



## Using the Video Vignettes Most Effectively

**Some of the Incredible Years (IY) Program vignettes seem outdated, can we omit them or change them out for something else? If we do that are we delivering the program with fidelity?**

Because the IY Parent and Teacher programs are evidenced based programs, doing the programs with fidelity to the model is very important in terms of assuring that agencies get outcomes similar to the positive change outcomes that have been found in multiple research studies around the world (Leijten, Raaijmakers, Orobio de Castro, Ban, & Matthys, 2015; Menting, Orobio de Castro, & Matthys, 2013; Pidano & Allen, 2015). Most agencies and countries that choose IY programs do so because of this strong evidence base. This also means that any significant changes to the program content and methods can diminish the program's effectiveness. Research has indicated that program effectiveness is reduced when the recommended program dosage is cut back, core vignettes are eliminated, and content changed. Reductions in fidelity to the program also occur when therapists and group leaders mediate the vignettes in ways that fail to make them relevant for the particular parents' and teachers' individual situations including behavior management knowledge level, or children's development and diagnoses.

We do not recommend leaving out core video vignettes because the clothing or hairstyles seem outdated, or the setting of the homes or classrooms doesn't match the group participants' environment. However, it is important for trained group leaders to pay attention to the ways that group participants are responding to the vignettes. We have found that when parents or teachers are not responding positively to the vignettes, there are many things that group leaders can do to make the vignettes more relevant to the group. For example, a vignette that seems corny or old fashioned can be one that the parents or teachers laugh at, roll their eyes, but then have a passionate and productive discussion as they explore what is appropriate for their current situation. It's usually the case that the way the vignette is presented by the group leader has a large impact on how

parents and teachers receive the vignette and what they get out of the vignette. It is not the intention that parents or teachers copy video vignettes verbatim, rather it is important that the vignettes are used to trigger discussions, to pull out the key “principles,” and to set up role play practices that represent the issues they are facing at home or at school. The skilled group leader will help group participants discover these timeless and evidence-based management and relationship building principles and learn how to apply them to their particular goals, situations, and their children’s unique developmental needs(Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Marsenich, 2014).

It is typical for newer group leaders to find that participants rate the videos lower than leader skills or participant involvement on their session evaluations. It is often easier and less personal for participants to rate vignettes lower than something more personal such as the leader skills or their own or peer involvement. However, with time, as group leaders get consultation around how to effectively mediate the vignettes, learn ways to present the vignettes to make them relevant to participants’ goals, those issues diminish with time.

### **Why both old and new vignettes?**

Several years ago when we updated the video vignettes for the third time, many certified group leaders wanted to make sure we didn’t eliminate some of the old classic vignettes. Regardless of outdated dress code, they found that these vignettes still evoked a strong participant response and modeled an important principle. Moreover, as these vignettes are non rehearsed, unscripted scenarios, it would be impossible to replicate many of these amazing parent or teacher-child interactions with updated clothing and settings. Therefore, we have continued to incorporate some vignettes that were filmed many years ago. If you have the latest updated versions of the IY programs, you will also see that there are newer vignettes interspersed with these older vignettes, so there is variety in the type of vignettes that group leaders are showing.

It's a complicated process to update a program that is empirically validated because years of research using the original vignettes provide the evidence base that the program works. If we were to take out all the old vignettes, then the program is substantially different than the original program and we cannot guarantee that it would get the same good results. Clothing, hair styles, and video technology changes rapidly, but many of the older, original vignettes have been left in because of the kinds of conversations we

have found that they can stimulate between group participants, and because they teach important principles about building relationships, managing behavior problems and promoting children's optimal social and emotional development. In our updated programs we have also added newer vignettes to represent families from different cultural backgrounds, different parent-child interactions such as grocery shopping, bedtime and separation routines, talking to children about calming down and newer ideas. New vignettes have been added based on content and interactions that parents have requested having more examples to view.

Finally, it is important for group leaders to know that while there are some core vignettes that should be shown in all groups, there is also flexibility about some of the vignette choices, so group leaders can review the vignettes and choose vignettes that seem most relevant for their families. Moreover, some parents and teachers will need to see more vignettes and examples of strategies than others depending on their educational and knowledge level or their cultural background and how new or different the content is for them.

### **How to these video vignettes work across different cultural groups and languages?**

For over 30 years we have evaluated our IY programs in the US with multiple ethnic groups including Latino, Asian, Native-American, and African-American families in addition to Caucasian families(Reid, Webster-Stratton, & Beauchaine, 2001). In addition, we have had program research replications of many of the IY programs by independent researchers in countries such as England, Holland, Hong Kong, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Scotland, and Wales. The programs have also been used with success in Russia, Turkey, and West Bank and with the Maori people in New Zealand. Current research is taking place in Estonia and Slovenia.

Outcomes have indicated success with the programs regardless of cultural or educational background(Gardner, Montgomery, & Knerr, 2015) (Gardner, Hutchings, & Bywater, 2010). For countries where English is not the dominant language, translations have been carried out for subtitling the DVDs, for participant handouts and in some cases for the participant books and leader's manuals. These translations have been carefully done with IY mentors reviewing them to make sure they are translated with accurate meaning and adhere to IY program philosophy. While IY has considered making individualized video programs for each cultural group or country, after a review of the

research results, it was decided that with the multiplicity of cultural groups and languages within countries we could not manage a unique program for every country or culture or language. Rather, the advantages of promoting cultural diversity, mixing up cultural groups, discussing cultural differences and problem-solving solutions to common goals seem to outweigh the barriers.

Overall the objective is to develop programs that promote not only family, and school support systems to bring out the best in children but also through the group approach to promote community and world-wide support networks. Most often there are more commonalities in participant goals than differences across different cultural or ethnic or country groups. The advantages of helping families and teachers to appreciate and respect different perspectives and learn from each other outweighs the more insular approach. Globalization requires this understanding.

It is interesting that when we speak to group leaders from around the world we often hear that there is a particular issue that parents or teachers in their groups bring up as a cultural barrier. For example, “teachers in our country do not believe in praising students in this way.” Or “in our country parents would not play with children in this way.” While we understand that parenting and teaching practices to vary with culture, these are often the same comments that we hear from group leaders who are using the program in the United States. The more that group leaders from around the world learn to skillfully use the vignettes as a jumping off point for discussing how praise or play might look in their particular country or setting, the less resistance group leaders experience. It is very common that more experienced group leaders say: “When I first started leader, there was much more resistance to the vignettes than when I show them now.”

### **Why is consultation recommended after group leader training?**

When certified IY trainers and mentors do consultations with IY group leaders, they spend considerable time role playing and practicing ways to present and mediate the vignettes that will reduce participant resistance, help parents and teachers engage with the vignettes and learn how the principles are relevant for their children or particular goals. IY headquarters in Seattle is happy to set up Skype call consultations or in-person consultations with certified mentors and trainers to work further with agencies or organizations regarding IY group delivery process. For Skype or in-person consultations

what is most helpful is when groups leaders video their group sessions and select segments for review ~ such as parents or teachers showing resistance, or challenging a particular strategy shown on video vignettes. When certified IY mentors or trainers can see these video interactions and the concepts are being presented they can then brainstorm ideas about how to engage participants and make the vignettes feel more relevant to them. For in-person consultations mentors/trainers will help group leaders role play and act out alternative responses to participant resistance and ways to turn the strategy being modeled in the vignette into something participants can see as relevant for their situation.

### **How important is it that the IY group leaders have the program text?**

We highly recommend that group leaders for the IY parent program have the program text called *Collaborating with Parents to Reduce Behavior Problems: A Book for Therapists Using Incredible Years Programs*. We also recommend that group leaders for IY teacher and child programs have the book *Incredible Teachers: Nurturing Children's Social, Emotional and Academic Competence*. The parent book provides detailed information about the process of working with parents using the video vignettes effectively in a collaborative process that employs participant reflection and active participation in experiential learning. The teacher book provides many examples of how to tailor the strategies in the program to meet the unique needs of different classrooms, cultural contexts, and individual student issues. All program sets include one copy of the book and participants of Seattle workshops all receive a copy at the training. For agencies outside of Seattle who are conducting their workshops with IY mentors we recommend they also include these books for participants. We believe these texts will improve program delivery fidelity as they answer many of the questions that come up once group leaders begin their own groups.

The Incredible Years evidence-based program delivery is about more than the video vignette clips, following session protocols and recommended dosage but relies heavily on the skill and clinical judgment of the group facilitator or therapist to be delivered with fidelity including knowing how to make fidelity-based adjustments for particular populations.

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