.

Group leaders should give parents a check in phone call shortly before each class. You should avoid giving the impression that you are checking up on home practice completion, although a phone call does increase accountability. Let parents know you are calling to check in on how their week is going and to see if they need clarification or help with the home practice assignment. This is also an ideal time to troubleshoot any problems, as parents don't want to be seen as incompetent in front of the group, so they will appreciate your help when you call. If someone misses a session a phone check in can significantly increase the chances that the parent will return for the next session. When calling a parent who has missed a class or who is not completing home practice assignments, assess the parent's engagement. It is often helpful to refer to the parent's goals in treatment that are recorded in the first session as an engagement strategy. If you can articulate how the next class is relevant to these goals the parent will be much more likely to attend. Parents are also likely to see your call as a sign you care about them.

Engagement Strategies

Parenting Wisely is deceptively simple looking. As an engagement strategy I tell families about 50% of parents report significant improvement after using the program individually. Since the program can be done so quickly it is a good place to begin treatment. I don't tell parents that a 50% success rate at achieving significant change this quickly is unheard of, as this may strain credibility. Your enthusiasm and optimism about the program is very important to motivate parents to take the program seriously.

The tendency of some parents to prematurely dismiss the program as being too simplistic can be problematic in a group setting as cynicism is contagious. Other parents may also adopt a critical outlook in order to avoid appearing naive. Service providers therefore need to have a number of strategies for dealing with cynicism. The following are a number of strategies I have used when responding to negative comments:

The ineffective solutions are obviously wrong and silly. No parent would make those mistakes.

It is OK if parents are critical of the ineffective choices but sometimes this kind of statement will stifle discussion from other parents about errors they have made and sometimes this kind of statement implies that the program as a whole is too simplistic and therefore not helpful. I sometimes respond by saying that I have known some parents who have responded to their children in that way or I myself have made that kind of response on a bad day. I also tell parents that it is relatively easy to spot the more effective intervention in our class, but when parents are in the middle of a heated exchange with their children, the most effective approach is not so obvious. If we were to watch a video of our own parenting many of us would be surprised to see errors that were not apparent to ourselves during the moments we made them.

The effective solution is too simple. It would never work with my children.

One way to respond to this kind of statement is to ask the parent to show you how their child would respond differently. This is an ideal set up for you to enter into a role-play with you playing the role of the parent. As you demonstrate a skill the parent can often experience himself or herself being drawn into a more positive response. This can be a very powerful tool for increasing a parent's awareness of the value of recommended strategies. If parents remain cynical it is best to not press the issue and move on.

If caregivers are still resistant I let the subject drop for a while, but later in the session I may describe some of the more extreme defiant behaviours of children I've treated in the past who made remarkable gains after their caregivers completed the Parenting Wisely program. The group leader's optimism that caregivers can make substantial gains with their children is correlated with significant change (Dishion & Kavanagh, 2003).

You can reduce this kind of resistance a head of time by warning the group about prejudging the program. You might state that none of these solutions will work every single time, but these strategies have been shown to be successful with a large number of children and families. In the effective solution I point out all the little things the parent did right. I emphasize that it is the combination of strategies that make the difference. I tell parents numerous people have told me they were reluctant to try a recommended approach because they have tried it before and it did not work. To their surprise, these parents report the parenting strategy worked beautifully when combined with some of the other strategies taught in the Parenting Wisely course.

My child would never respond that easily. My child is way more defiant than that.

It is helpful to explain that some children, and more teens will not respond positively when parents first start using these new skills. They may be hesitant to trust the positive changes they are seeing in their parents. It takes repetition and perseverance before children will trust these changes are real. If a parent is very pessimistic their most difficult child would respond to a recommended strategy ask them to practice first with another less difficult child or family member.

I don't agree with this. The way I'm raising my child is just fine.

Many parents already have strong views and beliefs about child rearing, about what does or does not work, and how children should be treated. Some parents will find their beliefs clash with the principles and skills taught in Parenting Wisely. It is usually unproductive to try to convince parents they need to change their beliefs. Instead it is better to change parent's behaviour in role-plays by prompting and shaping behaviour gradually over time. The following is an example from Allan Kazdin (2005).

As an example of the challenge, one father at the clinic I have mentioned said, "I am going to keep beating my child until he learns not to get into fights. My father beat me and it worked with me; it will work for him (my child) too." This is a common view we encounter at the clinic, and it illustrates the point. The irrationality and veracity of the statements are irrelevant (but interesting). The boy was referred to the clinic because of endless fighting at school; as to whether being beaten worked with the father – not very plausible. He physically abused the boy, beat his wife regularly (but never touched a young daughter), and had been in jail for 3 months for beating up a neighbour and brandishing a gun somewhere during this episode. The father had deeply held beliefs about child rearing and practices accompanying these beliefs.

Having stated the challenge, I hasten to add this obstacle can be surmounted. In parent management training, we do not try to persuade parents to believe differently or challenge their views. Some brief comments convey arguments against a child rearing practice that is counterproductive, but we emphasize shaping what parents actually do in the home. For example, the abusive father beat his boy at least once a day, with only rare exceptions. We trained the parents to use time out from reinforcement. The mother agreed to try the procedure and the parents and therapists practiced using it in the session. Yet, practice in the session, however intensive, would seem unlikely to change the daily corporal punishment from the father. Also, asking the father to understand, mend his ways, and have new insights, in my opinion, represents a naïve view of how human behaviour changes.

We began implementing time out by having the father choose a day when he would not beat the child-the easiest day when this might be completed. (We asked the father to choose only a half-day, but he said he could do a whole day). With phone prompts (a reminder) to the father and praise (in response to his statements of what he did in relation to the program), this strategy proved to be immediately successful and was extended to more days. When punishment was provided, it was a 5 minute time out. The father was brimming with new insights and changed attitudes, and he was proselytizing the deficiencies of beatings one's children. (We have encountered these reactions scores of times: insight, attitude change, and proselytizing that *follow* behaviour change. Indeed, many of our parents end up being "proselytutes." They advocate quite extremely about how inept and abusive parenting is and how parents ought to behave differently.) (Kazdin, 2005, p.190-191).

It is best to be proactive in dealing with resistance by bringing up some of these issues before the parents do. Once a parent has made a critical statement trying to teach or confront will usually increase resistance and dropout (Patterson & Forgath, 1985). Instead group leaders should focus on being empathic and communicating support.

Service providers will gain more credibility and have a better appreciation of the subtlety of the Parenting Wisely program by practicing and incorporating various skills into their own lives. Taking several weeks to practice problem solving in family meetings will help service providers appreciate the challenge of learning a new skill as well as see the practical benefits of that skill. Parents are more likely to try new strategies if they can see the group leader clearly believes in a recommended approach.

Focussing on the parent's goals in treatment is a basic engagement strategy. The parent's goals should be written down so that the service provider will have an accurate record to refer back to. Although the parent should define most of the treatment goals, treatment strategies need to be evidence-based and are to a certain extent proscriptive. At the same time planning out home practice assignments needs to be negotiated in as collaborative and respectful way as possible, with the therapist continually checking in with the parent to see if the recommended strategy makes sense and giving the parent opportunities to make choices. It is counterproductive to get into a power struggle with the parent over a recommended approach. If the parent is opposed to using a point system try setting up a contract instead.

Ideally group leaders should be quick on their feet at being able to articulate how a recommended strategy will help the parent to obtain their goals. It may be helpful for service providers to memorize a number of the Advantages listed in the workbook for each skill. For example, if one of the parent's goals is to increase their child's respect for parental authority the two skills which are the most directly related are Active Listening and Assertive Discipline. We tend to have more respect for people who are accurate and empathic listeners than we do for people who totally misunderstand what we are trying to communicate. Kids will have more respect if their parents consistently follow through with what they say and use discipline that the child sees as fair. If you can convincingly articulate how learning and practicing these two skills can help parents achieve their goals, that will make engagement easier.

All schools of psychotherapy have seen empathy as critical for promoting engagement. Empathy is the ability to perceive the internal frame of reference of the other person's perceptions and emotions. When the service provider makes guesses about the meaning or the underlying feelings of their clients they are role modeling Active Listening and empathy. The use of empathy will help the parent to feel accurately understood which promotes confidence and trust in the service provider. Empathy is a skill that service providers can enhance by practice and repeated use.

When service providers are struggling to engage families they sometimes console themselves by attributing the problem to the parents who they view as being lazy, unmotivated or uncaring. When practitioners are struggling with a difficult case their colleagues and supervisors often communicate support by blaming clients for being difficult and not motivated. While well intended, this blaming does not encourage the practitioner to empathize with parents and develop better engagement strategies. A more benign interpretation of problems with engagement is to see the parent as simply not understanding the connection between parenting and problem child behaviour or not understanding how a recommended strategy would help their particular situation. Parents are often threatened by the idea that they need to change and also feel guilty that they did not parent their children better.

Another more positive interpretation of engagement problems would be to view the parent as feeling so demoralized they find it difficult to believe that anything they do would have a positive impact on their child. Depression (more likely for single, low income mothers) causes cynicism and reluctance to try anything new. To cultivate empathy it can be helpful for the service provider to imagine themselves as being in the parent's shoes trying to see the world as the parent see it both emotionally and cognitively. It is important to remember these families often experience numerous adversities and defeats in their lives and yet continue to have worthy hopes and dreams for their children.

The therapeutic relationship inherently implies some degree of judgment. Seeking help involves telling your story and having a professional assess, or make a judgment, about your strengths and weaknesses so they can offer guidance. Some parents are sensitive to being judged due to a history of critical feedback from social service agencies.

Service providers should seek to provide a rationale for a recommended parenting strategy that does not blame the parent for the family's problems. Blaming clients for their problems, even if the problems are largely self-imposed, does not facilitate engagement and has been shown to lead to dropout. Patterson and Chamberlain have shown that when therapists respond to caregiver resistance with teaching or confrontation parental resistance increases. When therapists responded with

nondirective support parental resistance decreases (Patterson and Chamberlain, 1998). Decreasing parental blame is one of the primary objectives of the content in session 1 and 2 of the group program. Discussing the interactive nature of child behaviour problems and wider systemic influences of peers and the school system helps to decrease parental blame. The good and bad supervisor exercise from session 2 also helps to illustrate the systemic nature of behaviour problems in a way that is less blaming to the parent. In individual work with families I often begin with the content of the first 2 sessions of the group program as a way to establish a rationale for focusing on parenting strategies without blaming the parent.

Strategies that provide clients with immediate benefits early in treatment have been called “gift giving,” (Cunningham & Henggeler, 1999). Reducing a parent’s sense of blame is one gift. Other gifts include normalizing the family’s problems and feelings, increasing the parent’s sense of hope and the experience of a trusting and understanding relationship with the service provider. The development of more effective parenting skills and concrete gains in the child’s behaviour early in treatment are also gifts that can promote engagement. Therefore the service provider should focus on small obtainable goals early in treatment, such as increasing the child’s compliance with chores. Covert problems such as lying and stealing which are difficult to monitor should probably be dealt with later in treatment.

The Engagement/motivation phase of Functional Family Therapy uses numerous cognitive reframes to interpret family attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours in more positive and less malicious ways (Gordon, 2003). Reframing family interactions has been shown to decrease parental resistance. Reframing family interaction and reductions in resistance have both been shown to predict changes in parent behaviour. Changes in parents behaviour has been shown to predict improvements in children’s behaviour (Beauchaine, Webster-Stratton, & Reid, in press; Patterson & Chamberlain, 1994). Therefore it will likely be useful for service providers to memorize a number of these positive reframes which reduce blaming and promote engagement:

Child Behaviours Reframed for Parents¹:

Sibling conflicts: seeking attention, kids are bored, or jealous

Curfew violations: wanting to be with friends, parents are upset because they are worried

Not doing homework: too difficult, child lacks confidence, low on priorities, embarrassed to ask for help, peers pressure child to not do homework

Child talks back to parent: need for independence, child showing they can think on their own, practicing their debating skills, may be imitating an argumentative parent

Child curses parent: does not know how to put their feelings into words, wants some space or privacy, seeks attention, imitation of others in the family who curse, immature impulse control

Child avoids being at home: feels more comfortable with peers, trying to reduce family conflict

Child hits parents: poor impulse control, does not know how to put feelings into words, afraid

Child hangs out with peers the parents don’t like: wants to make own decisions, seeks approval from others.

Parent Behaviours Reframed for Children:

Parent nags child to be more responsible: wants them to succeed later, may have unrealistic expectations for child’s maturity or age, wants children to feel sense of pride

Parent is uninvolved with children: parent needs space, is under pressure, parent does not know how to be involved without being controlling (did not learn from own parents), respects children’s privacy

Parents yell at children: parent is tired or frustrated, parent cares too much, takes their job to give guidance and

1 From Gordon (2003).

teach maturity too seriously, has learned that yelling works to get things done

Parent hits children: does not know other methods, believes children need spanking, parent is frustrated and does not know how to put their feelings into words, learned this from their parents and never questioned it

Marital conflict: parent is unaware it is upsetting to children and not paying attention

Parent is overly controlling: parent is trying too hard to make sure child is safe or behaves properly, learned this from their parents, parent is too attached to their child, cares too much, parent has a hard time trusting

Parent calls child names: temper control problems, hopes to shock the child into behaving well, learned to do this growing up

These cognitive reframes may initially confuse family members but eventually help them to see each other in a more compassionate light. This skill may be somewhat difficult for novice practitioners, and even some experienced therapists, and will likely require conscious practice.

Another barrier for engagement is the parent's feelings of hopelessness that arises from the parent's perception that what they do seems to have no positive impact on their child. Parents may also feel hopeless because of past experiences of failure when working with mental health professionals. Maintaining a strength focus emphasizing what is good about the parent and the family, as opposed to focusing primarily on problems, has been shown to promote engagement. Service providers should seek out opportunities to praise any effort, success or "small win" on the parent's part. Research has shown that frequent use of praise is a strong and under used motivator.

Problems with engagement may also occur if the parent views the service provider as not likable or as incompetent. Attempts by the service provider to prove that they really are likable or competent are doomed to failure. The perception of competence is something service providers can earn by being accurately empathic about the family's understandings of their problems and by suggesting interventions that create small but quick gains early in treatment. If the service provider has the sense the family has reservations about competence or does not like the therapist a good tactic is to openly ask about this in a humble and respectful way. Many families will deny that they dislike the service provider or view them as incompetent. Usually the family's behaviour immediately improves after this type of discussion. If the family does identify concerns about the service provider it is counter productive to argue about this. In this situation, Cunningham and Henggeler (1999) recommend service providers affirm the family's perspective and ask for the family's cooperation to assist the clinician in correcting the problem. Sometimes an apology can be a very effective way of promoting engagement. For example if the family states that service provider is being too bossy, the therapist can acknowledge this possibility, state that they have no desire to act in this way and that being too bossy is not productive. The service provider could ask the family to provide a signal to communicate when the therapist is becoming too bossy in the future. This approach communicates openness, humility and constructive problem solving.

Sometimes cultural and racial differences can impede engagement. Middle class professionals may have difficulty connecting with families that have very different values than their own. For example some parents may not place their child's success in school as being a high priority. It is preferable to use service providers who have experience working with particular ethnic communities or who may have grown up in or in close contact with that culture. These people can help bridge parts of the program that might need some modification for a particular ethnic group.

Some types of parent behaviour such as physical abuse, sexual abuse and domestic violence are understandably repulsive to service providers. Expressing anger towards the perpetrator may feel good to the therapist, but it will not promote engagement and may block opportunities for collaborative work that will decrease the chances of abuse in the future. Service providers should try to enter into the parent's view of the world and try to understand how that worldview might be connected to the abusive behaviour. Collaboration is not the same as condoning. If service providers become aware that a child's safety is in jeopardy developing a safety plan is always the first priority. Service providers should follow appropriate guidelines regarding reporting abusive behaviour. Developing rapport under these circumstances is challenging. Service providers need to keep in mind their wider goals, as developing a collaborative relationship to focus on parenting is often the most effective way to decrease the probability of future abuse.

Dishion and Kavanagh conducted research on parenting classes to identify those factors that predicted significant improvement. The two factors that showed the strongest association with gains in treatment were therapist optimism and the therapist's ability to reframe parent's hopeless complaints in ways that were conducive to change:

For example, the therapist would respond to a parent's negative monologue about her adolescent son, Jerome who she feels has a bad attitude about work, much like his recalcitrant and absent father.

"Sounds like you've run into a wall with trying to get Jerome to help around the house. This is pretty common around his age. It may seem strange, but we may have to teach him how to be more cooperative. Let's see if what we talk about today is going to be helpful."

In this way, we help the parent move from an understandable place of hopelessness to one of putting in the work to make a family change. The implicit message is, "Jerome can change. He needs to be taught, like any child," (Dishion & Kavanagh, 2003, pp 137 - 138).

Management Strategies for Difficult Situations

Parents who talk too much: This issue can be addressed by having the parents discuss group rules one of which is to have people share discussion time. Another tactic is to create a list of discussion topics to be covered each session on a presentation board. The group leader can refer to this list to help bring discussion back to structured topics. Another strategy is to ask the overly talkative parent to help monitor discussion time to ensure there is adequate time to cover structured topics. If one parent speaks at length about a topic that is not relevant to the other parents, you can tell the parent that this is important issue and you can deal with it in a more adequate way at the end of the class or with a phone call. Look for opportunities to draw out quiet parents. You could preface a question by asking for a response from someone who has not spoken yet.

Negative demoralizing stories: Sometimes parents share "war stories" that can leave the group feeling demoralized and pessimistic about change. The group can be prompted to make suggestions on how to respond or prevent similar situations in the future. If the discussion continues to generate discouragement the group leader should move the discussion to a new topic.

Conflict between parents: Sometimes minor conflict between different members of the group can be ignored, but if the conflict escalates the group facilitator should ask to have separate meetings with the parents outside of the group. After the conflict has been addressed the parents can be asked about what they could do so that they can both stay in the group. This puts the responsibility for dealing with the conflict back on the parents.

This is often an effective strategy, as most parents will want to continue to be in the group. Sometimes conflict occurs between partners. If this is causing problems for the group then a meeting with the parents outside group should occur. The group leader can use the problem solving process to come up with a contract on how the parents will deal with conflict in the group.

Intense displays of emotion: During a group that lasts for 10 to 12 weeks it is not unusual for someone in the group to experience a crisis of one kind or another. A marriage may fall apart, a parent may lose a job or someone in the family may develop a serious illness or even die. Usually group members should be able to share these concerns with the group. Other group members will often respond with sympathy and support. The difficulty for the group leader is to bring some closure to this emotionally charged experience and return to structured material. One way to do this is to let the group know that if people want to talk more, they can do this at the end of the group. To communicate support the group leader can offer to set up an individual appointment or to make a referral. In one group I was leading a woman began to cry because she was the only parent who had not seen any improvements with her child as the group progressed. Expressions of support from other group members was not helping so my co-facilitator took the woman out of the group to speak with her individually.

Treatment Fidelity and Flexibility

We live in a culture with excessive amounts of information. Providing group participants with large amounts of supplementary

material may be counterproductive. The presentation of information on its own often has little impact. Doctors routinely advise their patients about the importance of exercise. Research has shown, however, that this good advice has no substantial effect on patient behaviour. The information in this course is strategic in nature. Most of the information on the CD and in this curriculum is aimed at increasing parent's motivation and decreasing resistance to learn specific skills that have been shown to prevent and treat behavior problems in children. More is not always better. Research has shown that when consumers are given information on three different cameras they often can make a competent decision about which camera is the best choice for them. If consumers are given information on 100 different cameras they often can not meaningfully process this much information and usually make a poorer choice with their purchase (Schwartz, B., 2004; Schwartz, B., Ward, A., Monterusso, J., Lyubomirsky, S., White, K., & Lyubomirsky, S., White, K., & Lehman, D., 2002). Adding in more information to the Parenting Wisely program, even if it is good information may not improve outcomes. Instead focussing on improving the delivery of information will likely enhance outcomes. Two resources on this are Motivational Interviewing and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (see Recommended Reading below).

Although maintaining treatment integrity is important this does not mean that group leaders should read session content from the group curriculum or from the workbook word by word. This in fact would be a bad idea, as it would undermine rapport. Rigidly following a curriculum has been shown to decrease significant change (Dishion and Kavanagh, 2003). Group leaders should personalize the information putting it into their own words and give examples of the use of various skills from their own lives. Even very experienced clinicians will feel awkward and clumsy when first using a new program. Repeated use of Parenting Wisely over time will help clinicians to express core concepts adeptly in their own words in a way that is responsive to parent initiated discussion.

If parents have issues that have arisen during the week, group facilitators should spend time addressing these concerns. To promote generalization it is a good idea to ask parents to reflect on whether skills they are learning from the program might be relevant to incidents that occurred during the week. If discussions become too freewheeling other parents may feel too much time is being spent on peripheral issues and they will appreciate the facilitator's efforts to return to structured content. An effort should be made to cover the main topics of each section.

Recommended Reading

Alexander, J.F., & Parsons, B.V. (1982). *Functional family therapy: Principles and procedures*. Carmel, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Forgatch, F. & Patterson, G., (1989). *Parents and adolescents: Living together, Part 1 and part 2*, Eugene: Castalia Publishing Company.

Henggeler, S., Schoenwald, S., Borduin, C., Rowland, M., & Cunningham, P., (1998). *Multisystemic treatment of antisocial behaviour in children and adolescents*. New York: Guilford Press.

Henggeler, S., Schoenwald, S., Rowland, M., & Cunningham, P., (2002). *Serious emotional disturbance in children and adolescents: Multisystemic Therapy*, New York Guilford Press.

Hembree-Kigin, T.W., & McNeil, C.B., (1995). *Parent-Child Interaction Therapy* New York: Plenum Publishing.

Miller, W.R., & Rollnick S., (2002). *Motivational Interviewing*, New York: Guilford Press.

The first four books are either treatment manuals or cover the basic program content for Functional Family Therapy, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care and Multisystemic Therapy. These are the programs that have currently achieved the strongest outcomes in treating children and youth with severe behaviour problems. Service providers who have oriented and educated themselves in these treatment approaches will have a better understanding of the treatment approach used in Parenting Wisely. This should help clinicians to present material in a more flexible way, which will stretch the Parenting Wisely program to its full potential. Facilitators who are well grounded in evidence-based treatments should be able to achieve remarkable outcomes.

Parent Child Interaction Therapy was developed by Sheila Eyberg and is an approach where practitioners teach and coach parenting skills while the parents does nondirective play with their child. This approach has been shown to reduce rates

of recidivism with families of young children where there are concerns of child maltreatment. Motivational Interviewing describes techniques for increasing rapport and therapeutic alliance and decreasing resistance. Motivational Interviewing is content neutral. These strategies have been shown to improve outcomes for a broad range of treatments.

Facilitator Self-Monitoring Form

After each session there is a facilitator self-monitoring form that can be photocopied and filled out at the end of each class. Group leaders should not feel compelled to check off every item. There will be times where it will not be possible to cover all the recommended topics and it is likely unrealistic to make use of all the general facilitation skills in one session. You should view the self-monitoring form as a tool for increasing skills related to positive outcomes. If you are in a supervisory role you can use the facilitator self-monitoring form for enhancing the skills of the people working under you.

Process of Certification

The purpose of certification is to increase the skills of group leaders and to maximize the quality of program implementation; with the ultimate goal of achieving outcomes similar to the original evaluations of the Parenting Wisely group program. The process of certification utilizes self-evaluation, peer evaluation and evaluation from Family Works. Group facilitators who wish to become certified should contact Family Works at familyworks@familyworksinc.com or bpushak@shaw.ca. The fee for certification is \$450.00 US. This fee covers review of videotapes, supervisory report, registration process and certificate of certification.

The process of certification includes:

- Three days of initial training by a certified trainer (training fees are not included in \$450.00 certification fee).
- Completion of facilitating at least two parenting groups (each group must last at least 9 weeks in duration)
- Submission of 2 videotapes of the applicant leading groups. The second tape should be from a different session and submitted after receiving feedback on initial tape. The criteria used for feedback in video submissions is identical to the co-leader feedback form below. We suggest you review your video using this form to ensure you have adequately covered these items. Please send a tape of the entire session from introduction to conclusion. Please do not send more than one tape or bits of several sessions. Make sure the tape shows the group leader being evaluated and not the parents or a co-leader. The person being evaluated should take responsibility for leading the entire session. Please clearly identify the person being evaluated.
- Submission of parent client satisfaction forms from two groups
- Submission of parent attendance from two groups (parent names should be omitted)
- Submission of facilitator self-monitoring forms from each session of two groups.
- Submission of co-leader evaluation form from two groups (see form below). We recommend completing this form be an ongoing process over several group sessions
- Obtain satisfactory summary report from a Family Works certified trainer.

Co-Leader Feedback Form

Engagement and interpersonal skills:

1. Was leader able to establish rapport with each member of the group:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

2. Encourages discussion from all group members:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

3. Communicates optimism that parent's efforts can lead to productive change.

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

4. Communicates encouragement and support:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

5. Listens well and is responsive to parent's discussion and concerns:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

6. Is able to use humour effectively:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

7. Is culturally sensitive:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Group Management Skills:

1. Follows an agenda and makes good use of pacing and timing:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

2. Establishes ground rules for group:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

3. Prevents and manages resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

4. Prevents and manages conflict:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

5. Reframes negative interpretations of other people's motives:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

6. Is able to interrupt unhelpful discussion in a non critical way and refocus on core content emphasizing a positive perspective:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

7. Please comment on the nature and severity of management difficulties presented with this group:

Teaching Skills:

1. Is well prepared for group:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

2. Emphasizes the importance of home practice assignments and reviews assignments in class:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

3. Demonstrates good knowledge of content covered in session:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

4. Provides rational for skills taught:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

5. Teaches without lecturing or being authoritarian. Uses teaching methods that engage parents in the process of learning:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

6. Avoids teaching in connection with confrontation. Communicates support if providing corrections:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

7. Connects parent initiated discussion to principles taught in course:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

8. Makes use of role-plays. Clearly describes skill. Breaks information into teachable units. Demonstrates skill. Prompts parents and praises performance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

9. Predicts problems parents may encounter in using skills:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

10. Summarizes group discussion:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

The Types of Youth Who Are Appropriate for This Program

Many of the strategies covered in this course were originally developed to treat or prevent the development of clinical behaviour problems, delinquency and substance abuse problems in children and youth. This course can actually cure some disorders listed in the DSM IV diagnostic manual such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder (CD) or for some younger children even Reactive Attachment Disorder. At the end of treatment most youth no longer meet diagnostic criteria for these ODD or CD. This course, however, will not cure neuro-psychiatric disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or Bi-polar Disorder, but the program can decrease the secondary behaviour problems that frequently accompany these disorders. The program is also appropriate for use with families where there are concerns about child maltreatment. The methods taught in the program have also been shown to be beneficial for most families in general, and will prevent the development of behaviour problems in the future.

Evaluation

Although it takes a little more time to do evaluations of the effect of this training, the benefits are well worth it. Parents often underestimate the progress they and their children make, and getting the feedback from pre and post testing will keep them from abandoning the more effective skills they have learned. The feedback will also increase their confidence in their parenting and let them know where work is still needed. The evaluation will provide invaluable feedback to group facilitators and administrators, for without objective feedback, we are unlikely to be able to improve our service delivery. Evaluation will also make sustainability funding much more likely. Research shows that evaluation improves program implementation and effectiveness.

Materials Needed

You may use either the CD or videotape versions of the program. The CD version of the program is preferable as it allows the group to make choices as to which solutions will be viewed and pacing discussion will be easier. There is some optional content included in the curriculum, which makes use of British teen version of Parenting Wisely. There are demo versions of Parenting Wisely that contain portions of all the different programs that service providers or foster parents can obtain through the Parenting Wisely web site (www.parentingwisely.com).

A multimedia projector is the ideal way to view the program in a group setting. A screen or a blank wall can be used as a surface for projecting the picture. If a projector is not available an s-video cable can be used to connect a laptop or desktop to a television screen. The clarity of the picture is compromised slightly when a television is used with a computer. A desktop computer can be used to lead groups but the written content of the program will be difficult to read. Parents can refer to their workbooks, which contain the written material from the CD. Using a laptop without a projector is not likely to be suitable for leading groups, as laptops usually need to be viewed at a 90-degree angle for the picture to be seen clearly.

Each parent participating in group should have a copy of the Parenting Wisely workbook. Photocopies of handouts need to be made for each session. Group facilitators should have access to a flipchart or a presentation board and appropriate felt markers. Pens will need to be available for parents to fill out demographic and outcome data.

Administrative Keys for Shortcuts

You can skip the video clip in the original American PW version by pressing the Fn Pause/break key or Ctrl Pause/break. For the UK programs, and the upgraded American Teen program (fall, 2003) (UK Teens, Young Children's Version, and Foster and Residential Version) you can navigate more quickly through the question and answer screens in a problem and through the quiz by simultaneously pressing the "Ctrl" and "M" keys. This will allow you to skip review questions and questions in the quiz. You can also skip a video by pressing the "end" key, and you can access the quiz and main menu buttons from within a problem by simultaneously pressing the "Ctrl" plus "A" keys.

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Session 1

Protection & Risk Factors – The Six Principles of Effective Parenting

Introductions

Briefly introduce yourself, mention your background and experience in working with families. Often parents will want to know if you are parent yourself, so this is a good time to share this information. If you are not a parent this may not be the best time to say so. Instead you could answer this later when the question arises spontaneously after you have already established some credibility with the group.

An optional exercise for introductions is to have parents split into groups of 2 with people they do not know or do not know very well. Parents can take two or three minutes to find out each other's names, how many children they have, what they like about being a parent and what they find most challenging about being a parent. People can then rejoin the larger group and briefly introduce each other.

Parents should fill out demographic information, the ECBI, and any other outcome or diagnostic measures. It may be desirable to have some articles for parents to read while they are waiting for other parents to finish up. Cover introductions and amenities. Parents should all receive a copy of the Parenting Wisely workbook. This workbook will be needed in class for most of the sessions.

Agenda

On a presentation board write out an agenda for the content that will be covered in today's session. Having an agenda will assist you in covering planned content and provide an opportunity to refocus discussions that might not be relevant or productive.

Goals of Treatment

Have parents write down their treatment goals for the class and hand in. Ask parents to be very specific about what their priorities are for treatment. Writing down the parent's goals can be helpful for dealing with possible resistance later in the course. Some parents may have trouble identifying achievable goals. Common goals most parents will agree to are: increased respect among family members, decreased conflict, increased cooperation, increased support, increased maturity and trust.

Group rules

Have parents contribute to a discussion about group rules and confidentiality. Some of the rules you wish to establish are communicating respect by having only one person speak at a time, not monopolizing the discussion time and being on time for the start of group.

Risk and Protective Factors

Ask parents to discuss the various factors they see as contributing or causing behaviour problems in youth. You can write parents response on a presentation board. If parents are having a difficult time coming up with ideas you may prompt them by asking about factors within the child, factors within the family, factors in school, factors in regards to peers and factors in the community or society at large.

Give handout for session 1 on Protective and Risk Factors and discuss. Some points to highlight here are:

- Parents not necessarily to blame for child's problems, there are important contributing factors that may have nothing to

do with the parents.

- Kids, however, are not necessarily to blame either. There are multiple factors that may contribute to behaviour problems in kids.
- Harsh and inconsistent discipline is associated with child behaviour problems for both biological and adoptive parents. Parents may have learned harsh discipline from their parents, who may not have been the best role models.
- This course will cover some material on psychiatric disorders such as ADHD, which sometimes contribute to behaviour problems in children. Psychiatric disorders are partially genetic and run in families. Both the parents and the child may have a psychiatric disorder or a sub-clinical disorder that may contribute to family problems.
- The report lists risk and protective factors in order of predictive power. The research on relative contribution of various factors is not definitive. It is interesting to note, however, that the strongest family predictor of child behaviour problems is poverty. Poverty does not directly cause behaviour problems. Poverty creates significant stress for the parent and parental stress frequently undermines effective parenting. Poverty does not predict child behaviour problems in Scandinavian countries. These countries have a stronger social support programs which decreases parental stress. This illustrates that it is parental stress rather than poverty itself that is the real problem. This also illustrates that child conduct problems have multiple causes which are systemic in nature and popular views about the causes of behaviour problems are often too simplistic.

Have parent's rate the possible significance of the various factors in the handout from 1 to 10 in regards to how they see these factors as relating to their child's behaviour. It may be useful to photocopy these sheets, place them on file and then return the originals to the parents. If parents list psychiatric conditions or depression as risk factors check to see if these are being adequately treated either with medications or cognitive-behavioural treatments. If there are several parents who share similar risk factors, for example depression, than you may wish to add a session where you discuss cognitive-behavioural strategies for treating depression.

Handout for Session 1: Flow Chart of the Interactive Nature of Behaviour Problems in Children

This handout is fairly long and somewhat abstract. With parents who have lower cognitive ability you may choose to not give out this handout at all. Instead you could just present the information on a presentation board adapting the discussion to the cognitive level of the parents and making frequent check ins to see if parents are understanding the material and if it fits with their experience of how their children's behaviour problems have developed over time. The purpose of this exercise is to highlight the interactive nature of child behaviour problems and why treatment needs to focus on parenting and the child's social environment. This exercise illustrates how parents and other individuals in the child's life can become ensnared in ways of interacting with these children that feed into the child's problems. Part of the purpose of this chart is to decrease parent's sense of being blamed for causing their children's behaviour problems.

Point out that often children with behaviour problems have a difficult temperament, which makes it more difficult for parents to interact with their children in a positive way. The concept of temperament refers to characteristics the child is born with. Not all children with behaviour problems start life with difficult temperaments, but many do. Some of these children are more irritable, moody, oppositional and aggressive in nature than their peers. After a while parents may become frustrated and tired which leads to the parent becoming more negative and irritable with their children. This creates a negative loop that tends to perpetuate negative interactions between the child and their parents. You can illustrate this by drawing a dark spiral between the child and the parent.

You can add to the flow chart by showing how stress on the parent can exacerbate negative interactions between the child and parent. Some of the more common sources of stress are financial problems, marital problems, employment problems, poor health or psychiatric conditions. This stress will increase the parent's irritability in interacting with their child and the stress may also directly affect the child. A parent who is preoccupied with other problems in their life will find it difficult to attend to effective parenting.

Having a child with behaviour problems can increase social isolation because the parent is embarrassed by the child's behaviour in public. Parents under stress who are socially isolated are more vulnerable to becoming depressed. Maternal depression is relatively common in families with children with behaviour problems. The child's behaviour problems will exacerbate parental depression and depression can feed into behaviour problems in the child. Depression decreases the parent's energy to deal with the child, causing the child to act out to get the parent's attention. A depressed parent will

perceive their child's problems as being worse than they really are, causing the parent to alternately withdraw and overreact with harsh punishment.

This illustrates why individual treatment for the child is not likely to be effective. The most effective treatments for child and youth behaviour problems focus on changing the social environment around the child through parenting, family therapy or by changing the social environment at school. The most effective treatments systematically target protective and risk factors that surround the child.

Children with easygoing temperaments can be raised by extremely dysfunctional parents and still turn out OK. The parents of an easygoing child can bark at their kid to do their chores and the child will do their chores. The parent does not resort to overly harsh discipline to force the child to behave. These children are seen as being likable and they form positive relationships with people outside their families that have a protective effect on their lives. These children are amazingly resilient; they bounce back from negative experiences. Children with behaviour problems, however, are not like this. These children are often more temperamental and defiant. Their parents need exceptional skills to decrease conflict and help steer their children away from risk factors.

Parents are not the only ones who can become trapped into spiralling negative interactions with these children. Research has shown that many teachers at school often become ensnared into similar negative interactions with this group of kids. Research indicates that there is a discrepancy between how teachers interact with the best-behaved children in their classes and how they interact with children who have behaviour problems.

Something similar can occur with peer relationships. Over time positive peers tend to withdraw from relating with children with behaviour problems. Children with behaviour problems tend to be attracted to and to associate with other children with behaviour problems. Association with negative peers is a strong predictor of future conduct problems, delinquency and substance abuse problems. If for some reason a child who has behaviour problems does not become connected with deviant peers, then the child's behaviour problems tend to be stable and to not increase during adolescence.

The same patterns of negative interactions are often repeated with other adults in the child's community. Research has shown that other children's parents are quick to become negative in interactions with children who have behaviour problems. This course will cover strategies for improving children's behaviour at home, in school and with peers. It maybe helpful to review this chart several times during the course in order to emphasis that effective treatment needs to target systemic factors in the child's social environment.

The Six principles of Effective Parenting

There are 6 principles that research has shown can increase the effectiveness of parenting (Barkley et al, 1997). These can be written up on a presentation board and left on display for all of the sessions so that they can be referred to frequently in class discussions.

Specific	Immediate	Consistent
Meaningful	Balance	Frequent

Specific: Telling children you want them to behave well in general often has little impact. Being specific about expectations increases parental effectiveness. Telling a child that they need to make their bed, put their dirty cloths in the laundry hamper and put their clean cloths away into their drawers is usually more effective than just telling the child to clean up their room. Being specific can save you a lot of arguing later about whether the chore was done adequately. Being vague with threats of punishments is also less effective, for example telling a child he/she will be in "big trouble," if they haven't cleaned up their toys is less likely to be effective than saying, "you need to put all of your Legos away in this before you play with something else. If you do not do this you will not be able to watch TV for the rest of the day." Families that have few clear rules are more likely to have children with behaviour problems.

Consistent: If your child must always eat their vegetables before having desert your child will likely cooperate with the rule most of the time. If you are inconsistent with this rule your child will test you more looking for the exception. Nobody is

100% consistent but this is an important goal to strive towards because it can make family life so much simpler and easier. Parents should strive to be consistent enough that their children would be willing to bet ahead of time on how their parents are going to respond.

Immediate: The more immediate rewards and praise are the more effective they tend to be. Some children, especially young children, may not see the connection between their behaviour and a delayed reward or punishment. Being immediate helps make this connection clear. Sometimes negative consequences, however, can and should be delayed. If the parent is very angry they are likely to be too extreme in their punishments.

Frequent: Parent should pick their battles and not target everything at once. Parents should focus on their priorities and increase the frequency of their use of praise, smiles and consistent rewards and sanctions for these priorities.

Balance: It might be helpful to use a bank balance to illustrate this principle. Punishments and criticism represent withdrawals and positive interactions represent deposits. Parents cannot successfully use punishments or withdrawals if they are not first making deposits and building a positive relationship with their children. If parents are only having negative interactions with their children the relationship will become emotionally bankrupt. It is recommended that parents strive for a ratio of 4 or more positive interactions with their children for each criticism or punishment. This ratio can produce remarkable improvements in children's behavior.

Meaningful: Rewards or negative consequences that are effective for one child may not be effective for another. Parent need to search for rewards and consequences that are meaningful to their child. If a child makes a request for something then parents immediately know they have a meaningful reward that the child could earn. Children sometimes become bored if they receive the same rewards repeatedly. Parents should seek to vary the rewards they use over time.

Handouts

Protective and Risk factors

The Interactive Nature of Behaviour Problems

Home practice

Point out that regular attendance and completion of home practice increase the likelihood of parents seeing strong improvements in their children's behavior

If there are any outcome or diagnostic measures that still need to be filled out ask the parents to complete this at home. Let the parents know these tests will help the group leaders have a better understanding of their child's difficulties and may help detect additional factors that need to be targeted in treatment. You should commiserate with the parents that this is a chore, but this will help them receive more thorough help and a summary of their progress down the road.

Ask parents to discover three examples of how they can think more positively about their children. This is a cognitive exercise, which can be done in class and as home practice, which should lead to increased praise for their kids, or decreased defensive parenting.

Ask parents to experiment on their own with the 6 principles of effective parenting to see if this makes any difference in how their children respond.

Ask the parents to use the parent daily discipline report (PDR) that is included floppy disk that comes with the Parenting Wisely program for at least 5 days. This will help parents to be more accurate in monitoring the frequency of poor behaviour. Most parents tend to over estimate the frequency of inappropriate behaviour. The form will also help parents to be more conscious of how they respond to negative behaviour.

Is there anything parents can think of that would interfere with their ability to complete home practice assignments? If there is, what kinds of things have they done in the past to minimise these difficulties?

Ask parents to give feedback on amount of home practice in course: we want parents to do home practice because it makes the class more effective, but we do not want parents to dropout because of too much home practice.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 1

- ☐ Consent to treatment and pre-test outcome data collected and checked for being correctly filled out.
- ☐ Parent's goal's in treatment collected.
- ☐ Group discussion on the causes of behaviour problems in children.
- ☐ Six principles of effective parenting discussed.
- ☐ Importance of home practice and need for skill practice explained.
- ☐ Parenting Wisely workbooks distributed.
- ☐ Home practice assigned:
 - ☐ Identify 3 positive qualities of child
 - ☐ Experiment with 6 principles of effective parenting
- ☐ Handouts distributed.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to establish rational for parent training which decreased parental defensiveness?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 2

When Children Act Up in Public Redirection, Planning Ahead and Nondirective Play

Debrief Home practice

At the beginning of each session it is a good idea to allow some time to discuss events that occurred with families during the previous week.

Ask parent to share about the three ways of thinking more positively about their children.

Ask parents about their experimentation with the 6 principles of effective parenting: specific, immediate, consistent, frequent, meaningful, and balanced.

If possible do a role-play with parent regarding any problems or objections. The facilitator takes the role of the parent and the parent would play the role of the child. This gives the parents the opportunity to identify where they may have had difficulty.

If parents have not completed their home practice exercise you should not make this an issue or communicate that parents have in any way failed. Therapist confrontation usually leads to dropout. Lack of home practice completion may be a sign that the parents are not engaged in treatment. With these families try to ensure that you make a supportive phone call before the next session and focus your discussion on the engagement strategies described in the introduction.

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Acting Up in Public: Mum takes her two young children to the store to buy groceries. Her daughter, Shona, pleads loudly for Mum to buy her some treats, and Mum doesn't want to give in to Shona.

Many of the questions and discussion material in this section can be inserted in a flexible way into discussion that arises in response to the CD. You should not feel compelled to cover all of the questions and material below.

Question: What kinds of problems are parents likely to encounter with their children in public places? Point out that these kinds of problems are often fairly predictable, but most parents do not think ahead and come up with plan for dealing with problems. When parents are responding to a child who is already misbehaving in public this is a very difficult time to think of a good plan. Since the parent probably feels embarrassed they are more likely to overreact in anger as this mother does in solution 2.

Click on [Redirection](#) and examples.

Click on [Time Out](#) and examples. If Time Out is being used effectively at home then parents can also use it in public settings. Time Outs do not need to be as long in public as children usually find this embarrassing and unpleasant, which makes the Time Out more effective. ½ to one minute per year of the child's age is adequate.

Click on the definition of [Praise](#) and play examples.

Question: Is it possible to over use praise? Will children become conceited or spoiled by frequent praise? The opposite is true. Research shows that effective parents are not stingy with praise and encouragement.

Question: Shouldn't praise be reserved for exceptional performances? Research has shown that increased use of praise leads to substantial improvements in performance. Parents, teachers and therapist all tend to forget to make use of frequent

praise.

Some people find it difficult to give praise without adding on a critical comment. For example, “I really like it when you pick up your toys. Why can’t you do this all the time?” The added criticism does not accomplish anything and reduces the power of the praise.

When parents focus on praising and rewarding positive behaviour they are being excellent role models. If parents focus on the positive their children will be more positive in interacting with others. People who focus on the positive ways tend to receive more affirmation from others. If parents are critical and sarcastic their children are likely to be critical and sarcastic too.

Frequent specific praise is an excellent reward for small tasks when children are learning something new. Parents should praise each small step the child makes. More tangible rewards can be used when the entire task is completed.

One way to increase the impact of praise is to combine it with a hug or a kiss.

When good behaviour is taken for granted it often disappears. For example decreases in affirmation and expressions of affection in the first 3 years of marriage is the strongest predictor of which marriages will eventually fail. This predictive power is still strong even if the divorce comes after 30 years of marriage. We should never take our children or our spouses for granted.

Ensure you display the solution where nondirective play is demonstrated. Click on the definition of Nondirective Play and play examples.

Sheila Eyberg uses the acronym PRIDE to teach the components of nondirective play.

P = praising the child’s behavior
R = reflecting the child’s statements
I = imitating the child’s play
D = describing the child’s play
E = using enthusiasm

Point out Shona’s mother’s use of these componenets

The kind of imaginative play that Shona is doing is related to the development of creativity and it helps children to learn how to think symbolically. Pretending to be someone else helps children learn to see other people’s point of view and to have better understanding of other people’s emotions. Children who never do this kind of play with adults tend to have poor social skills.

Point out the physical contact the mother makes with her daughter and how the child seeks out this contact.

Good supervisor/bad supervisor exercise²

After completing the CD-ROM material for this session draw a line down the middle of a blackboard or a chart. On one side write out “best boss” and on the other side write out “worst boss”. Ask the parent’s to recall the characteristics of the worst supervisor, or worst teacher they ever had and write these down. Then ask the parents to describe the characteristics of the best supervisor or the best teacher they ever had. This list will likely have some overlap with the six principles of effective parenting.

Ask parents if the type of attention they received by these supervisors had any influence on their motivation to perform for these individuals. Now ask the parents where they think their children would place them on a continuum between the best and the worst supervisors. Point out that sometimes, through no fault of their own, parents can inadvertently end up being cast in the role of the worst boss. The negative behaviour of the child elicits negative responses from the parent. When this

happens everyone in the family is the victim of ongoing negative interactions. As this process continues the children may end up doing the equivalent of going on strike, because they lose motivation to work for and to please their parents.

Today's home practice assignment is a relationship enhancement exercise, which will help increase the reward value of parent's attention. Improving the parent child relationship will help children be more motivated to work for and please their parents. Let parents know this assignment often does not produce big immediate results, but it is foundational for the rest of the course and will make the rest of the course much more powerful.

I encourage parents to increase the amount of physical contact they have with children by telling this story. In Eastern Europe back in the 50s many babies and children were placed in orphanages. Many of the children in these orphanages would become sick and die. In one orphanage, however, there was one wing of the building where the incidence of sickness and death was dramatically lower. Officials were puzzled about this for sometime. Eventually it was discovered that one of the women who did janitorial work in the building would pick up crying babies and cradle them on her hip as she continued her work. This physical contact dramatically lowered the rates of sickness and death for these children.

Research has shown that physical play between fathers and their sons and daughters is correlated with the child's ability to have healthy peer relationships. Mothers can do this type of play as well, but it is more common for fathers to initiate this type of physical play. Physical play with children is important; it teaches basic skills for making and playing with friends.

Father's involvement with children is also associated with a tendency for children to have better emotional regulation skills for both boys and girls. This may be related to the fact that many, although not all, fathers tend to be more firm with discipline and the child has to learn to control his or her emotions to gain privileges and avoid negative consequences. Both mothers and fathers should work on being consistent and firm with discipline to promote better emotional control skills. Indulgent parenting tends to produce children who have more trouble controlling their emotions.

One of the most powerful rewards caregivers can use is positive one to one attention with their child. Children also, however, find negative attention very rewarding as well. When you argue with your child this can have an unintended effect of rewarding the child's behaviour with very intense one to one attention. So it is important for caregivers to keep discipline simple and concise.

Of the various mental health child treatments strategies available to us this intervention is associated with the strongest long-term results if parents incorporate parent/child play an ongoing routine with their children. Parent/child play is associated with lower rates of delinquency, substance abuse problems and psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety problems. Parenting programs that focus only on behavior management produce immediate results, but the effects tend to fade over time. Increasing parent's use of nurturing activities however, has been shown to be crucial for maintaining strong long-term positive effects.

Praise role-play

Review the purpose and Advantages from handout on How to Make Praise More Effective and write out the 4 How to use: steps for praise on a presentation board for the parents to refer to during the role-play.

Use the scenario of Shona shopping with her mother for the role-play. (Get out of your seat and stand close to the person who is playing the role of Shona). Demonstrate the 4 steps by praising Shona for staying close to you while your shopping for groceries and helping you by looking for bread and some milk. Using an enthusiastic tone of voice the dialogue might proceed like this:

"Excellent Shona! You found the milk. I'm so pleased. You have been staying nice and close to mommy. You haven't touched anything on the counters just like I asked and you were able to help mommy find both the bread and now the milk. You are such a big help to me. It is so nice to have you along when I'm shopping." Smile warmly at Shona and give her a pat on the back.

If you miss a step during the role-play stay in character and finish up the role-play before pointing out the step you missed. Review your use of the four steps in the role-play, "Ok, I immediately praised Shona right after she helped me to find the

milk, I was enthusiastic and I increase the effectiveness of the praise by touching Shona and patting her on the back.”

Have the parents split into groups of 2 to do the role-play. After the role-play ask partners to praise the person playing the mother for everything they did right and to ignore any mistakes or omissions. If you hear any criticisms interrupt stating, “We will have time to practice that later, for right now just focus only on what _____ did that was right.” Have people exchange roles so they both have a chance to play the role of Shona’s mother.

Since this is the first role-play in the course keep this practice brief. Later in the course when people are more comfortable with role-plays you may have people repeat the role-play a second time after prompting them to add in any omissions to “make the skill even better.” After the role-play is over you can acknowledge that many people are reluctant to do role-plays. Enthusiastically praise and thank the parents for being willing to do the practice. Let them know that this type of skill practice will greatly increase the effectiveness of the program.

Question: What should parents do if their child does not respond well to praise? For children who are not used to this kind of positive attention parents should increase the children’s exposure to praise. One way to do this is by letting their children overhear their parents praising the child while speaking to someone else.

Warn parents to not judge the program too quickly. Parents should try out strategies in good faith and postpone judgement of the merits of these strategies until the end of the program. You can let parents know that some resistance to learning new things is normal. New skills usually feel awkward when they are first used.

Handouts for session 2

Nondirective Play
Physical Play with Children
How to Make Praise More Effective
Dealing with Children in Public

Home practice

Ask parents to select one behaviour they would like to see more of and to greatly increase their use of praise for this behaviour.

Nondirective Play

- Ask parents to spend 15 to 20 minutes in nondirective play with their child daily, if possible, or 3 to 5 times per week.
- Parent can introduce this time by saying “I have 20 minutes free and I’d like to do something with you, what would you like to do?”
- Parents should not control activity or conversation. Play is one activity where children can legitimately have some power and control. Adults should not take this chance to have power away from the child. Parents can practice active listening, which is covered on page 76 in the workbook (Active Listening will be covered in more detail later in the course). It is better to avoid asking questions, as many parents will try to indirectly lead or control the conversation by their questions. Questions are a form of command, which create an expectation for the child to perform. Innocent cocktail party-like questions that communicate interest are okay or questions where you simply are trying to understand what the child is saying.
- Parents can pretend they are a sports broadcaster giving a play-by-play description of child’s play. Younger children tend to really like this.
- Tell parents to ignore minor misbehaviour. If the behaviour becomes more problematic parents should end the nondirective playtime. The parent is to tell the child their behaviour is not appropriate and they will play again another time. Let parents know that it is very rare for children to act out during Nondirective playtime. Occasionally, however, there are children who will act out as soon as their parents pay more direct attention to them. This is more likely to happen in families where children tend to be neglected by their parents. The children are enjoying the increased attention of the Nondirective playtime and they are acting out because in the past they have learned this is the best way to ensure the attention will continue. If a parent brings this up I attempt to make my response less

critical by stating this is something I occasionally have seen in other families and I add that this may not be relevant to this parent's situation. A better way to handle this situation is to make this comment early before a parent brings it up.

- Parent should not worry about teaching the child rules or the right way to play a game. Children tend to not understand the idea of permanent rules until they are about 7 or 8. It is okay to let the child cheat or to let the child win. Look for ways to have the child experience success. Children do not need practice in learning how to lose.
- Watching TV does not count as a Nondirective play activity. Shona's play with little people is an ideal nondirective play activity. Some other activities that work well are playing with building blocks, cars and trucks or dolls.
- Have parents problem solve in advance about what to do with siblings. If there are other siblings present, they will likely be very jealous of the extra attention that parents are giving to the target child.
- Parents should record what they do during special time in their journal along with how their child responded and bring this to the next session.

Optional Home practice assignment: Dealing with Children in Public

For this home practice assignment parents are to take their children on a bogus outing where the sole purpose of the trip is to practice the strategies described below and report on this at the next class.

1. Before entering the public place the parent should go over the rules for appropriate behaviour in this place. Some examples of rules might be: "stay close to me," "do not badger me to buy you something," and "do not touch things in the store." The child should repeat these rules back to the parent. On future visits to this place the parent can ask the child to recall the rules.
2. Establish an incentive for appropriate behaviour. If you are already using a point system the child can earn points for good behaviour. Parents can also choose to buy a reward at the end of the trip or the child could receive a reward when they return home. Nondirective Play is an excellent reward.
3. Establish a negative consequence for negative behaviour. The child should be told ahead of time what kind of negative consequence they will receive for poor behaviour. If a Time Out will be used decide on an appropriate location such as facing a wall or taking the child outside to sit in a car. During Time Out the parent needs to stay in the vicinity and monitor the child. The parent should look like they are engaged in some other activity and not directly attending to the child. If the child is likely to throw a tantrum the Time Out should be done either outside the building or in a location where noise will be less of an issue. An alternative to using Time Out in public is to put a red check mark in a visible place for inappropriate behaviour. The number of check marks will determine how long of a Time Out the child will receive when they return home.
4. Assign the child a positive role or activity. Giving the child a positive role or activity can make a big difference for how well behaved the child is. This gives the child a positive focus and gives the parents the opportunity to praise their child, which sets a positive tone to the outing. The child could be asked to look for certain grocery items that need to be picked up or check off items on a list once they've been found. The parent should look for numerous opportunities to praise the child during the outing for appropriate behaviour and cooperating with the parent.

Encourage parents to memorize 4 principles that summarize the above discussion:

1. Establish the rules for this place or activity.
2. Set up incentives.
3. Set up a negative consequence for poor behaviour.
4. Assign an activity or positive role.

These same 4 steps can also be used when guests are being entertained at home or when the child is going to a party or to someone's home.

**Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 2**

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice debriefed:
 - ☐ Six principles of effective parenting
 - ☐ Three positive qualities of child
- ☐ Best and worst supervisor discussion used to help parents reflect on the importance of positive attention as a motivator.
- ☐ Importance of parent child relationship enhancement for long-term treatment gains emphasized.
- ☐ Home practice on praise assigned
- ☐ Home practice on non-directive play assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

- ☐ Were you able to make personal contact with each member of the group through such things as eye contact, smiles, and affirmations of their input?

- ☐ Were you able to role model the three forms of effective praise while affirming parent's input?

Session 3

When Children Interrupt Conversations and Phone Calls

Improving Compliance & Increasing Independent Play

Debrief home practice

Did anyone have trouble finding time for nondirective play? How did the children respond to nondirective play? How did the children respond when the playtime was over? Did parents notice if as there was a change in the parent child relationship? Did parent have any trouble with ignoring minor misbehaviour?

How did children respond to the increased use of praise? How often do parents use praise? The average mother uses praise about once every 90 minutes. How often do parents use praise with their spouses or with other adults? Remember to enthusiastically praise the parents for their efforts.

For parents who do not complete their home practice assignments make contact by phone or consider setting up an individual session outside the group to assist parents with the assignment. Assess whether the parent is adequately engaged in treatment. Remember to focus in on the parent's treatment goals that were handed in during the first session and connect these to the home practice assignments.

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Interrupting Telephone Calls: Mum is talking on the telephone, and her daughter Phoebe is interrupting Mum to get her attention. The phone call is important and Mum can see that her daughter's request can wait.

Click on [Consequences](#), and [Problems Solving](#) and play examples.

Question: Since many parents value uninterrupted time for themselves, why don't children learn to not interrupt parents in order to get positive attention? The obvious reason children are not likely to do this is that parents usually do not reward their children with attention for not interrupting or for playing independently. Instead parents usually pay more attention to their children when they do interrupt them.

Question: When children are playing nicely is it best to let sleeping dogs lie or should the parent praise the child for playing independently? If parents did interrupt their activities to praise and reward quiet play then in the future interruptions would be less likely to occur.

Question: What is the best way to make consequences more effective? The best way to get improvements in behaviour is to use pleasant consequences that are used immediately after the child is behaving appropriately.

Handouts for session 3

Using Positive Attention to Improve Compliance
Rewarding Independent Play
Improving Cooperation

Home practice

Parent should continue with Nondirective Play throughout the course.

Parents should read through the handout on Improving Cooperation

Increasing Independent Play

Ask parents to set up a situation for catching their children being good. For this assignment parents are to set up a bogus phone call so that they can frequently interrupt their conversation to praise and give positive attention to their children for not interrupting them on the phone. Parents should tell their children that they are going to be on the phone and do not want to be interrupted. Parents should then assign an activity to keep the child busy such as doing a puzzle. After being on the phone for 30 seconds or less parents are to interrupt themselves to attend to and praise the child for not interrupting them. The parent should continue to interrupt their conversation every few minutes to praise their child. The parent is to keep their eyes on their child so that if the child is beginning to become antsy the parent will immediately interrupt their conversation to praise the child for not interrupting. The intervals between these interruptions are to be gradually increased so that the child can play for extended lengths of time without interrupting the parent.

Role-play on Increasing Independent Play

For this role-play you can use the scenario of Phoebe's mother teaching her child to not interrupt her on the phone. On a presentation board write down the steps for the role-play:

1. **Give clear expectations:** "Phoebe I'm going to be on the phone for 5 minutes. While I'm on the phone I want you to play quietly and not interrupt me."
2. **Assign an activity:** "I would like you to color this picture while I am on the phone."
3. **Set up a reward:** "Phoebe if you play quietly with out interrupting me while I am on the phone I will play a game with you after I am done."
4. **Monitor, interrupt yourself frequently and use praise:** "Good girl Phoebe. Your doing great." (Repeat this step at least two more times for the role play.)
5. **Praise the specific behavior, use enthusiasm, touch Phoebe affectionately and give the reward:** (Hang up the phone) "Perfect Phoebe, you did not interrupt me once. You are such a big girl. I knew you could do it. Now let's go play."

Demonstrate the role-play yourself first. Get out of your seat and stand close to the person who is playing the role of Phoebe. Review your use of the 5 How to use steps your role-play. Ask parents if they have any questions.

Have the parents split into groups of 2 to do the role-play. After completing the role-play ask partners to praise the person playing the mother for everything they did right. Tell people to ignore any mistakes or omissions. If you hear any criticisms you should interrupt stating, "We will have time to practice that later, for right now focus only on what _____ did that was great. Have people exchange roles so they both have a chance to play the role of Phoebe's mother.

Enthusiastically praise and thank the parents for being willing to do the exercise and let them know that this type of practice will greatly increase the effectiveness of the program.

Compliance Training

Parents are to set up compliance training periods that should last about 3 – 5 minutes a couple of times per day. During these times parent are to make a number of small requests that require little effort form the child. Some examples would be, "please pass the salt," or "please fetch this for me." These training periods should be done when the child is not preoccupied with another activity. Because the requests are simple and don't involve much effort the child is much more likely to respond. The parent is to reinforce this compliance by using praise and positive attention. It is also appropriate to give the child small rewards for compliance such as a favorite snack food or drink.

Ask Parents to continue to record their child's responses to the training periods and bring these to the next session.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 3

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on praise debriefed.
- ☐ Home practice on non-directive play debriefed.
- ☐ The cycle of coercive behaviour discussed.
- ☐ Handout on effective commands given and assigned for home practice.
- ☐ Home practice on increasing independent play and compliance training assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 4

Helping Children to Do Housework – Doing Chores The Point System

This problem is portrayed on the Urban Teen (UK) and the American Teen Versions of Parenting Wisely. If you do not have these versions and do not work with older children you could purchase the Wise Parent for a modest price and use the housework problem video for this session. The Wise Parent is not ideal for group use, however, as there is no narrated text with this version and the group facilitator cannot navigate quickly through the program.

Debrief Home practice:

Ask parents about the assignments on rewarding independent play, the compliance training periods and the use of more effective commands.

During each review of home practice ask the parents if there is anything else they have tried out on their own regarding strategies from the Parenting Wisely program.

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Helping Children to Do Household Chores: Mum is preparing dinner when Dad comes into the kitchen. She complains bitterly that the children are not doing their jobs. He says he doesn't have a problem getting them to listen to him. Mum gets angry and tells Dad to deal with the problem.

Click on [Chore Compliance](#) and play examples.

Click on [Point System](#).

For younger children chores should be simple and appropriate for the child's age. For example helping to pick up toys before bedtime or helping to set out cutlery for mealtime are chores that are appropriate for younger children. Even young children can start learning responsible behaviour by having regular chores.

Question: Isn't using rewards a form of bribery? The definition of bribery is paying someone to do something illegal. It is not against the law to reward children for doing their chores or behaving responsibly. In this course bribery is defined as giving kids rewards before they have earned them in the hopes that children will behave well in response.

Question: What gets quicker results punishments or praise and rewards? Use of punishments tends to get quicker results than use of praise and rewards. The use of positives, however has a better impact in the long run. Discipline that focuses primarily on punishments will result in the child avoiding the parent. Strong use of praise and attention will build a strong parent child relationship where children will seek the parent out rather than avoiding them.

Question: Shouldn't children just behave without receiving rewards? You can tell the parents that this would be nice, but with their children, however, this won't happen. Children with behavior problems have a motivation deficit that for some of these kids is neurologically based, especially children with ADHD. For these kids social reinforcement is not enough and they need a greater amount of external reinforcement. Children with ADHD have a deficit in their perception of time. For many of these children have difficulty judging the duration of time. Therefore these youth are primarily motivated by what pays off for them in the immediate moment. This is problematic as misbehavior often has a short-term pay off for the child. The point system should be considered as a prosthetic device for children with ADHD. It gives them a tangible reason to behave well in the immediate moment.

The Point System:

The primary components of a point system are increased clarity about expectations, more consistent use of rewards and increased parental monitoring of target behaviour. For younger children parents should use pictures and age appropriate words to set up the point system.

The point system is an ideal way to decrease conflict over chores. There are few interventions available to therapists that can produce as quick and substantial gains as a point system. Present material on the point system pages 58 to 64 in the Workbook. You do not need to make a detailed presentation of everything in the book, because too much didactic instruction at one time can increase resistance. It is a good idea to cover the section on Advantages and several of the main points, plus discuss at least one of the examples of a point system on page 62 to 64.

Sometimes parents find it helpful to introduce a discussion of point systems with their children by discussing the differences between rights and privileges. Parents can explain that their children have a right to food, clothing, shelter and safety. We do not encourage parents to take these rights away to punish their children. Material possessions and fun activities are not rights; they are privileges that can be earned.

After their parents completed a treatment program similar to this one the children were asked which part of the program they liked best. The most frequent answer was the point system. Children state they like knowing their efforts can pay off with increased access to rewards and privileges. Point systems are a good way to instill a work ethic in children.

Some parents may wish to use a variation on the point system where the total number of points the child has ever earned is also recorded. The children still collect points and use up or spend them on a daily basis. Keeping track of the total points earned can give children a sense of accomplishment. Parents can choose to connect more valuable long term rewards once a large number of points are achieved.

It's important to find meaningful rewards. Point systems usually need to be modified overtime and parents will need to replace rewards that no longer motivate. Parent should always be keeping their eyes open for new possibilities for motivating their children. For example if your child loves Harry Potter you could use the next movie or book as an incentive. Trading cards are also often an effective motivator. To increase the value of some rewards it may be helpful to give the child a free sample that is brief or very small, for example a single spoonful of a new desert or being able to play a new video game for 5 minutes. This strategy is often effectively used commercially by companies that wish to encourage the purchase of new products.

Parents can give out bonus points for any positive behaviour that their children spontaneously do. This helps to reinforce internalization of positive behaviour.

The point system should be set up for the child to succeed. It is counter productive to be stingy with giving rewards. In the beginning parents should make it easy for the child to earn points so that the child will buy into the program. Most children do not resist the point system and see it as an opportunity to earn more privileges and rewards.

If a child fails to perform a target behavior parents can let children earn points by simulating the desired behavior. For example the parent could say to the child, "you can earn some extra points in a pretend situation. Let pretend that you have asked for something and I say "no." You can earn some points by saying "okay mom," without having a tantrum, throwing things or hitting me." In these pretend situation children almost always perform the desired behavior. Parents should praise the child's appropriate response copiously and this will significantly increase the likelihood the child will perform the desired behavior in a real situation in the near future.

Warn parents that sometimes after being on a point system a child may respond to an adult request by asking, "How many points will I get?" or "What is in it for me?" Some parents are irritated by this response and stop using point or reward systems. Encourage parents to look at the bigger picture. Is there an over all improvement in the child's behavior? Is there less nagging and conflict over chores? Tell parents not to throw away a point or reward programs because of an occasional glitch. If parents are bothered by the child's response they can use an I Statement to let the child know.

Home practice:

Parents should read pages 54 and 58 to 75 in the Parenting Wisely workbook. Ask parents to look through more examples of point systems in the workbook. This will give them several good ideas about behaviors to target and rewards they could use.

Parents are to set up point system and bring a copy to class next week for troubleshooting. Parents should focus on start rather than stop behaviors in the beginning. Parents should not use fines or response cost for the first week as they want to increase the likelihood that their children will buy into the program.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure Session 4

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on non-directive special time debriefed.
- ☐ Components of Point Systems covered.
- ☐ Home practice on Point System or Contracts assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to communicate a positive optimistic attitude about the program and home practice assignment?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 5

Helping Children to Get to Bed on Time Coercive Behavior - Attending & Planned Ignoring

Debrief Home practice

Photocopy the parent's point systems and review later. Phone parents midweek to give them feedback. Always start and finish your critique by praising some aspect of the parent's work. Praise for parents work should be given in class as frequently as possible. Use the 6 principles of effective parenting when giving feedback. You want to find ways to help parents to be more specific, immediate, meaningful, frequent, consistent and balanced.

On average parents are most likely to make the biggest changes in their behaviour after session 4 (Dishion & Kavanagh, 2003). This is a good time to ask parents to share if they have spontaneously implemented anything on their own from the program.

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Refusing to go to Bed: Mum tries to get her daughter, Erin, to leave the television and go to bed. Erin complains her brother gets to stay up and that this is not fair.

Ask Parents about common problems they have with bedtime routines.

As you proceeding through the problem and solutions ask the class what possible thoughts or emotions could be influencing various family members' behaviour.

Click on Role Modeling and Assertive Discipline and play examples.

Are there any other problems parents experience with their children where some of the ideas discussed today might be helpful?

There are 2 effective solutions to this problem: 2(a) and 3.

Question: What are the most common reasons parents yell at their children? Most of the time parents end up yelling out of frustration. In the beginning children often initially respond when their parents yell, but in the long run children get used to yelling and ignore it.

If parents have a child who has chronic difficulty falling asleep it is a good idea to consistently get them up in the morning at the same time regardless of how much sleep they had the night before. This will help their bodies to establish a regular time cycle that promotes regular sleep in the long run. Having a regular routine at bedtime, with quiet activities such as stories and some nurturing contact will also help children to settle at bedtime.

The session for next week uses the Teen version of Parenting Wisely. If you do not have the teen versions of the Parenting Wisely program you may wish to skip the material below and instead present the material covered in session 6 on Active Listening instead.

Coercive Behavior

Have parents refer to the Handout on Coercive Behavior or draw the flow chart on a presentation board. This discussion about coercive behavior not only applies to parents interactions with their children, it is also relevant with how children interact with their siblings and parents, and between spouses with each other.

When parents give a child a direction there are two possible responses. The child may cooperate with the request or they don't cooperate. If the child does not respond the average parent usually ends up repeating the request between 3 to 7 times.

Ask the group what happens to the parent's heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension as the parents repeat the request. The parents will likely respond, "They will increase."

At this point many parents in frustration will yell at their child to try to get them to cooperate. We saw an example of this in today's scenario where mom asked Erin three times to get ready for bed. When she still wasn't getting ready for bed mom yelled at Erin and finally Erin started moving. In the beginning yelling often works. This can lead to parents yelling more frequently. Over time, however yelling is not effective. Children get used to it and tune it out.

At this point parents may use threats to get children to cooperate. In the beginning threats are often effective. This results in the parents increasing their use of threats over time. Children eventually start tuning out the threats and do not respond. Also quite often parent's threats are vague and some children will refuse to cooperate just to see what their parents will do. Parents may increase the harshness of their threats over time to try to get the child to respond. In the beginning this also may be effective, but eventually, frequent use of threats is not effective.

During this whole process parents are probably becoming increasingly angry and frustrated. At this point parents are faced by a dilemma. They often feel their only choices are to either give up and let the child get away with not complying or they feel they must become physically aggressive to force compliance.

If the parent gives up without intending to they are rewarding the child. The child has learned that if they hang on long enough they can at least some of the time, escape doing something they would rather not do. This makes them less likely to cooperate with parent's requests in the future. Children will persist in not cooperating even if it only pays off occasionally. This is similar to gambling. Even if gamblers only win occasionally they will continue to gamble.

If the parent does resort to physical aggression they are role modeling aggression as a way to coerce others into doing what they want. This creates several problems for parents. Children learn to use coercion themselves to get what they want from parents, for example by yelling, having tantrums or using aggression. We saw an example of this when Erin yelled at her mother saying she would not go to bed and started kicking Sam. In the ineffective solution the mother rewarded this behavior by letting Erin stay up longer. If children are successful in using coercion at home they will often start using it outside the home and become bullies.

The same increase of coercive behavior over time occurs when spouses resort to physical aggression with each other. Partner abuse does not occur out of the blue. Usually there is a gradual increase of coercive interactions between couples over time.

Researchers call the frequent use of coercion "delinquency training." To some extent coercion occurs in all families but it occurs much more frequently in families where children grow up to be delinquent and have substance abuse problems. Families where parents are under stress are more likely to run into problems with coercive interactions. Parents who are stressed out are preoccupied and irritable. Children in these families learn that good behavior is often ignored and does not pay off. At the same time these children learn they are more likely to get parent attention or get what they want with coercive behavior. It is the ratio of how often children are rewarded for either coercive behaviors or for positive behaviors that plays a critical role in the development of more serious behavior problems.

Parents can nip many problems in the bud by thinking ahead of how to handle situations where there is likely to be conflict. In today's effective solution the mother redirected Erin's attention with a bedtime story. When parents ask their children to do a chore it is a good idea to think ahead about a consequence or what they will do if their child refuses to cooperate. Having a plan will help parents stay focused and calm. Parents should only give a direction twice. Repeating a request more than this is nagging. After 2 requests parents should use Assertive Discipline and warn the child what consequence they will receive if they don't cooperate. Parents do not always need to force compliance. If the child is not compliant parents can follow through with removing a privilege. This should only be done for a short period of time so the family atmosphere can return to being positive. Increasing the use of rewards and praise while using small, consistent punishments will help parents avoid "delinquency training."

Attending and Planned Ignoring

Paying attention to someone is a type of reward. When we monitor how our attention affects other people's behavior this is called attending. When we notice what someone is doing by praising, smiling, asking pleasant question, talking nicely or give someone a pat on the back they are more likely to continue to do that behavior. Unfortunately we often tend to notice bad behavior more than we notice good behavior. So we accidentally end of rewarding children's poor behavior by attending to it so we end up getting more poor behavior. Parents often ignore their children when they are playing nicely. When the children are squabbling they often get much more adult attention.

A complimentary skill to attending is Planned Ignoring. This skill involves deliberately ignoring a behavior so that it will be less likely to occur. To use planned ignoring, you do not look at the person or talk to them. Instead you turn away, keep your facial expression blank, talk to someone else or just leave the room. For planned ignoring to work you need to increase your attending to the positive opposite behavior. If you wish to teach your child that whining results in being ignored then it is critical to attend to your child when they speak in a calm, appropriate tone of voice. Ask the group which behaviors should be attended to or ignored in the following example:

You have asked your child to wash the dishes. He complains, "This is stupid. I shouldn't have to do this. You always give me chores just when I was going to do something fun." Your son walks over to the sink and turns on the water, adds some dish soap but continues to grumble about how he hates doing dishes. He slides the dishes slowly off the counter one at a time and plops them into the water. For a few minutes he swirls the dishrag around in the water. Eventually he starts washing the dishes. After about 5 minutes he looks at you and yells, "This is your fault. You should have bought us a dishwasher. None of my friends have to wash dishes." He continues washing. One of the pots has some burnt soup on the bottom. As he scraps it off he mutters to himself, "I hate this. We should just throw this stupid pot away." One of the jars he is washing has a narrow neck and he has difficulty trying to wash the inside. After a few minutes he calmly asks, "Mom I can't get this clean. Can you help me with this?"

This example points out how easy it is to miss opportunities to attend to and reward good behavior, yet it is easy for us to accidentally reward poor behavior by attending to it.

Warn parents there are two problems that can occur with planned ignoring. Children's poor behavior may temporarily increase. This is an example of the child increasing their use of coercion when poor behavior no longer pays off like it use to. Parents should continue to ignore the behavior and it will eventually decrease. The second problem is some children may resort to aggression. In the ineffective solution if Erin was allowed to stay up later after become aggressive with Sam then she would be more likely to use aggression in a similar way in the future. If children become aggressive when parents are first using Planned Ignoring parents should respond with Assertive Discipline.

Using Response Cost with the Point System

An example of using response cost would be to tell children they can earn up to 10 points per day, or a smaller time period if necessary, by being respectful. The children will lose one point off this total for each time they are disrespectful or use inappropriate language. These points could only be lost up to a total of 10. Once these points are gone the parent would not deduct points that the child had earned in other ways. Response cost is different from fines because children do not lose points they have earned in other ways.

If parents are worried their child might be initially highly reactive to losing points they can begin by just tagging the behaviour for a few days. The parent can do this when the child misbehaves by saying, "starting Monday you will lose one point for that type of behaviour". It can also be helpful in the beginning to tell the child that the parent expects them to not be perfect and to lose a few points now and then when they are angry. The child is told that losing one point is no big deal. This gives the parent a small consequence that will help the child learn to be more careful about being respectful.

Parents should avoid a punishment spiral by repeatedly taking points away in an angry exchange with the child. An example of a negative spiral would be the parent taking away a point for misbehavior and the child responds with a tantrum or swearing. The child's reactions are again fined and the child again reacts negatively. After taking away one point during an

interaction if the child's behavior continues to be problematic the parent should move to a second form of discipline such as sending the child for a Time Out. This approach needs to be set up for the child to succeed. If the child is constantly losing all 10 points the parent should either increase the number of points that can be earned or break the day up into smaller periods for earning points.

Handouts:

Coercive Behavior
Attending and Planned Ignoring

Home practice:

Parents should pick at least one behavior they would like to decrease with Planned Ignoring. Parents should use attention, interest, smiles, praise and hugs to increase the positive opposite behavior. Parents can add the use of response cost to their point systems if they wish.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 5

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on point systems debriefed using the 6 Principles of Effective Parenting.
- ☐ Discussion of response cost covered.
- ☐ Home practice on response cost and handouts assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Have you able to role model use of the three forms of effective praise with parents?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 6

Solving Stepparent – Stepchild Conflict

Active Listening

(American Teen and UK Teen versions)

If you do not have the teen versions of Parenting Wisely and only work with younger children you may wish to purchase the Wise Parent version of the program to use for today's session or skip the material from the preceding session on response cost and use the problem scenario on helping to get children to bed on time to introduce today's session on Active Listening.

Debrief Home practice

Photocopy parent's point systems and give feedback later if parents are handing this in for the first time. Make sure parents are not over using response cost to the point where the child loses motivation.

Do parents have any other comments on things that they have tried from the program?

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Solving Stepparent and Stepchild Conflict: Ben tells his mother that his stepfather is criticizing him a lot, and that he hates his stepfather.

Today's problem video portrays a family with stepparent issues, but these types of issues are very common with 2 biological parents as well.

We recommend watching all three videos in this section.

Point out examples of Active Listening in the videos, click on [Active Listening](#) and play examples.

Question: What should a stepparent do if a child is being disrespectful to their parent? Usually it's better if the stepparent lets the biological parent deal with the issue or to wait until the child leaves and then speak to the other parent about coming up with a plan for dealing with disrespect.

Question: Are there any situations where having a family meeting would not be a good idea? If parents are not in agreement with each other they should work through that issue on their own first.

Question: Does anyone know somebody who does an excellent job of listening? What is it like to talk to this person? Children and people in general love talking to someone who is a very attentive, good listener. This is a very powerful reinforcing experience.

Question: Are there any other area's in parents' lives where Active Listening or other strategies from today's session might be useful?

The multiple choice quiz has several good questions for parents to practice identifying the underlying feelings of other people which is good practice for learning Active Listening

It is fairly common for parents to end up being polarized over how they should deal with their child's difficult behaviour. One parent may end up being cast in the role of the bad parent who attempts to be harsher with discipline while the other

parent plays the role of the good parent who is soft and indulgent. Over time both parents become more extreme in their positions, because they are trying to compensate for the perceived faults they see in the other parent. The child may end up playing both parents off on each other. The whole family including the child ends up being victimized by these dynamics in the long run.

Sometimes intense emotional conflict with our children serves to meet a need for emotional involvement. Perhaps in a way that parents are not that conscious of they prefer to have conflictual relationship with their child rather than no involvement at all. When teens seek space from their parents in order to spend more time with friends, parents may seek emotional involvement by starting arguments. Young children express a need for attention from their parents by bugging them or doing things that get a strong emotional reaction from their parents. We need to engage our children in healthier ways so they learn they can meet their needs for contact or distance in less conflictual and unhealthy ways.

All families have problems, but some families can deal with these problems more smoothly and calmly than others. Families that are more successful in dealing with difficulties usually have good communication skills. The use of good communication has been shown to contribute to happier marriages and a more enjoyable family life. One of the most useful things people can do to improve their parenting, their marriages and their lives is to work at developing good communication skills. A list of effective marriage education courses is available at www.smartmarriages.com.

Active Listening role-play

Briefly point out the Advantages to Active Listening covered in the workbook.

Write out the How to use steps for Active Listening on a presentation board.

Demonstrate Active Listening using the examples from the workbook. Point out the three different forms of Active Listening. Review some of the practice exercises together as a group and ask volunteers to respond first by repeating the statement in their own words. Next ask people to guess at the meaning or the underlying feelings behind the statements.

Have parents role-play their child while their partner practices active listening. Encourage people playing the child to not be overly difficult in their role-plays. The parents playing the child should give positive feedback when their partners accurately understand what they are saying. Ask people to ignore mistakes and for now to focus only on praising what their partners did well.

Thank and praise the parents for doing the role-play.

Home practice

Finish page 79 at home and either hand in for next class or discuss people's answers together as a group. Parents may choose to ask their children if they would be willing to help them do their home practice by taking turns doing the exercises on page 79. Parents should not force home practice on their children, but parents could offer incentives to motivate their children to learn these skills. Tell parents that a common mistake with this exercise is to come up with solutions to the other person's statements. Tell the parents to make a conscious effort to avoid coming up with solutions in order to concentrate on the skill of Active Listening alone.

Non-directive special time is ideal activity for parents to practice using Active Listening. Parents should record their child's response in their daily discipline reports and bring these in for the next session.

**Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 6**

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice debriefed.
- ☐ Role-play on Active Listening completed.
- ☐ Home practice on Active Listening assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to communicate respect to parents through use of careful listening skills and empathic statements?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 7

Helping Children Solve Conflict with their Friends I Statements

Debrief Home practice

Have people share their answers from the workbook on the Active Listening assignment. Ask parents about their experiences with using Active Listening. Did the people they listened to seem to enjoy this type of attention?

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Conflict with other Children: Dad asks his son, Sean why he seems upset. Sean tells Dad that he is not getting along with the group with whom he plays football.

Ask parents to briefly talk about some of the problems their children have relating to their friends.

Both solution 2(b) and 3 are effective. Solution 2(b) has a good discussion of specific praise. Be sure to select solution 3 as it gives examples of I Statements.

Click on [I Statements](#) and examples.

This problem video was in part designed with the idea of parents watching it together with their children. Parents may wish to set up an appointment to view this and some of the other videos with their children. For children who have ongoing problems with being bullied the use of I Statements alone will not likely be sufficient. For the normal squabbles that children have with their friends I Statements, at least some of the time, can be very effective. This is a skill that parents will want to role model and teach to their children.

Ask parents about other situations where they might be able to use I Statements.

Research shows that people are often more rude with family members than they are with strangers. How would we react if our children or our spouse were to make the following statements to us:

- You are such a mess. Why can't you stay clean for just 5 minutes?
- Shut the door. Take your boots off. Hang up your coat. Pick those things up off the floor. Wash your hands and go sit over there
- What do you mean you can't find it? Honestly if you didn't have your head screwed on you'd lose that too.
- Mom what part of the word "no" do you not understand?
- Dad you are driving me crazy. Can't you see I'm busy?
- Why can't you be more responsible... like your sister?

Politeness is an under used parenting skill. Being polite is always under your control. Even if the other person is rude that doesn't mean you should be nasty back. Using effective communication skills is always the most productive way to interact with the other person. I Statements help you to address issues without being rude. You can be firm on the issue, but soft on the person.

Role-play on I Statements

Briefly discuss the purpose and [Advantages](#) to I Statements covered in the workbook.

Write out the [How to use](#) steps for I Statements on a presentation board and the formula (below) for I Statements:

I feel _____ when you _____. Next time, I'd like _____
_____. If this happens again, then _____
_____.

Review the How to use steps with the examples in the workbook. Lead the group together through the first two practice exercises. Ask parents to fill in the blanks in their workbooks as you proceed through the examples.

Have the parents split up into groups of two to do a role-play based on the two Practice Exercises you have just completed. People can read their I Statements right out of their workbooks if they wish to. After completing the role-play of the first Practice Exercise partners should provide feedback focusing only on what was done right. Instruct parents to ignore any mistakes or omissions.

Partners can now switch roles with the other parents role-playing the second Practice Exercise.

Provide copious praise and encouragement throughout the role-plays and thank the parents for their willingness to practice.

Home Practice

Parents should complete exercises 3 to 4 to be handed in or discussed in class next week. Ask parents to think of two recent examples in their families when they could have used an I Statement. Parents should briefly describe these and write them down to be shared or handed in for the next session.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 7

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on Active Listening debriefed.
- ☐ Role-play on I Statements completed.
- ☐ Home practice on I Statements assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Have you been able to establish an atmosphere of respectful communication through use of group management skills?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 8

Controlling Sibling Arguing (YCV)

Time Out & Assertive Discipline

Debrief Home practice

Have people share their answers from the workbook on the I Statements assignment. Ask if anyone can share an I Statement they recorded or used with their families. Ask if there anything else from the program so far that people have tried on their own initiative?

Interacting With the CD-ROM

Sibling Conflict: a brother and his sister are arguing while playing with a puzzle. The daughter asks her mum to come and solve the problem.

Before watching the problem video you could ask parents to briefly discuss some of the problems they have with sibling rivalry.

Question: Do children seem to fight more if a parent is present, rather than when the parent is not there? If this is true, it suggests their children could be fighting as a way to obtain more attention from their parents. Telling children that you will join them and play with them when they are playing nicely with each other is a beautiful way to turn this dynamic around.

Make sure to include solution 2(a) among your choices and click on Time Out

Question: If children are given a chore as a consequence how fussy should parents be about the quality of the work done? Parents should try to choose chores where perfectionism is not required. The point of the chore is not to improve work habits, but to take away the child's freedom and fun for a short period of time. Parents can teach children the proper way to do the chore another time when it is not connected to a punishment. It is the message that poor behavior consistently results in negative consequences that is important. It is best to keep the chore short so that the child can do the job and get it out of the way. For a small consequence chores that can be completed in 5 minutes are ideal. For a more serious consequence a chore that lasts about an hour is appropriate. If the child is deliberately doing a bad job with the chore parents can either assign a second chore or end the power struggle by switching the consequence to taking away a privilege.

Question: What are some good ways to prepare yourself if you need to confront a child's poor behaviour and follow through with Assertive Discipline? Parents should try to think of some innocent reason that might contribute to the child's behaviour. Parents should use coping self-talk to stay focused and not become distracted by defiance or defensiveness.

Question: Some parents avoid discipline, yet also are reluctant to be supportive and openly praise their children. How are these two attitudes related? Parents who are not very positive and supportive toward their children often feel guilty when they have to be firm and discipline. Increasing the amount of support will alleviate these guilt feelings and make using discipline easier.

Question: What should parents do if a child refuses to give up an object or play thing that the parents has taken away? Parents should avoid grabbing things out of the child's hand. Unless there is some immediate danger it can be taken away later when the child is not present. The time period for which the child loses that object or activity can be doubled if it was not given up voluntarily.

Time Out was not the most effective intervention in this scenario. It is best to restrict the use of time out to only a few behaviors to increase consistency in use. If Time Out is used with numerous problems there is the potential for it to lead to a negative spiral of punishment that can be counter productive Time Out is more effective if is used sparingly and as a back up to other parent strategies. If parents are using Time Out several times per day that is a sign the program is not working well and needs revision. If parents are having trouble with this look for ways too increase parent's use of praise and rewards.

Role-play on Assertive Discipline

Discuss the purpose and Advantages of Assertive Discipline in the workbook.

Write out the steps for Assertive Discipline on a presentation board.

1. Stay calm. Look for a more positive interpretation instead of taking the misbehavior personally.
2. Be very specific about what you did not like and what you want done.
3. Explain why he/she is being punished
4. Clearly state the punishment
5. If your child argues, tell them if he/she continues to argue they will have an additional punishment. Do not argue back

Demonstrate the steps of Assertive Discipline with a role-play. (Get out of your seat and go over to the person playing Annie.)

You asked your 12 year old Annie daughter to put away the clean dishes and clean the counter tops in the kitchen an hour ago. You went into her room and asked her to come do the chore. She said she would come in five minutes because she wanted to finish listening to some music. You told her that if she didn't do the chore by 5:00 she would have an additional chore of taking out the garbage. It is now 10 minutes after 5:00 and she still hasn't come out of her room.

Step 1 "I need to stay calm. I should not take this personally as defiance of my authority. Most kids are allergic to chores and will try to skip out of doing one if they get the chance."

Step 2 "Annie I'm disappointed you didn't put the dishes away or clean the counters like I asked.

Step 3 "I need you to do this so I can get supper ready"

Step 4 "Because you have not done this you will have an additional consequence of taking out the garbage.

(Prompt the person playing Annie to start arguing).

Annie: "What is your problem mom. I said I was going to do it later and I will. Get off my case."

Step 5 "Annie you have a choice. You can either do the chores now or you can keep arguing with me and receive an additional chore of cleaning the bathrooms."

(Prompt Annie to cooperate while still complaining as she does so).

Annie: "Ok, ok. I'm going. I don't see what the big deal is."

Review the steps of Assertive Discipline demonstrated in the role-play.

Have parents split up into groups of 2 to do the role-play of Annie and her mother. Parents should praise everything their partners did well. Ask people to ignore any mistakes or omissions. Have people switch roles so everyone has the opportunity to play the role of Annie's mom.

Use of Time Out

Have parents read through the handout on using Time Out. Ask if there are any questions.

Handouts

Time Out.

Home practice

Parents should complete the practice exercises on Assertive Discipline in the workbook. These can either be handed in or discussed in group for the next session. Ask parents to look for opportunities to use Assertive Discipline when they feel their authority is ineffective.

Parent can use Time Out to target 1 or 2 behaviors. Preferably the parents should tell the group leader what these behaviors would be before leaving class. Parents should record any use of Time Out in their journals to bring to the next class. Parents should record the child's initial behavior, how they implemented Time Out (where, how long) and their child's response. Thomas Phelan's video 1-2-3 Magic is a good resource for parents on the use of Time Out.

It is important for parents to keep up the non-directive playtime, especially for this week to counter balance any negative effects of the use of Time Out as a punishment.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 8

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on I Statements debriefed
- ☐ Discussion questions covered.
- ☐ Use of Timeout and handout discussed
- ☐ Home practice on Assertive Discipline assigned

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Have you communicated you are optimistic about parent's ability to cope with temporary setbacks in the future?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Have you been able to encourage parents to give other members of the group positive feedback on their input and efforts?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 9

Helping Children Get Ready for School

Problem Solving & Family Meetings

There is an optional session on Giving and Receiving Supports that can be used with the Helping Children Get Ready for School scenario. This optional session is described immediately below the present session. If you have access to the British Teen version of Parenting Wisely Problem 3: Staying Out to Late can be used as a replacement for this session on Problem Solving and Family Meetings.

Debrief Home practice

Parents often report that the assignment on Assertive Discipline required more thought than previous assignments. This is a good session for parents to share their answers from the workbook and to discuss the pros and cons of their choices. Discuss parent's use of Time Out. Try doing role-plays with any problems the parents experienced where they portray the role of their child and you play the role of the parent.

Are parents feeling more confident when they use discipline? Do their children respond differently if they are more confident?

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Getting Ready for School: Mum is trying to get her children ready for school in the morning. Her son Therek won't eat his breakfast, and her daughter, Rosie, is taking too long getting dressed. Grandma, who lives with the family, has different ideas about how Mum should handle the children.

If one child at a table is eating and another is not, which child usually receives more attention from their parents? Parents often inadvertently reinforce or reward children, who do not eat the way the parent would like, by giving this behaviour a significant amount of attention. When we do this as parents we are actually making it less likely that the child who is eating well will continue to do so in the future and we are increasing the likelihood that the child who is not eating will continue to have problems with eating in the future.

Include solution 4 among your choices and click on [Family Meetings](#).

Click on [Problem Solving](#).

Group Role-play on Problem Solving

Have the entire class do a role-play based on the Calvert family described on page 86 in the workbook. You can add in some new characters to give more of the people in the class a role. For example you could add in a father, a grandmother who lives with the family, plus you could add in 2 more children who are twins. You could also have some people share a single role who can trade off playing the character as they wish throughout the role-play.

1. IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM. Have the people playing the roles of the children define the conflict from their perspectives. Then have the people playing the parent's role define the problem from their perspective. As people are defining the problem write their statements down on a presentation board. It is a good idea to have the parents practice active listening by repeating back to the children how the children perceive the problem. The children can then correct the parents if the parents have not understood the children's perspective correctly. The people playing the role of the children can also practice active listening by repeating back to the parents how the parent's perceive the problem. The people playing the role of the parents can also have a chance to correct the children if the children have not correctly understood the parent's perspective of the problem.
2. EXPLORE THE PROBLEM. On a presentation board write down 3 headings:

A. Factors preceding problem	B. Bedtime Problem	C. What follows the problem

Have the group briefly discuss various factors that might have led up to conflict and what events tend to follow the conflict. This discussion helps to add more detail to step one, which may give a clearer understanding of the problem.

3. BRAINSTORM SOLUTIONS. Everyone in the role-play should come up with at least one or two solutions, which should be written down on the presentation board as illustrated below:

Leo to do his jobs without a reminder 30 minutes after getting home from school					
Dad to hire a maid to do the chores					
Mom to give Leo a note to remind him to do chores instead of yelling at him in front of friends.					
Grandma bakes cookies if there are no problems with chores for 5 days					

It is a good idea to include some silly solutions as this increases creative problem solving. Warn parents that one of the difficulties in using problem solving is people making critical remarks. One tactic to help with this is to write down the number of "zingers" or cutting remarks that are made during the session. The group can be challenged to try to keep the number of zingers to a minimum.

4. EVALUATE EACH SOLUTION AND DECIDE ON THE BEST ONE. Go through each idea one at a time and discuss the pros and cons of each. Try to have all the people doing the role-play give some input. Work towards agreement on at least one solution or to combine good solutions. A chart like the one below can help identify the solutions that have the most agreement.

	Mom	Dad	G.M.	Leo	Leticia
Leo to do his jobs without a reminder 30 minutes after getting home from school				?	
Dad to hire a maid to do the chores	X	X	X		X
Mom to give Leo a note to remind him to do chores instead of yelling at him in front of friends.					
Grandma bakes cookies if there are no problems with chores for 5 days					

5. WRITE A CONTRACT. Write up a contract based on the best solutions. Discuss rewards for keeping the contract agreements, and the penalties for breaking them. The group can compare the contract they wrote up with the one in the workbook on page 87.

Home Practice

Parents are to complete pages 84 to 91. Parents should pick a problem that is less contentious when they are first using Problem Solving and Contracts. When people are angry they develop tunnel vision which decreases their ability to problem solve effectively. A Family Meeting should be called when tempers are less hot. Emphasize the importance of fixing the problem not fixing the blame. Focus on making changes for the future rather than laying blame about the past.

If parents have not had a Family Meeting previously suggest that the first meeting not be to deal with a problem, but to plan a family activity. Reinforce the idea of starting family meetings on a positive note by having each person give at least one compliment to someone else. If the family is dealing with conflict the parent can establish a positive tone by praising each family member for some positive thing they have done in the past that is relevant to the problem.

It may be helpful for the parent to assign someone the role of helping the family stick to a positive focus and to help keep the meeting from being derailed by peripheral issues

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 9

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on
- ☐ Discussion questions covered.
- ☐ Role-play on Contracting conducted.
- ☐ Home practice on Contracting assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to maintain a good balance between use of structured content from the curriculum while being able to be responsive to parent discussion?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 9

Helping Children Get Ready for School

Giving and Receiving Support

(Alternate material for session 9)

Debrief home practice

Collect home practice from the last session and ask parents if they set up a family meeting and how this went. Ask if anyone experienced a greater sense of closeness in the family after the meeting. Ask what other benefits or problems came during a family meeting. You want families to use this method regularly so supporting them to do this is important.

If parents tried out the Problem Solving exercise what issues did they try to solve. Were they successful? What kinds of difficulties did they have?

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Research indicates that grandparents are often the biggest source of practical help for parents, but at the same time are also often a source of significant stress. This can certainly be true if grandparents are critical of about their children's parenting. Before watching the problem scenario ask parents to relate some brief stories of help or frustrations they had with their children's grandparents.

Giving and Receiving Support

When Germany was bombing Britain during World War II the average life expectancy in England increased by over 7 years. In general research has shown that there is a significant increase in the over all health of a population during periods of war. The research suggests this is due to social factors. During war efforts unemployment decreases and almost everyone has a meaningful role to contribute to society. The gap between the rich and the poor decreases and societies pull together. People who have been involved in wars usually recall the war itself as a negative experience, but at the same time they remember the friendships and closeness they had with their comrades with great fondness. This sense of social connectedness is very healthy and it is something that tends to be lacking in our present culture.

Its been said that it takes a whole village to raise a child. It also takes a whole village to have a healthy parent. Parents who are socially isolated are at greater risk for becoming depressed and their children are more likely to have behaviour problems. Research shows that families that are active in church or other community organisations help to protect children from delinquency and substance abuse problems. This protective effect is stronger than that of most of our social services programs for high-risk youth.

Encourage parents to find ways of increasing their social supports by encouraging grandparents to become more positively involved with their grandchildren. Even if grandparents live far away you could ask them to phone their grandchildren on a regular basis to give positive support. If grandparents do this parents should be sure to regularly tell the grandparents how much they appreciate their efforts.

One way to develop an ongoing supportive relationship is through reciprocity. Reciprocity means there is a give and take to the relationship. Parents should try to return the favour of giving social support by looking for ways that they can give encouragement or practical favours for the other person.

Ask parents if they would like to have their phone numbers added to a list so that parents could remain in touch with each other as supports after the group is over. Encourage parents to continue to meet with each other as a support group after the course is over. You can book booster sessions in 1 to 4 months time using alternate versions of the program to lead the sessions.

Home practice

Ask parents to complete the exercise of identifying people who could be a source of social support along with some ideas for increasing reciprocity in their relationship. Have the parent write up a pretend request for support for either themselves or their child. Ask the parents to use an I Statements to describe the situation that led up to the request. Have parents also write a statement of appreciation for positive things that person has done in the past. Ask parents to consider if it might be a good idea to sometimes include this person in a Family Meeting as the mother did with the grandparent in today's session. Parents are to hand this in for the next class.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 9

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on last session debriefed
- ☐ Discussion questions covered.
- ☐ Role-play on giving and receiving support completed.
- ☐ Handout on social supports given out.
- ☐ Home practice on social supports assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Are there any tangible ways that you could help parents to become connected with ongoing non-professional sources of social supports?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 10

Helping Children with Poor Marks or School Trouble

Debrief Home practice:

Collect parent's home practice from the previous session and ask for parents' comments on the home practice.

Interacting with the CD-ROM:

Homework and Poor Marks: David says school is going well when his dad asks about it. Then Dad discovers David's school report and sees poor marks. He realizes that David has not told the truth and is doing poorly in school.

Ask parents to briefly discuss some of the difficulties they have experienced with their children at school.

Click on School and Homework Monitoring skills

Click on Supervision.

Question: What is the first thing a parent should do when they find out that their child is having problems at school?

There are many different things that could be contributing to schools problems. It is best not to jump quickly to a solution. Parents should gather more information either from the child, the teacher or from both.

Question: What should parents do if there are concerns about a child forging signatures in communication passed back and forth between home and school? The child can be told parents will make regular checks with the teacher if there is a concern about forged signatures. The child is less likely to cheat if he knows this will be detected.

The location for homework should be somewhere close to the parent so they can monitor the child. Research suggests that one hour of help with homework by mothers was superior to teachers spending one hour of extra time with child doing schoolwork. This was true even with mothers who had not completed high school themselves (Rodick & Henggeler, 1980).

Sometimes there is a tendency for both the parents and the school to blame each other for the child's problems at school. This is a no-win situation because it does not solve problems and the child may play the school and parents off on each other.

For children in the higher grades even if there are treatment gains made in children's behaviour at home this improvement often does not generalize to the school. Parents need to set up some direct linkage with the school through things like homework monitoring, parent teacher meetings and communication through homework planners. If there is daily or weekly communication between the parent and teacher a point system or contract can be set up that can substantially improve academic performance and behaviour at school. Some research suggests that home-school linkage is more important in the long run than academic remediation for learning difficulties. Parental involvement in their child's school activities is the best predictor of a child's success at school.

This maybe a good time to discuss ADHD, and how this neuro-psychiatric disorder affects the frontal lobes of the brain. The frontal lobes play a significant role in paying attention, planning and impulse control. The most effective treatment for core ADHD symptoms are stimulant medications such as Ritalin, Dexedrine and Concerta. Warn parent that there has been a lot of inaccurate bad press about Ritalin. These medications are sometimes inappropriately prescribed because parents and teachers are looking for a quick fix to a child's problems. If a child truly has ADHD, however, all the psychosocial interventions put together are not as effective as stimulant medication in treating core symptoms of ADHD. A recent review of the literature by Timothy Wilens, M.D., a Harvard University professor of pediatric psychiatry, indicates that stimulant

medication helps protect kids from later substance use. A meta-analysis of 5 studies shows that for children who have ADHD who do not receive medication have a 3 times higher rate of substance abuse problems than children who have ADHD that do receive medication.

If families are concerned about medication a referral to a child psychiatrist maybe indicated, as medication issues can be very complex. Russell Barkley has some videotapes and books on ADHD that are a good resource to make available for parents. These products can be ordered through the ADD warehouse at this web site:

http://addwarehouse.com/shopsite_sc/store/html/index.html

The point system is the second most effective intervention for ADHD. Both medication and point systems should be considered a prosthetic device for ADHD. No one expects a child in a wheel chair to be able to compete with non-handicapped peers in a track meet. Children with ADHD have a neurological handicap, but this handicap is invisible. When people take a sink or swim approach with these children, they sink. Sadly they can sink into delinquency, drugs, and the correctional system.

Setting up School Meetings for Success

Teachers will be reluctant to set up a behavior management if they think it will be a lot of work. Have the class brainstorm ways to set up a meeting with the school so that the teacher would be more likely to cooperate with the parent's ideas. Some of the possible solutions parents may come up with are:

- Preparing for the meeting by looking for positive interpretations of the child and teacher's motives.
- Being slow to make suggestions and asking for the teacher's perspective of the child's problems.
- Communicating respect to the teacher.
- Communicating something the child said about the teacher that was positive, or that could be interpreted as positive.
- Looking for opportunities to praise and show appreciation for the teacher, especially in regards to her efforts and hard work.
- Communicating you recognize how difficult the teacher's job must be with so many students.
- Looking for exceptions to the problem, either with the child or other times the teacher was successful in addressing this kind of problem with other students.
- Expressing confidence that if caregiver and teacher work together a solution can be found.
- Suggest brainstorming together about various solutions.
- Suggest experimenting with solutions may save the teacher a lot of work in the future.

A list of the solutions could be made, photocopied for the class and distributed next session.

Handout:

Increasing Home School Communication

Home practice:

If their children are having difficulties at school parents can either use a contract or a point system to target these problems. Parents should bring the contract or a completed Daily Home School Communication sheet for the next session. Parents may need to set up an appointment with their child's teacher to coordinate this program. Parents need to be collaborative in setting up a program at school. Teachers are not likely to be receptive if they feel a program is being imposed on them.

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure
Session 10

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice debriefed
- ☐ Discussion questions covered
- ☐ Role-play on school completed.
- ☐ Handout on school discussed
- ☐ Home practice on school assigned.

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Have you been able to draw out discussion from the more quiet members of the group?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Session 11

Summary & Conclusion

Debrief Home practice

Collect home practice from the session on school. Have parents fill out outcome data and client satisfaction questionnaires.

Interacting with the CD-ROM

Watch the conclusion video.

Ask parents about what things they have found most helpful from the course and how they will be able to remember what they have learned.

Summary

Have parents come up with a summary of the various communication, self-control and discipline strategies covered in the course.

Six principles of effective parenting

- Specific
- Consistent
- Immediate
- Frequent
- Balanced
- Meaningful

Non-Directive play

Active Listening

I Statements

Problem Solving

Role Modeling

Praise

Family Meetings

Taking time to cool down

Redirection

Monitoring parental attention and ignoring minor misbehavior

Coping Self-talk

Looking for a positive or benign motive for the other person's behavior

Sitting down to discuss issues

Supervision and Monitoring

Specific Commands

Assertive Discipline

Setting Consequences

Point System

Contracting

Providing Choices

Monitoring activities with friends

Importance of family social supports

Monitoring School and Homework

A summary of various skills taught in the course is covered in the handout for this session.

Have parents think about how they would handle future behaviour problems. Do some role-plays where one of the group leaders plays the role of a defiant child refusing to get off a computer and start her homework (if you have access to the Foster/Residential Care version of Parenting Wisely this problem scenario is depicted on that CD). Parents can take turns in attempting to get the girl to begin her homework. If the parent is feeling stuck they could put up their hand and another parent could take over the role-play. The person playing the defiant child can later give positive feedback on how they emotionally responded to the parent's interventions. It is a good idea to have fun doing this by exaggerating the personality of the child. Be careful not to be so defiant that parents feel embarrassed in the role-play. Other scenarios you could role-play are:

- Acting up in public
- Sarcastic back talk
- Siblings quarrelling on a car trip
- Badgering for treats before supper

Predict Relapse

Tell parents they should expect periodic relapse with poor behaviour from their children. Let parents know this is common and that they should plan ahead for these periods. Parents will know that over-all progress is being made if the length of time between relapse is becoming longer and the episodes of poor behaviour are less intense. Let parents know that they can contact you again if things become problematic.

Give out certificates for those parents who have attended most of the program. Congratulate the parents for completing the program and say goodbye.

Handout

Recommend Skills for Problem Behaviors

Facilitator Self Monitoring Measure

Session 11

- ☐ Midweek support phone calls made.
- ☐ Home practice on school debriefed.
- ☐ Group role-play completed.
- ☐ Summary of skills covered
- ☐ Parents warned about the likelihood of future relapse

Estimated percentage of planned content covered: _____

Rate your success at establishing credibility with most of the parents:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate the overall amount of parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

Rate your success at dealing with parental resistance:

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

List several methods you used to deal with resistance: _____

General Facilitator Skills

- ☐ Were you able to keep discussion directed towards being present focussed and action oriented?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to reframe negative comments about spouses, family members and school with more positive interpretations?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to give parents recognition for their input to discussions?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to acknowledge and also reframe parental statements of hopelessness into statements that communicate change is possible?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Were you able to use role-plays demonstrating recommended skills in response to concerns or objections?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

- ☐ Have you communicated you are optimistic about parent's ability to cope with temporary setbacks in the future?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Fairly often	Very often
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

What did you learn from your experience with this group that might suggest improvements for the next group you lead?

Handouts

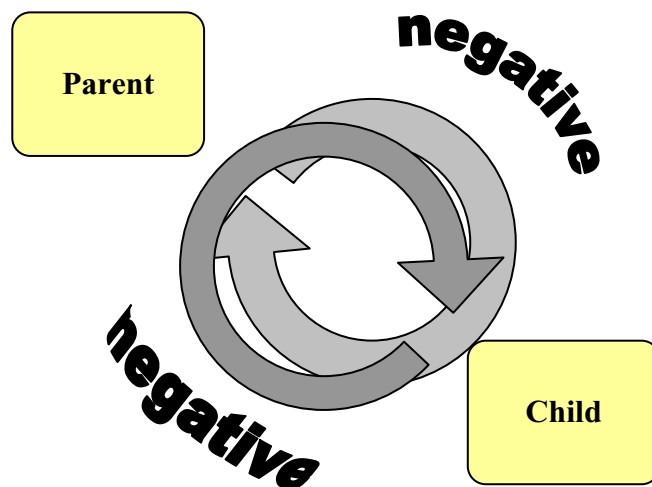
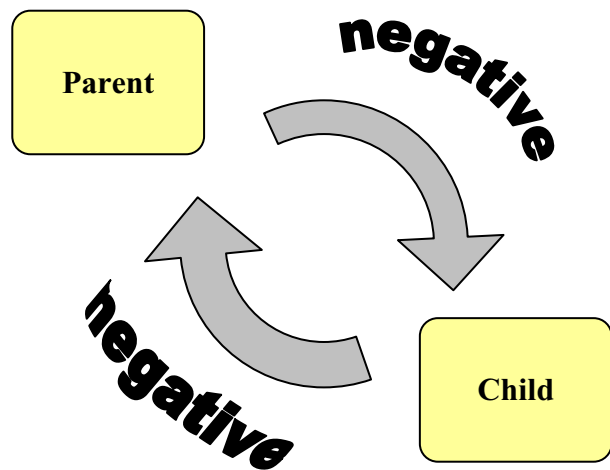
Hand for Session 1: Protective and Risk Factors

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Individual	Drug and alcohol use Being male Aggression Psychiatric conditions e.g. ADHD Early behaviour problems in school Watching violent television Low IQ Medical, physical difficulties Favourable attitude to negative and delinquent behaviour Dishonesty	Being critical and judgmental of delinquent behaviour High IQ Being female Knows there are consequences for inappropriate behaviour (in other words does not believe they can do as they please and there is nothing their parents or anyone else can do about it).
Family	Poverty Parent involvement in criminal behaviour Poor parent-child relationship Harsh, lax, or inconsistent discipline Poor supervision Broken home Separation from parents Parents are abusive Neglect	Family has warm, supportive relationships with other parents or other adults Parents approve of child's friends Parental monitoring Marital harmony
School	Poor attitude and performance at school School discipline is unclear or not consistently enforced Teachers are demoralized or burnt out	Commitment to schooling Receives recognition for efforts and positive activities at school
Peer Group	Poor at making or keeping friends Friends who are a bad influence	Friends who are involved in positive activities
Community	Crime, drugs and poverty are common in neighbourhood Neighbors and community do not support family	Ongoing family involvement in church or community activities

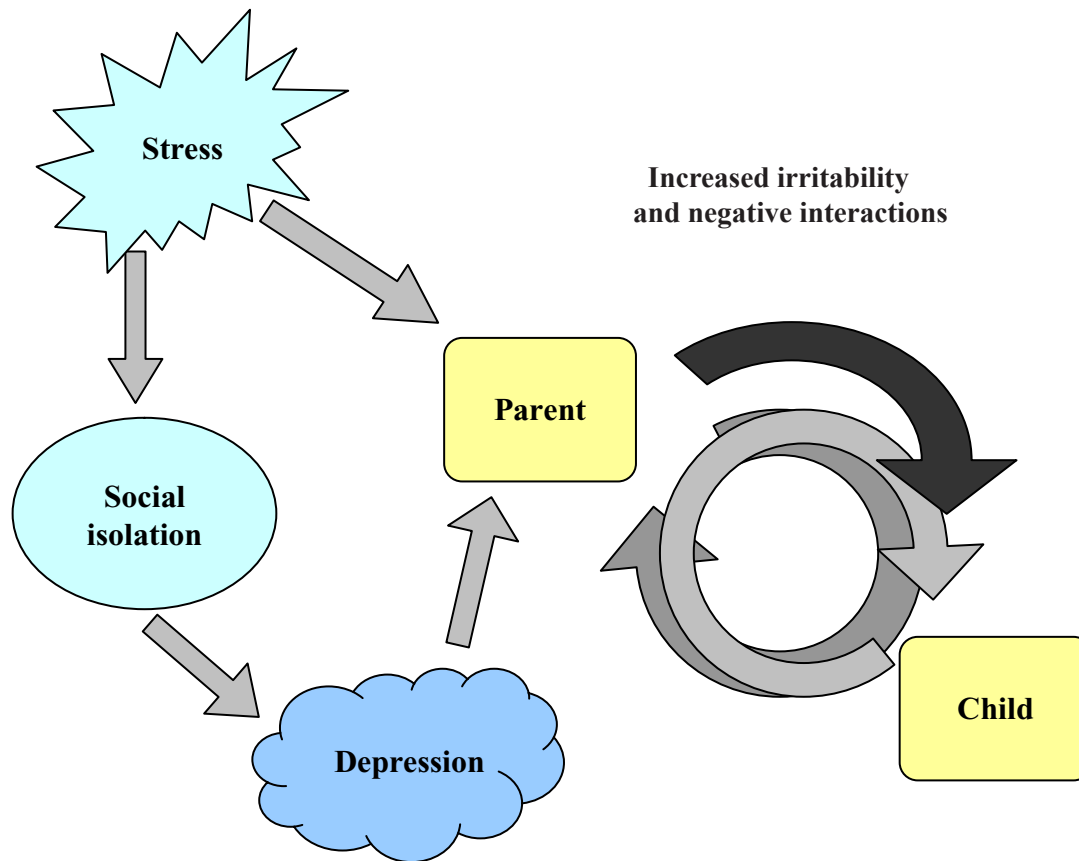
Adapted from the Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence

Handout for Session 1: The Interactive Nature of Behaviour Problems

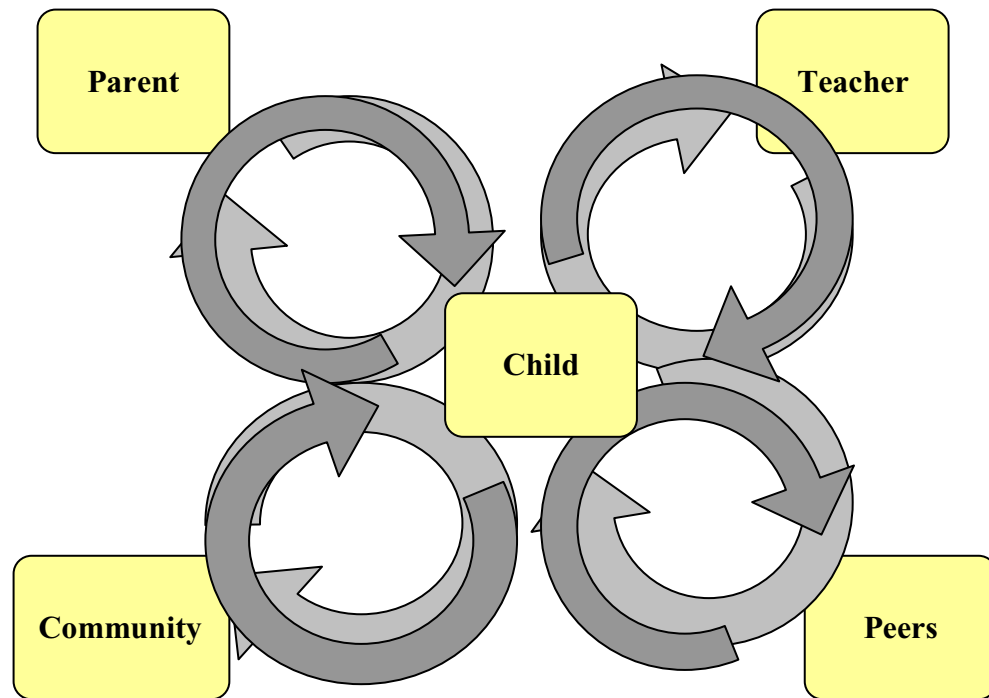
Often children with behaviour problems have difficult temperaments. Temperament refers to characteristics the child is born with and is not primarily related to how the child was raised. Some children by nature are more impulsive or irritable or are more likely to have negative moods. Children who have behaviour problems are more likely to act in ways that their parents see as negative. After a while parents may become tired and worn down by the negative behaviour of their children. This will often result in the parents becoming more irritable and negative in response to their children. This can become a vicious cycle because the child may feel that the parent is not treating them fairly or that the parent does not love them. This will lead to more negative behaviour from the child, which then leads to more negative responses from the parent. Through no fault of their own parents can become part of negative spiral that feeds into itself.



If the parent is under a lot of stress this cause further problems. Any kind of stress will make things worse. Common sources of stress include financial stress, marital problems, health problems or employment stress. These stressors will result in the parent becoming more irritable. This makes the parent even more likely to over react to the child's poor behaviour. If parents have friends who can act as social supports they will be able to handle a greater amount of stress in their lives and still manage to be OK. Parents who don't have friends and have few social supports have a much harder time coping with stress. These parents are much more likely to run into bigger problems trying to cope with a difficult child. Research has shown that parents with out social supports who have a difficult child are much more likely to become depressed. Depression drains the parent's energy causing them to become even more irritable and cranky with their child. When people become depressed it is harder to think clearly. Depression distorts the parent's thinking making the child's behaviour seem worse than it really is. The parent is much more likely to overreact to the child's problems, which again hurts the parent-child relationship.



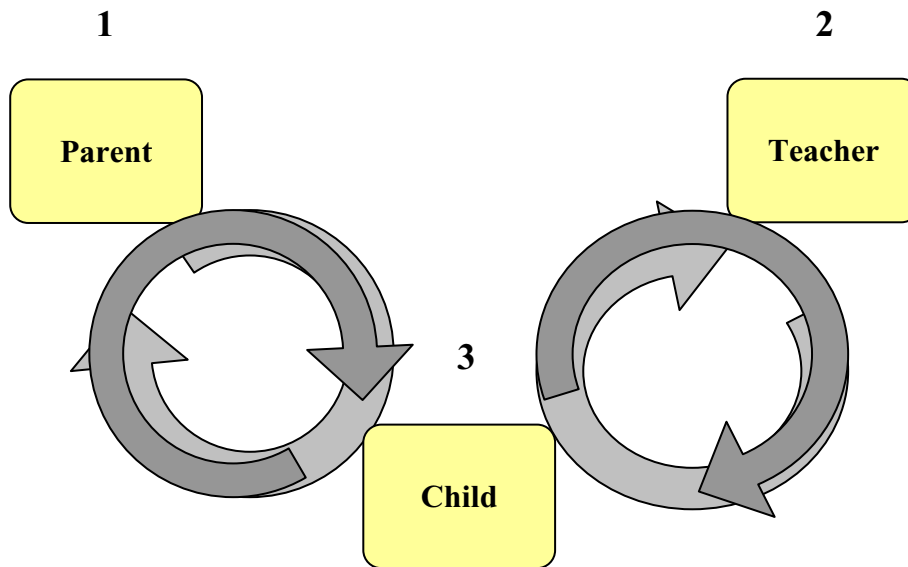
Similar cycles of negative interactions can frequently occur between children with behaviour problems and teachers, or their friends or other people in the community. Research has shown that many teachers are quicker to become irritable and negative with children with behaviour problems than they are with other students. Research has shown that the average teacher tends to become more negative with children with behaviour problems than they should be even when the child's poor behavior is taken into consideration. We cannot really blame teachers for this because it is the same kind of cyclical negative interactions that frequently occur between the parent and child. Research has also shown that when children with behaviour problems are playing in community settings other parents are quicker to become negative and hostile towards them. These repetitive cycles of negative interactions are the primary factors that drive behaviour problems, delinquency and substance abuse problems in youth.



This explains why many of the interventions that target behaviour problems and substance abuse problems in youth are so ineffective. Individual counseling with the child is the most common intervention that is available for children with behaviour problems and it is an approach that has been carefully studied and consistently shown to be ineffective. Residential treatments and psychiatric hospitalization are also ineffective because they do not help change the way these children interact with their parents and with the school system.

There are three kinds of treatments that have been shown to be effective in helping children and teens with behaviour problems:

1. treatments that teach parents skills for decreasing these negative interactions
2. treatments that that give schoolteachers and the school system skills for decreasing these negative interactions
3. treatments that teach the child skills for decreasing these negative interactions (skill training is more effective than counseling).



The most effective approach focuses on parents, the second most effective approach focuses on the school system and the least effective approach focuses on the child. Both parents and teachers usually prefer the child to be the focus of treatment, but unfortunately these ongoing negative interactions create a situation where children are not motivated to learn anything. In session 2 of this course we will look more at why these children are not motivated to change and what we need to do to help them become more motivated.

Parent Handout for Session 2: Nondirective Play

In Nondirective play the parent lets the child take the lead in the play activities. Parent/child play will help you and your child to become more bonded to each other and increase your enjoyment of each other. If you have a strong positive relationship with your child then the child will be more motivated to please you and will be more likely to respond appropriately when you do need to use discipline. Research shows that parents who play regularly with their children improve children's attention span, increase creativity and resourcefulness and improve social skills. Parent/child play has also been shown to decrease the likelihood of future problems with depression and anxiety problems, delinquency, school drop out and substance abuse.

Pick a regular time to spend about 15 to 20 minutes each day for nondirective play with your child. If your child is already playing in an appropriate activity then you could simply join in with that play imitating your child. No other children should be present during the nondirective playtime because they are likely to become jealous and interrupt. You can set up this time by saying to your child, "I have 20 minutes free time and I would like to do something with you. What would you like to do?" Watching TV does not count as a nondirective play activity because there would be too little interaction between you and your child.

Play using building blocks, cars and trucks, little people, dolls and dress up play are ideal for the non-directive play exercise. Pay very close attention, sitting close by your child, describing most of what the child does or says. Look for chances to praise your child's activities. Try not to take control of the play or direct it. Let the child take the lead. Try to plan the playtime during a part of the day when you can forget about other worries. The activity will be good for you as well as your child because it is a good way to let go of daily stress and enjoy your child in a receptive manner. You can pretend that you are a sport news broadcaster who is describing your child's activities over the radio. Younger children will often really enjoy this especially if you describe the play with lots of enthusiasm and excitement.

During this time you should avoid asking questions and give no commands. Questions are often a subtle way to direct children. It is all right to ask innocent questions to clarify what a child is doing, but keep these to a minimum as they can interrupt the play. Do not use this time to teach your child the correct way to play a game like checkers. If you wish to teach your child the correct way to play do so another time. Look for opportunities to praise your child and give approval. Praise has more impact if it is specific, accurate and honest. Your children will beam if they are the center of your positive attention. Here are some examples you might use, "I really enjoy spending time with you when we play quietly like this," "that was very clever the way you did that," "when you were younger you would never have been able to do this - you sure are growing up fast." You can also show approval nonverbally by smiling, giving a kiss, fluffing your child's hair or giving a thumb up sign.

If your child misbehaves simply turn away and look elsewhere briefly. As soon as your child is being appropriate turn and immediately give approval. If the misbehavior continues or is fairly serious, then tell your child the playtime is over and that you will play with them again another time when they are behaving more appropriately. Then leave the room. Most children do not misbehave during nondirective play.

Nondirective play sounds easy but many parents find it difficult to do. Parents have a tendency to ask too many questions or end up trying to teach the child. Don't worry if you make mistakes; just try harder next time to work on your positive attention skills.

Handout for session 2: How to Make Praise More Effective

Praise is an important way to let our children know how much we appreciate their efforts. When children receive praise and feel appreciated, they are more motivated to work hard.

The average mother praises her child about once every 90 minutes. The majority of parents are making critical statements much more frequently than this. Strive to use praise and interact positively with your child 4 times for every criticism or punishment you use. The most effective parents are very liberal in their use of praise.

Advantages

- Helps to develop healthy self esteem
- Children love being the center of positive attention from their parents
- Kids will want to spend more time with you
- In the long run frequent use of praise increases the effectiveness of other things you do as a parent.

How to use:

1. Use praise *immediately*. Praise is more effective if you use it as immediately as possible after your child does something you want to see more of.
2. Use a *sincere, enthusiastic* tone of voice. Make sure your child knows you are thrilled with what they are doing.
3. Be specific. This lets your child know exactly what it is you like about what they are doing. Being specific makes praise more effective
4. Use nonverbal signs of approval. You can double the effectiveness of your praise by pairing it with smiles, a wink, a pat on the back, tussling the child's hair, giving a hug or a high five.

There are three types of praise that have been shown to be particularly effective in helping children to be more cooperative:

- That was very smart or clever
- I know you can do it
- You are important to me (or to our group) because...

You do not have to use these exact same words. People tend to get into habits with how they do things. It is a good idea to experiment with different ways of giving praise, as it will have more impact if we say it differently.

Handout for session 2: Nurturing Games with Younger Children

These games involve a lot of physical contact with your child. This will help you and your child to feel more bonded with each other. This kind of play is a form of social skill training for your child and will help teach your child some basic skills for playing with others. These games are not nondirective and should be used separately from the nondirective playtime.

The sandwich game

The parent roles the child up in a blanket and pretends to add various condiments such as ketchup and mayonnaise. The condiments can be silly such as peanut butter, mash potatoes or ice cream. The parent then pretends to eat their favorite sandwich telling the child that they taste delightfully good.

Popcorn toes

A similar game involves the parent pretending that the child has exotically flavored popcorn toes. The parent names a different flavor of popcorn for each toe, such as, caramel popcorn, chocolate popcorn, root beer popcorn, or spaghetti popcorn. After naming the different toes the parent pretends to eat the delicious toes.

The Smarties game

The child lies on the carpet and the parent hides smarties in different places on the child's body, for example in a pocket, under an arm, behind an ear. The parent then pretends to forget where the smarties are and searches for them. As each smartie is found the parent feeds them to the child. Afterwards the parent can hide some smarties in different places around their body. This time the child searches for the smarties and either feeds them to the parent or shares them.

Measuring the child

The parent uses a tape measure or a ruler measuring different parts of the child's body and writing them down. The parent tells the child this is very important information, while measuring things like the distance from the middle finger to the child's nose or the distance from the big toe to the elbow.

Simon says touch

There is a version of Simon says where the parent might say touch your thumbs. Then the parent touches his or her thumb to the child's thumb. Next the parent might say touch your knees the parent and child would touch their knees together. The roles can be reversed with the child leading the game some of the time.

Guessing the shape

The parent draws shapes or letters on the child's back with their finger while the child tries to guess what the letter or shape was. The roles can be reversed with the child writing on the parents back.

Handout for Session 2: Dealing with Children in Public Places

Some parents find their children's behaviour in public to be so embarrassing that they avoid taking their children out. This not only limits the parent ability to go out, but it also deprives the child of opportunities to learn better social behaviour. Often the kinds of problems parents encounter with their children in public places are fairly predictable. Thinking ahead and coming up with a plan can often save you a lot of grief later. There are four steps that will help you to do set up a good plan.

Step 1. Set up the rules before entering the public place. Before you enter the building or public place review with your child the rules you expect your child to follow. For example, in a store you might say, "stay close to me, don't touch things and do not badger me to buy you something." Have your child repeat these rules back to you. On future trips you do not necessarily need to repeat the same rules each time. Instead you can have your child recite the rules to you. This helps keep your rules clear in your child's mind.

Step 2. Set up a reward for the child's compliance. While your still outside the public place tell your child that they can earn a reward for good behaviour and following the rules. For very young children you may need to use frequent small rewards such as favourite snack food that you can give out every few minutes to help keep your child on track. For older children they could earn a special privilege at home after the trip. Occasionally you may choose to buy your child something at the end of your trip. This is okay, but if you do this frequently then your child will come to expect this kind of reward every time you go out.

Step 3. Set up a consequence for non-compliance. While you still outside, tell your child what consequence they will receive for not following the rules. This might be a loss of privileges at home such as no TV or electronic games for a period of time. If you are already using Time Outs effectively at home then you can likely use Time Out effectively in public places. Time Outs will be covered in greater detail later in the course. If you do use Time Out you could have your child face a blank wall or a dull corner in the store. Or you could have the child serve the Time Out outside or in your car. Never leave a young child unsupervised while they are in a car. Another alternative is to have the child do the Time Out when you return home. You could keep a notebook to write down the problems that occur or you could put a red check mark in a visible place. Each time you add a mark your child will have a longer Time Out when you return home.

Step 4. Give your child a role or activity. Think of an activity or role that you can ask your child to do. In a grocery store you could ask your child to look for certain items that you intend to purchase. Children are more likely to get into trouble if they are bored or have nothing to do. They may get involved in all kinds of inappropriate or silly things just to entertain themselves. Remember to give your child very frequent praise for good behaviour or for doing the activity or task.

You can use these four steps in restaurants, church or at someone else's home. You can also use them in your own home when you have company over. If your having company for a meal, look for a role that you could assign to your child such as serving appetizers. Your child is much less likely to get into trouble if they have a positive role to play.

Long car trips. You can use the same four steps for long car trips. Review the rules for car trips and set up some incentives along with punishments before you leave. Find some activities to occupy your child for the trip. A strategy for earning rewards is to bring a kitchen timer along for the trip. You can tell your children that they can earn 10 to 25 cents spending money for each 15 minutes of the trip where there is no fighting or problems along the way. You can also use the timer to remind your self to frequently praise your children when they are not being a problem. You can use Time Out in the car but you need to look for a safe place to park. You can exit the car if you wish and supervise the Time Out from outside. You could also have your child stand or sit on a car mat in a safe location outside the car.

Handout for session 3: Rewarding Independent Play.

Many parents state that as soon as they are on the phone their children interrupt and pester them for attention. This exercise will help you to increase the amount of praise you give your child for not interrupting you. With this exercise you set up a bogus phone call. You could phone a spouse, a close friend or no one at all. The whole purpose of the phone call is to interrupt yourself and praise your child for not interrupting.

- Assign a pleasant task for the child, which is close by your phone so that you can monitor your child. For example you might ask your child to do some coloring.
- Tell the child that you are making a phone call and you do not want to be interrupted.
- After making the call, interrupt your self in the first 30 to 60 seconds and praise your child for not interrupting you. Tell your child you really appreciate how well he/she is playing on their own.
- Continue to interrupt yourself every few minutes and praise your child. Keep your eye on the child so that if you see your child is becoming antsy you can immediately interrupt yourself and praise your child for not interrupting you.
- You can eventually extend the time interval between the times you interrupt your phone call to praise your child.
- How often you praise your child depends upon their maturity. Less mature children need more frequent praise.

This exercise can be done with other activities such as having a conversation with a visitor, preparing a meal or reading a magazine.

Handout for session 3: Using Positive Attention to Improve Compliance

In the next few weeks set up a number of short training periods where you increase the number of commands that you give to your child. These should be simple requests that your child can do quickly with little effort such as please pass me that magazine or could you get me a Kleenex. After each one of these requests use praise and positive attention skills to reinforce the child's compliance by saying things like:

“Mommy really likes it when you do what I ask,”

“I really appreciate it when you help me with things like this,”

“Good boy/girl for ...”

Try to give about 4 or 5 simple commands like this in a short period. Because these request are quite simple it is very likely your child will be compliant. If your child is not compliant switch to using even simpler requests or ask your child to do something that it is very unlikely to refuse such as, “please go to the fridge and get a soft drink for you and me,” and then strongly praise the child's compliance.

It is important to strongly praise your child whenever they spontaneously do something appropriately. This will help increase internal motivation and the child is more likely to do things like this on his own in the future.

When you are first teaching your child to do a chore don't walk away. Instead stay close by and go out of your way to praise your child as they are completing the chore. Instead of pointing out mistakes praise the child for everything they are doing right and prompt your child on what they need to add in so they can do an even better job. Try to use lots of positive attention during and immediately after completing the chore so that your child will begin to make a connection between cooperation, good behavior and positive attention.

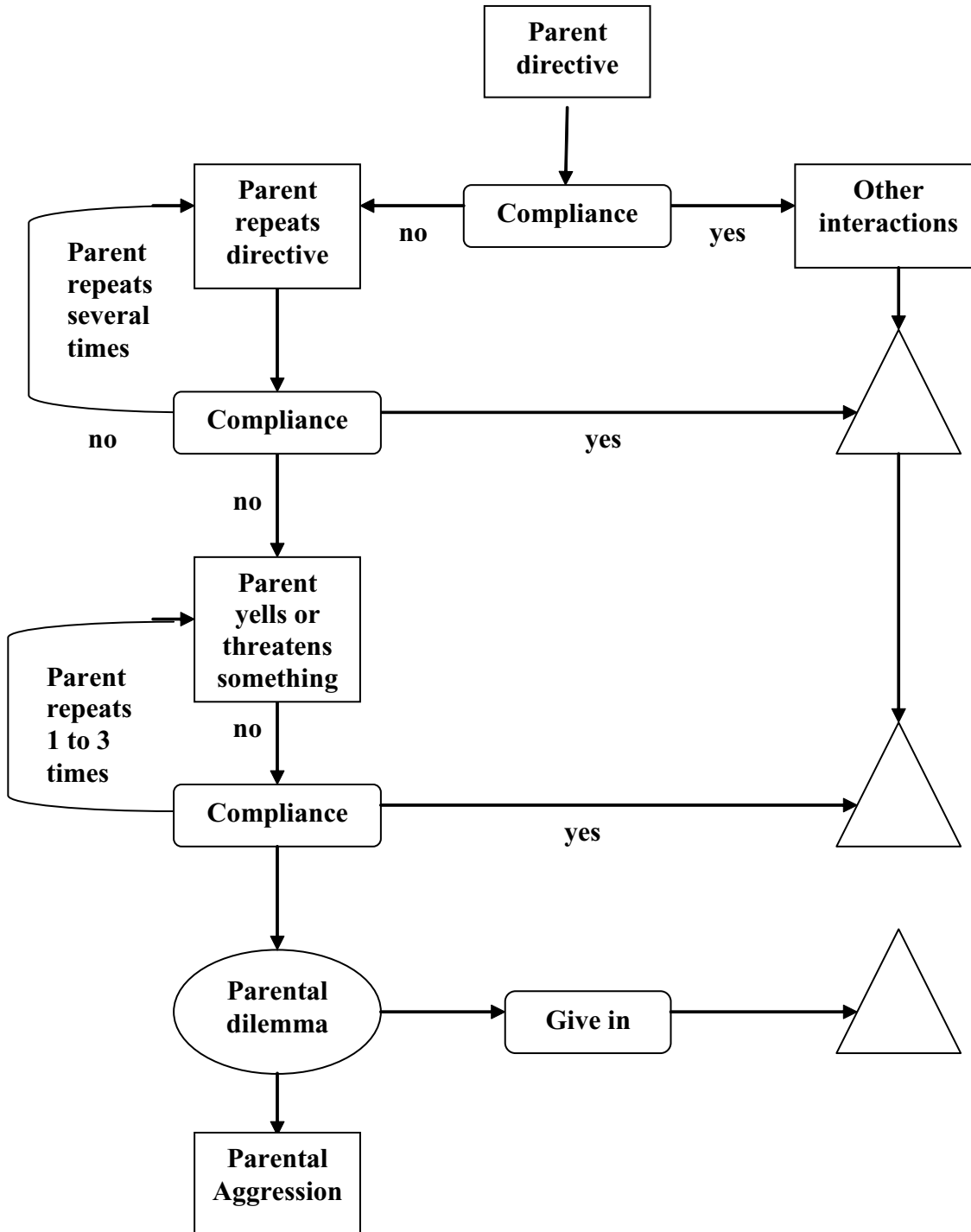
Handout for session 3: Improving Cooperation

Improving a child's compliance to parental authority has been shown to improve children's behaviour in general. So increasing parent's ability to give effective commands or direction is very important. Timing is important. Children often need some warning if they are involved in an activity to respond to a request. For example you could say, "You can add 2 more pieces to your model and then it is time to get ready for bed." Use of a kitchen timer can also be useful to help children with transitions. Arguments, protests, whining and crying should be ignored. Arguing about rules and commands is a way to sidetrack the parent. If you give a reason for why the child should comply it should be short and to the point. Here are 5 steps for making more effective requests:

1. **Be prepared to follow through.** Before you give a command stop and think about what you will do if the child does not comply. If your child is noncompliant and you do not follow through with a consequence then your child is more likely to be noncompliant again in the future. You need to be able to back up what you say with positive and negative consequences. If you have a plan ahead of time it is easier to stay calm and in control. You do not need to make your child comply every time, but you need to follow through with a small consequence for non-compliance. What consequence you use is less important than giving a message that bad behaviour always receives a consequence and good behaviour results in parental attention and increased privileges.
2. **Make sure you have your child's attention.** Do not try to parent by remote control from the next room. It may help to touch the child's arm, say the child's name and ask the child to look at you. You may need to turn down the volume on a TV or computer to eliminate distractions.
3. **Stay calm.** Remember most children are allergic to chores. Taking non-compliance personally as defiance of your authority will feed into your anger. If you have anger in your voice it usually increases a power struggle. Keep your voice steady and calm.
4. **Be Specific.** Tell the child what you want them to do rather than what you do not want them to do. Give one direction at a time and if the task is complicated break it down into steps. Have the child repeat the request back to you so that you are sure they understand what you have said.

Reward compliance. If you take compliance for granted and do not reinforce it then it is less likely to occur again in the future. Points, privileges and tangible rewards are all effective ways to reinforce compliance, but you do not want to become too dependent on using them alone. It is even more important to use praise, smiles, hugs and positive attention to reward your child's compliance with requests.

Handout for session 5: The Cycle of Coercive Behavior



This flow chart is an adapted from Barkley, R.A. (1997). *Defiant Child*, New York: Guilford Press.

Handout for Session 5: Attending and Planned Ignoring³

There are a number of behaviors which can be decreased with Planned Ignoring:

Whining, poor table manners, complaining, yelling, badgering, crying, swearing, quarreling with siblings, pouting, teasing, and interrupting.

List which behaviors you would like to decrease with planned ignoring.

General Problem: _____

When my child does this problem behavior _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	I will do this Ignore at him/her Not look at him/her Not smile Turn away Walk away Talk with someone else Attend to another child And I will do this every time
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When my child does this positive opposite _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	I will do this Pay attention Look at him/her Talk to him/her Smile Praise Ask questions Hug Kiss Give a thumbs up or high five And I will do this every time
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Parent Handout for session 7: Time Out

Time Out can be used for more serious misbehavior in children. One common mistake is to repeat a command several times before following through with Time Out. If the child refuses to comply after several requests the parent is likely to become angry. Anger in a parent's voice often results in the child being more defiant and it can undermine your authority. The location of the Time Out should be away from other people in a boring but safe place like the bottom of the stairs or the corner of a room.

Find a time when everyone is calm to explain to your child how Time Outs will work. Be specific about what kinds of behaviors will result in Time Out. Explain where the Time Out will be and how long it will last. Explain what will happen if your child does not cooperate with the Time Out. Let your child know that if he or she breaks something they will need to fix it. If they make a mess they will need to clean it up before coming out of Time Out. If your child tries to argue do not argue back.

If this is the first time you have used Time Out it is a good idea to have your child practice the Time Out in a pretend situation. You can use points or another reward to encourage your child to practice. Make sure you enthusiastically praise your child for cooperating with the pretend Time Out. It is ok for the child to leave the Time Out early during a role-play situation. Practicing Time Out in a pretend situation can greatly improve cooperation with real Time Outs in the near future.

Steps for Time Out

- In a firm and calm voice tell your child what they have done wrong and state they must go to Time Out.
- Stay calm. Do not debate or argue with the child.
- Give only one warning. Do not continue to threaten to use Time Out. Use it!
- Tell the child how long the time out will be (this helps to prevent the child continually asking when the Time Out will be done). Use a kitchen timer to keep track of time. An appropriate amount of time is 1 minute for each year of the child's age. Time Out time begins when the child is quiet.
- If the child cooperates with Time Out without arguing or having a tantrum praise their cooperation. For example, "I asked you to go to Time Out and went right away. That's great!"
- If the child does not go to Time Out right away the time it takes to get there is added to the original Time Out. If your child is still not going to Time Out after 5 minutes has passed tell your child they will lose a privilege instead. Warn them ahead of time and tell them you will count to 3 and the privilege will be lost. Once the count to 3 is over the child loses the privilege even if they state they are now willing to go to Time Out.
- Do not argue with the child during Time Out and no one else in the family should talk to the child either. You should remain close by so you can monitor the Time Out.
- If your child refused to do something that led to the Time Out tell your child they must agree to do this before coming out of Time Out. If the child still does not cooperate with your original request end the power struggle by taking away a privilege instead.
- Be sure to praise the positive opposite behavior whenever it occurs. This is the most important part of any punishment technique.

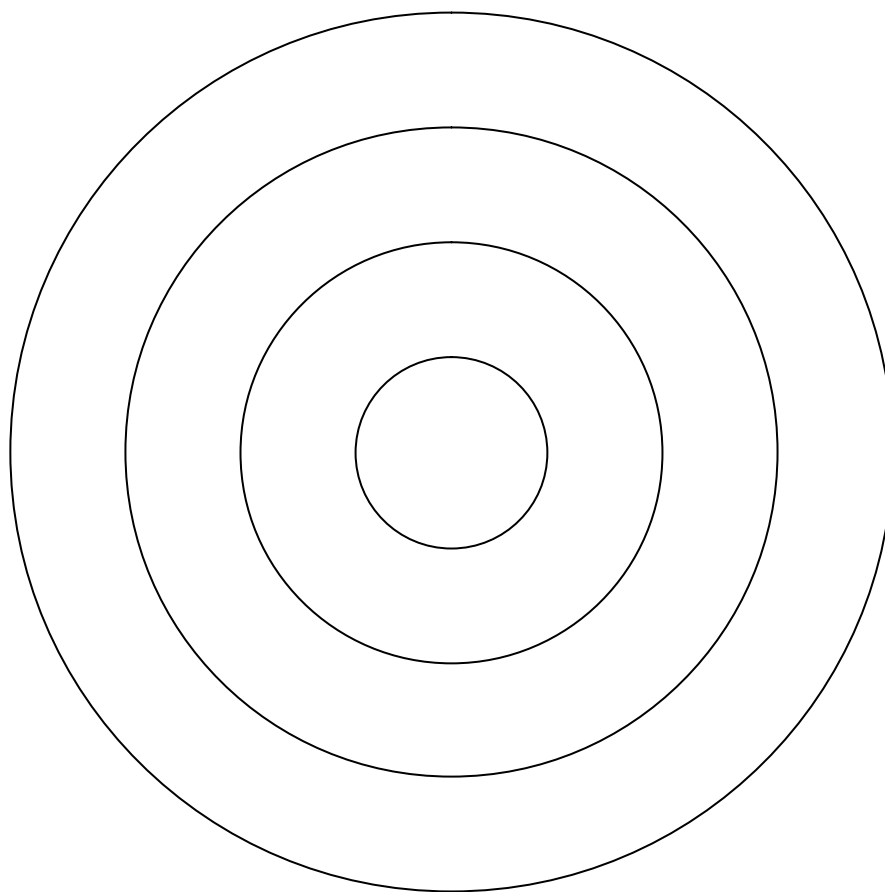
Responding to problems with Time Out.

Many children in the beginning will try to resist Time Out in order to test their parents. If your child throws a tantrum or cries and you do not follow through then your child is more likely to throw a tantrum or cry in the future in order to avoid Time Out. If the child is rocking his chair or tipping the chair over you can switch to using the stairs or a room for Time Out. If the child comes out of the room the door can be shut. Don't lock the door. If your child still refuses to cooperate warn the child they will lose a privilege such as not being able to watch TV for the afternoon or the evening. Make sure the child knows ahead of time what will happen if they do not cooperate with the Time Out.

If you find you are using Time Out several times a day this is a sign the program is not working well and needs to be modified. Being very consistent and using Time Out in a precise way greatly increases effectiveness. If you are carefully following the above steps and are still having difficulty try increasing your use of praise and rewards for the positive opposite behaviour:

- Handling problems calmly versus temper tantrums
- Speaking respectfully and calmly versus backtalk
- Playing cooperatively versus teasing and quarrelling

Handout for Alternate Session 9: Increasing Social Supports



Put the names of your very closest friends or family members into the inner circle of this diagram. In the next circle add the names of a wider group of friends, family and co-workers that you would regard as people you feel supported by. In the outer circle add the names of acquaintances and other people you know.

Name one person who used to be in the inner circle but has now become more distant. Draw an arrow from where they used to be to where they are now. Name one person you would like to be closer with (not romantically). Put their name where they are now and draw an arrow to where you would like them to be.

People who feel well supported by family and friends are less likely to become sick or depressed and tend to be able to recover more quickly after experiencing a crisis. Dr. Harold Koenig of Duke University Medical Centre has been quoted by The New Republic as stating, that “Lack of religious involvement has an effect on mortality that is equivalent to forty years of smoking one pack of cigarettes per day.” People who attend church tend to live longer than people who do not. The church community acts as a social support network. Human beings need social contact and social support to remain healthy physically and emotionally. Parents who do not have social supports are less healthy physically, are more likely to become depressed and have more trouble coping with stress. Social isolation is the enemy of all parents.

One of the best ways to build friendships is to show interest in the other person and be a good listener. The communication skills that you have learned through the Parenting Wisely program can help you to develop more supportive relationships. Not all friendships, however, need to be intimate. Shallow but fun relationships are also good for you. Look for relationships where you can have regular contact. Try to find people who have similar interests to yours. Try to keep a wide focus. Some people try to meet all their social needs through one person. It is better to have a variety of friendships.

It is usually easier to deepen a friendship you already have or to connect with an old friend than to start new friendships. Look for ways that you can combine time with friends with exercise, or activities with your children so that you can do two things at once. Look for ways that you can connect with other parents who have children the same age as yours. Lasting relationships are reciprocal. This means that if they do a favour for you that you look for a way to return the favour. There needs to be a balance in the give and take of the relationship. The person who never receives anything in return will likely lose interest in the friendship.

Write down the names of two people you would like to know better.

Who: _____

How often: _____

What do you need to do to make contact with this person?

What else could you do to improve this relationship?

What could you do to make the relationship more reciprocal? So that you are not just asking for things but you are helping to meet the needs of the other person.

Write up a pretend request for help for either yourself or your child. Use an I Statement to describe your feelings and why you're asking for help:

Handout for Session 10: Increasing Home School Communication

Helping children to do well at school is one of the most important things parents can do. If children are having difficulty at school parents need to increase their monitoring of this area. This can be done through the child's homework planner or through the use of daily behaviour reports described below. The first example primarily targets the child's work performance in class and the second example targets behaviour at recess and free time. You can make up your own daily report that targets about 4 or 5 behaviours that are most important with your child. Some other examples might be not calling out in class, staying in your seat, sharing, including other children in play, giving complements, and writing down assigned homework. It is important to set up the program to succeed. Therefore you should include a couple of behaviours that your child is already doing well so that he or she will experience some success right away.

If your child has more than one teacher they both can fill out reports for their classes. Once your child is doing well the report can be cut back to once a week or perhaps eventually once per month. The points the child earns can be included in a point system that you have already set up with your child at home or it can be connected to incentives written up in a contract. Parents have a much broader range of rewards and sanctions than teachers have at school, which can make this program more effective than a program that is set up at school alone. Set up the rewards so that there is an immediate pay off for the child each day. For example earning TV time, a special snack or a later bedtime. Additional weekly rewards can be included such as earning pizza, a video or having a friend sleep over.

If the child fails to bring the report home this should result in a loss of privileges or perhaps being grounded for that day. If your child is likely to forge the teacher's signature you should tell the child that you will be meeting with the teacher on a regular basis to review the communication book and the forgeries will be detected.

Daily Home-School Communication: Classroom

Teacher's comments and initials:

Date _____ Child's name _____

Teachers: Please rate the child's behaviour today for the area's below.
5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = fair, 2 = poor and 1 = very poor

Quality of any handed in homework	
Class participation	
Follows classroom rules	
Gets along with other children	
Performance of class work	

Recess & Free time

Teacher's comments and initial's:

Date _____ Child's name _____

Teachers: Please rate the child's behaviour today for the area's below.
5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = fair, 2 = poor and 1 = very poor

No fighting, hitting, kicking, pushing	
Waiting for turns	
Follows recess rules	
No teasing or name calling	
Being friendly with other children	

Daily school report

Teacher's comments and initial's:

Date _____ Child's name _____

Teachers: Please rate the child's behaviour today for the area's below.
5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = fair, 2 = poor and 1 = very poor

Handout for Session 11: Recommended Skills for Problem Behaviors⁴

Problem Behavior	Parent Response
Back talk, arguing	Planned Ignoring Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior of talking calmly and respectfully I-statements Setting consequences Time out
Bed time problems	Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior of going to bed appropriately Point system
Not doing chores	Giving clear and specific instructions Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior Point system Assertive discipline: give a choice of assigning a second chore or losing a privilege
Cleanliness problems	Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior Point system
Disobeying curfew	Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior Point system Assertive Discipline
Dawdling, not getting ready on time	Attending to and praising the positive opposite Point system
Sibling rivalry and conflict	Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior Non directive play with each child individually Point system Time out Time out of toys Setting consequences
Physical aggression	Point system Assertive Discipline
School problems	Active Listening to child Contacting teacher Attending to and praising the positive opposite behavior Point system Parent participating in homework
Property destruction	Make restitution Time out of toys Assertive Discipline
Running away	Assertive Discipline
Stealing	Making restitution Assertive Discipline
Lying	Assertive Discipline Time out
Tantrums	Attending to and praising the positive opposite of handling disappointments calmly Point system Time outs Parent walks away from child

⁴ The specification of parenting practices to address child behaviors is based on Kazdin's Parent Management Training program.

Skipping school

Contacting teacher
Assertive Discipline

Whining, badgering, crying

Ignoring
Attending to and praising the positive opposite

Pouting

Ignoring