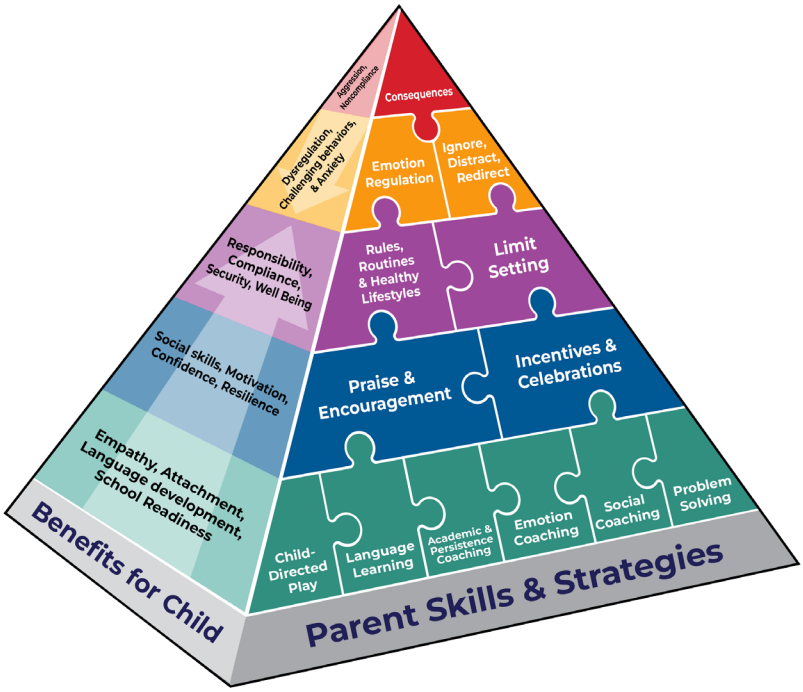
The Incredible Years®

Parents, Teachers and Children Series



Basic Workshop Manual

(covers Incredible Years® Toddler, Preschool Basic and early School Age Basic Programs)

For Group Leaders of Parents of Children Ages 2-8

by Carolyn Webster-Stratton, MSN, MPH, PhD

Video-based instruction for child and family guidance

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**NOTE: This manual is for workshop purposes only. Full program set can be purchased from The Incredible Years®*

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Please contact The Incredible Years® office with your questions - we are here to help!

Some General Guidelines:

- If your agency plans to implement an Incredible Years® Program, they must purchase the program set from The Incredible Years® office. A program set includes all the main components to run your groups. A leader's manual, video vignettes to show, and other "extra" items are included.
- In the leader's manual, you MAY photocopy the handouts and different evaluation forms for parents to use and fill out. You may keep the master copies in your leader's manual so that you can reuse them for each group.
- You may not make any alterations to these handouts, evaluations, or any of the other forms in the leader's manual. This includes removing copyright information, recreating materials without permission from The Incredible Years® and/or translating any of the materials without permission.
- You may not photocopy the entire leader's manual to create new manuals. If you need additional manuals, they can be purchased from The Incredible Years® office.
- You may access select materials from our website, in the "Group Leader Resources" section.
- The video vignettes that comes with each program are copyright protected. Making "back up" copies is not allowed.
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Table 2: Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Parents and Toddlers Program

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Toddler Program: 1—3 Years			
Part 1: Child-Directed Play Promotes Positive Relationships	• Understanding the value of showing attention and appreciation as a way of increasing positive child behaviors • Understanding the importance of showing joy with toddlers through songs and games • Understanding how to promote imaginary and pretend play • Learning how to be child-directed and understanding its value for children • Learning how to end play successfully with toddlers • Learning about toddlers' developmental needs and milestones • Learning about the "modeling" principle • Balancing power between parents and children • Building children's self-esteem and creativity through child-directed play • Understanding the "attention rule"	**Part 2: Promoting Toddler's Language with Child-Directed Coaching**	• Understanding how to model and prompt language development • Learning how to coach preschool readiness skills • Learning about "descriptive commenting" and child-directed coaching • Learning about "persistence coaching" to build children's ability to be focused, calm and to persist with an activity • Learning about the "modeling principle" • Understanding how to promote pre-reading and pre-writing readiness skills • Appreciating normal differences in children's developmental abilities and temperament — completing temperament checklist
Part 3: Social and Emotion Coaching	• Understanding how to use emotion coaching to build children's emotional vocabulary and encourage their expression of feelings. • Understanding how to prompt social coaching to encourage children's social skills such as sharing, being respectful, waiting, asking, taking turns, etc. • Learning the "modeling principle"—by parents avoiding the use of critical statements and demands and substituting positive polite language, children learn more positive communication • Understanding how to coach sibling and peer play using modeling, prompting and praise to encourage social skills • Understanding developmental stages of play • Learning how to apply coaching principles in other settings such as mealtimes, bath time, and grocery store trips	**Part 4: The Art of Praise and Encouragement**	• Labeling praise • "Give to get" principle—for adults and children • Attending to learning "process," not only end results • Modeling self-praise • Resistance to praise—the difficulties giving and accepting praise • Promoting positive self-talk • Using specific encouraging statements versus nonspecific • Gaining and giving support through praise • Avoiding praising only perfection • Recognizing social and self-regulation skills that need praise • Building children's self-esteem through praise and encouragement

Table 2 Continued: Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Parents and Toddlers Program

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Toddler Program: 1—3 Years			
Part 5: Spontaneous Incentives for Toddlers	• Shaping behaviors in the direction you want—"small steps" • Clearly identifying positive behavior • Rewards are a temporary measure leading to child's learning a new behavior • What will reinforce one child will not necessarily reinforce another • Value of unexpected and spontaneous rewards • Recognizing the "first-then" principle • Designing programs that are realistic and developmentally appropriate • Understanding how to set up programs for problems such as not dressing, non-compliance, picky eating, difficulty going to bed, toilet training and rough animal care • Importance of reinforcing oneself, teachers, and others	**Part 6: Handling Separations and Reunions**	• Establishing clear and predictable routines for separating from children • Establishing routines for greeting children after being away from them • Understanding object and person permanence • Providing adequate monitoring at all times • Understanding how peek-a-boo games help children • Understanding how predictable routines for bedtime and schedules help children feel secure and safe • Completing the toddler-proofing home safety checklist
Part 7: Positive Discipline—Effective Limit Setting	• Reduce number of commands to only necessary commands • Learning about the importance of distractions and redirections • Understanding the value of giving children some choice • Politeness principle and modeling respect • Clear and predictable household rules offer children safety and reduce misbehaviors • "Monitoring Principle": Understanding the importance of constant monitoring & supervision for toddlers • All children will test rules—don't take it personally • Commands should be clear, brief, respectful, and action oriented • "When-then" commands can be effective • Distractible children need warnings and reminders	**Part 8: Positive Discipline—Handling Misbehavior**	• Understanding how to use distractions and redirections coupled with ignore • Parents maintaining self-control using calm-down strategies and positive self-talk • Repeated learning trials—negative behavior is a signal child needs some new learning • Using the ignore technique consistently and appropriately for selected behaviors such as whining, tantrums • Knowing how to help toddlers practice calming down • Know how to handle children who hit or bite • Understanding the importance of parents finding support

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Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Program One: Strengthening Children's Language, School Readiness, Emotion and Social Skills and Positive Relationships			
Part 1: Child-Directed Play Promotes Positive Relationships & Children's Confidence	• Understanding the value of parents' positive attention and appreciation for their children during child-directed play interactions. • Importance of respecting children's play ideas to build their self-esteem. • Parents modeling compliance to children's ideas during play to promote their cooperation. • Value of balancing power between parents and children's interactions. • Accepting children's temperament and developmental readiness for learning activities. • Building children's creativity, independence and confidence through child-directed play. • The "attention rule" — attending to positive child behavior and ignoring challenging behavior results in increased child social behaviors, positive relationships and child's sense of well-being. • The "ignoring" principle — not giving attention to annoying and challenging behaviors, a planned action for promoting "positive opposite" behaviors. • Learning the importance of the "modeling principle". • Building a positive relationship with children through regular, one-on-one "special time" with child-directed play.	**Part 2: Promoting Language Learning and Conversations**	• Using descriptive commenting to enhance children's language development. • Balancing descriptive commenting with a few open-ended questions. • Engaging in reflective commenting to enhance shared conversations. • Tailoring language for children with less verbal language and adding nonverbal visual language gestures and pictures. • Listening carefully to child and imitating, or mirroring the child's words and extending the length of sentence by one word. • Taking advantage of times child is open to a conversation – don't pressure a child to talk if the child doesn't want to; try to understand what the child is trying to tell you about their thoughts, feelings and discoveries without corrections. • Prompting conversations with the "serve and return" methods. • Promoting conversations about school experiences to enhance home-school connections. • Understanding the importance of promoting bilingual language learning. • Using puppets, pretend play, songs, games and stories to extend vocabulary and social communication. • Using interactive reading and coaching to build bilingual language and reading readiness.

Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Program One: Strengthening Children's Language, School Readiness, Emotion and Social Skills and Positive Relationships			
Part 3: Persistence and Academic Coaching Promotes School Readiness	• Descriptive commenting and academic coaching promote children's language skills and school readiness skills. • Open-ended questions with positive feedback, connecting stories to life events and interactive reading approaches promote children's reading readiness. • Positive adult attention builds your child's "bank account" of self-confidence. • The "attention rule"—the principles of attending to positive behavior, remaining patient with your child's learning efforts results in increased self-esteem and children's ability to cope with frustration. • The "modeling principle"—parents avoiding the use of critical statements and demands and substituting positive polite language builds children's resilience. • Using "persistence coaching" to strengthen children's ability to be focused, calm and to persist with a difficult or frustrating activity.	**Part 4: Emotion Coaching Promotes Emotional Literacy and Empathy**	• Listening and understanding what the child is feeling, thinking and wanting. • Assessing children's emotion literacy and targeting emotion words to encourage. • Useing emotion coaching during child-directed play times to build children's emotion language and to encourage their expression of feelings. • Enhancing feelings communication with games and stories. • Sharing the message that all thoughts and feelings are okay, but some behavior responses are not. • Labeling a child's positive feelings more often than angry, or unhappy, or anxious feelings. • When labeling uncomfortable feelings, point out a possible coping strategy; that is, combine emotion coaching with persistence coaching as a way to help children manage their feelings. • Recognizing when a child is too dysregulated to talk, or listen, and needs space and privacy to calm down. • Parents modeling appropriate expression of feelings language themselves. • Using puppets to model, prompt and share feelings and to encourage empathy for another's feelings. • Importance of cuddling and soothing a child when frightened or hurt or anxious. • Staying calm as a parent to provide extra reassurance. • Using emotion coaching throughout the day (such as during mealtimes, bathtime, etc.). • Fostering empathy by helping the child understand another person's feelings.

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Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)			
Content	**Objectives**		
Program One: Strengthening Children's Language, School Readiness, Emotion and Social Skills and Positive Relationships			
Part 5: Social Coaching Promotes Children's Cooperative Friendships	• Understanding how to use social coaching to build children's social skills. • Importance of modeling, prompting, coaching, and encouraging social skills such as sharing, being respectful, waiting, asking, taking turns, apologizing, forgiving and praising. • Understanding the developmental stages of children's social play interactions. • Learning how to apply social coaching principles outside of play times such as during meal times, sports and any family activities that require cooperation. • Labeling or describing parents' own social behavior so children know what the parent is modeling. • Participating in pretend play with puppets or action figures to model social skills such as offering an idea, or to help, or making a polite suggestion, praising, forgiving or waiting for a turn. • Modeling and prompting children with limited language by providing a suggestion for the appropriate social words to use. • Prompting children to notice what another child is doing or to help in some way. • Helping child to see the connection between their social behavior and how another child or person feels. • Encouraging joint social play between siblings and with peers.		

Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Program Two: Using Praise and Incentives to Encourage Cooperative Behaviors			
Part 1: The Art of Effective Praise and Encouragement	• Using Labeled (descriptive) praise. • The "give to get" principle—for adults and children. • Attending to child's learning "process," not only end results. • Modeling self-praise. • Managing resistance to praise—the difficulties from self and others to accept praise. • Using specific encouraging statements versus nonspecific comments. • Getting and giving support through praise with others. • Promoting cooperative skills with praise. • Avoiding praising only perfection. • Understanding "differential attention" and "proximal praise." • Recognizing academic, persistence, social and self-regulation behaviors that need praise and coaching. • Building children's self-esteem, confidence, resilience, creativity and independence through praise and encouragement. • Promoting parents' positive self-talk.	**Part 2: Using Incentives to Motivate Children**	• Clearly identifying positive behaviors to encourage with positive attention. • Understanding that Incentives are a temporary measure designed to help a child with a particularly difficult behavior. • Learning that what reinforces one child will not necessarily reinforce another child. • Learning the value of spontaneous rewards and celebrations. • Understanding the difference between rewards and bribes. • Recognizing the "first/then" principle. • Shaping behaviors in the direction you want—"small steps toward goal." • Designing reward programs that are realistic and developmentally appropriate. • Understanding how to set up reward programs for problems such as dressing, compliance, sharing, eating, going to bed, toilet training, etc. • Importance of reinforcing yourself, teachers, and others. • Understanding how to respond to children who reject incentives or become oppositional. • Understanding the importance of combining praise with incentives and learning how to gradually withdraw incentives.

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Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Program Three: Proactive Discipline			
Part 1: Establishing Household Rules, Routines, and Healthy Lifestyles	• Clear and predictable household rules offer children safety and reduce misbehaviors. • Understanding the importance of predictable routines for bedtimes, morning routines & mealtimes. • Recognizing how to establish clear household rules. • Understanding how to separate from young children & the importance of loving reunions. • Designing visual charts for morning routines and daily responsibilities. • Promoting healthy eating habits and enjoyable mealtime experiences. • Understanding how to encourage dinner table manners. • Knowing how to use books and puppets to promote discussions of healthy lifestyles. • Understanding how to set up daily exercise routines. • Helping children develop healthy lifestyles in terms of eating, sleeping and exercise habits. • Respecting and promoting cultural identity with traditional routines, stories and food.	**Part 2: Effective Limit Setting**	• Reducing the number of commands/requests to only necessary commands that you are prepared to follow through on. • Remembering the Politeness Principle when making requests. • Keep filling your child's bank account with child directed play & coaching methods. • When possible use transition requests to warn children of a change in activity. • Avoiding unnecessary, vague, confusing or question commands/requests. • Commands should be clear, brief, positive and action oriented. • "When-Then", "if-then" and "first-then" commands offer the child a choice related to positive outcome. • Children need warnings, reminders and redirection. • Praise and reward child compliance to commands/requests. • Consistently ignore children's challenging responses to limits set. • Manage resistance to limit setting by staying patient and calm. • Strive for a balance of parent and child power.

Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Program Four: Preventing and Managing Misbehavior			
Part 1: Teaching Children Emotion Regulation Skills	• Continuing to use emotion coaching to strengthen emotional literacy. • Understanding the Arc of Emotional Regulation. • Strengthening children's use of emotion self-regulation skills such as positive self-talk, positive imagery, music and exercise. • Using puppets and breathing ball to practice calm down deep breathing skills with children. • Helping children practice calm down methods with the Calm Down Thermometer. • Using books and other visual images to teach and practice calm down methods. • Understanding the importance of parents using calm down methods themselves to stay patient. • Understanding the importance of regular exercise as a way for children to manage emotional regulation. • Praising and rewarding children when they remain patient and calm in frustrating situations.	**Part 2: Ignore, Distract, and Redirect**	• Parents practicing self-control and using calm down strategies themselves to stay patient. • Understanding the importance of repeated learning trials for children and that challenging behavior is a signal that the child needs some new positive learning opportunities. • Continuing to invest in your child's positive bank account with child directed play, coaching methods, encouragement, praise and incentives. • Understanding the Arc of Emotional Regulation, when to offer support, and when to give children time and space to calm down. • Understanding effective ways to use the Ignore strategy with targeted behaviors parents want to see less of. • Learning the value of motivating distractions and redirections.

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Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® Preschool Basic Parent Training Program 2.0 (Ages 3–6)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Program Four: Preventing and Managing Misbehavior			
Part 3: Consequences for Aggressive or Destructive Behavior	• Understanding the Arc of Emotional Regulation, when to offer support, and when to give children time and space to calm down. • Teaching and practicing with children how to take time away to calm down & use self-regulation and calm down skills. • Using puppets to teach children how to take Time Out to Calm Down. • Learning when a self-regulation strategy, or Ignore, or Time Out to Calm Down strategy is needed for selected behaviors. • Understanding the compliance training process for children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder. • Learning when a logical or natural consequence might be the appropriate strategy. • Parents practicing self-control and using calm down strategies themselves to stay patient.	**Part 4: Teaching Children to Problem Solve**	• Understanding how to have fun using games, books and imaginative play interactions to present hypothetical problem scenarios designed to promote discussions and opportunities for children to practice acting out solutions. • Helping children realize that an uncomfortable feeling signals a problem that needs discussion and problem solving with someone. • Using puppets to model problem solving steps and prompt practice of solutions • Understanding how to use the “attention principle” during the problem-solving play interactions • Helping young preschool children (3-6 years) focus on generating and practicing several different solutions for a problem situation. • Helping early school age children (6-8 years) think whether their solutions are safe, fair and lead to good feelings and how to make the best solution choice. • Setting up problem solving scenarios to practice that occur for their children at home or school (e.g., fears or frustrations or lonliness). • Helping children think about what to do when one solution doesn’t work. • Understanding the importance of waiting until a child is regulated before trying to problem solve; avoid doing this when children are highly dysregulated. • Teaching parents how to use the Problem Solving Checklist and Worksheets to review their problem solving approaches.

Table 5: Content and Objectives of the Incredible Years® School Age Basic Parent Training Programs (Ages 6-12)

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Promoting Positive Behaviors in School-Age Children (Program 9)			
Part 1: The Importance of Parental Attention and Special Time	• Understanding how to build a positive relationship with children. • Helping children develop imaginative and creative play. • Building children's self-esteem and self-confidence through supportive parental attention. • Understanding the importance of adult attention for promoting positive child behaviors. • Understanding how lack of attention and interest can lead to child misbehaviors.	**Part 2: Social, Emotion, and Persistence Coaching**	• Understanding how to use academic and persistence coaching to encourage children's persistence and focus • Learning to use emotion coaching to build emotional literacy • Learning to use social coaching to encourage social skills such as being respectful, sharing, cooperating, and being a good team member.
Part 3: Effective Praise and Encouragement	• Knowing how to use praise more effectively. • Avoiding praising only perfection. • Recognizing common traps. • Knowing how to deal with children who reject praise. • Recognizing child behaviors that need praise. • Understanding the effects of social rewards on children. • Doubling the impact of praise. • Building children's self-esteem and self-concept.	**Part 4: Tangible Rewards**	• Understanding the difference between rewards and bribes. • Recognizing when to use the "first-then" rule. • Understanding how to set up star and point systems to motivate children. • Understanding how to design programs that are age-appropriate. • Understanding ways to use tangible rewards for problems such as dawdling, noncompliance, sibling fighting, messy room, not going to bed, and being home on time.

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Table 5 Continued

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
Reducing Inappropriate Behaviors in School-Age Children (Program 10)			
Part 1: Rules, Responsibilities, and Routines	• Politeness Principle • Understanding how to establish clear and predictable routines. • Strategies for encouraging children to be responsible. • Understanding the importance of household chores. • Making sure household rules are clear.	**Part 2: Clear and Respectful Limit Setting**	• The importance of household rules. • Guidelines for giving effective commands. • How to avoid using unnecessary commands. • Identifying unclear, vague, and negative commands. • Providing children with positive alternatives. • Using "when/then" commands effectively. • The importance of warnings, reminders, and giving choices.
Part 3: Ignoring Misbehavior	• Dealing effectively with children who test the limits. • Knowing when to divert and distract children. • Avoiding arguments and "why games." • Understanding why it is important to ignore children's inappropriate responses. • Following through with commands effectively. • Recognizing how to help children be more compliant.	**Part 4: Time Out Consequences**	• Guidelines for implementing Time Out for noncompliance, hitting and destructive behaviors. • How to explain Time Out to children. • Avoiding power struggles. • Techniques for dealing with children who refuse to go to Time Out or won't stay in Time Out. • Teaching children how to calm down. • Understanding the importance of strengthening positive behaviors.
Part 5: Logical and Natural Consequences	• Guidelines for avoiding power struggles. • Recognizing when to use logical consequences, privilege removal, or start up commands. • Understanding what to do when discipline doesn't seem to work. • Recognizing when to ignore children's inappropriate responses and how to avoid power struggles. • Understanding how natural and logical consequences increase children's sense of responsibility. • Understanding when to use work chores with children. • Understanding the importance of parental monitoring at all ages.		

Table 5 Continued

Content	Objectives	Content	Objectives
How to Support Your Child's Education (Program 8)			
Part 1: Promoting Reading Skills	• Providing positive support for children's reading. • Building children's self-esteem and self-confidence in their learning ability. • Making reading enjoyable. • Fostering children's reading skills and story telling through "interactive dialogue," praise, and open-ended questions.	**Part 2: Dealing with Children's Discouragement**	• Helping children avoid a sense of failure when they can't do something. • Recognizing the importance of children learning according to their developmental ability and learning style. • Understanding how to build on children's strengths. • Knowing how to set up tangible reward programs to help motivate children in difficult areas. • Understanding how to motivate children through praise and encouragement.
Part 3: Fostering Good Learning Habits and Routines	• Setting up a predictable daily learning routine for academic activities. • Understanding how television and computer games interfere with learning. • Incorporating effective limit-setting regarding homework. • Understanding how to follow through with limits. • Understanding the importance of parental monitoring. • Avoiding the criticism trap.	**Part 4: Parents Showing Interest in School**	• Understanding the importance of parental attention, praise, and encouragement for what children learn in school. • Recognizing that every child learns different skills at different rates according to their developmental ability. • Understanding how to build on children's strengths. • Understanding how to show "active interest" in children's learning at home and at school. • Understanding the importance of working with your child's teacher. • Understanding the importance of parental advocacy for their children in school.

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Overview of Parents and Children Programs

1. Program History & Rationale
2. Theoretical Assumptions
3. Ultimate Outcomes Expected and Short-term Objectives
4. Targeted Populations for Basic Preschool Program
5. Program Format and Content
6. Training Methods
7. Recommended Evaluation Tools
8. Summary of Program Evaluation

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The Incredible Years®: Parents, Teachers and Children Group-Based Video Series

by Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Ph.D.

Program History and Rationale

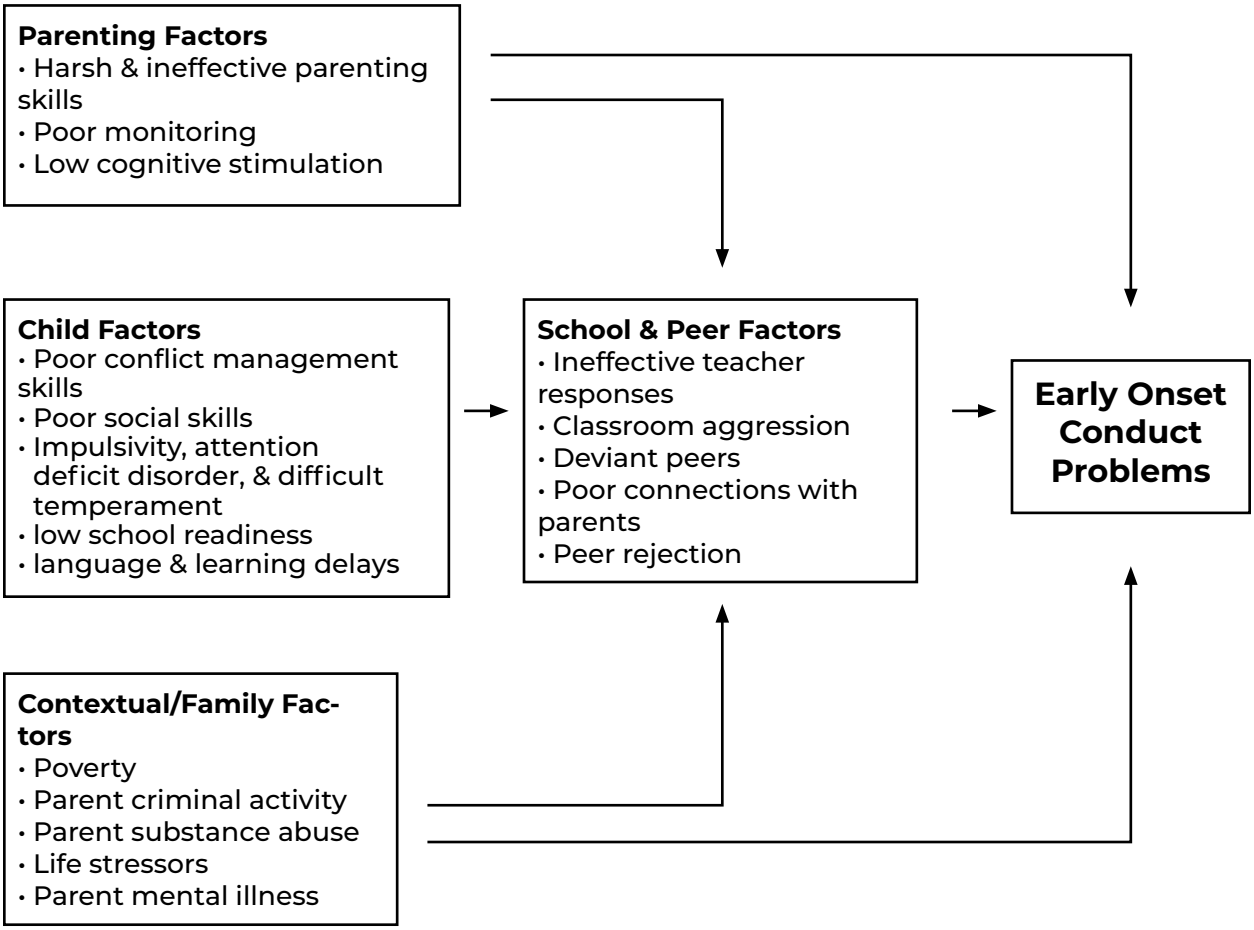
The Problem: The incidence of aggression in children is escalating—and at younger ages (Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992). Studies indicate that anywhere from 7-20 % of preschool and early school age children meet the diagnostic criteria for Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder (CD). These rates may be as high as 35% for very low-income families (Webster-Stratton, 1998; Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1998). Research on the treatment and prevention of conduct disorders has been identified as one of the nation's highest priorities (NIMH, 1996). This agenda is vitally important because of the widespread occurrence of delinquency and escalating adolescent violence with its resulting high cost to society (Kazdin, 1985). Emergence of "early onset" ODD/CD in preschool children (in the form of high rates of oppositional defiance and aggressive and non-compliant behaviors) is stable over time and appears to be the single most important behavioral risk factor for antisocial behavior for boys and girls in adolescence (Loeber, 1991). Such behavior has repeatedly been found to predict the development of drug abuse in adolescence (Brook, Whiteman, Gordon, & Cohen, 1986; Dishion & Ray, 1991) as well as other problems such as juvenile delinquency, depression, violent behavior, and school dropout (Kazdin, 1985). Moreover, since conduct disorder becomes increasingly resistant to change over time, intervention that begins in the early school years is clearly a strategic way to prevent substance abuse, delinquency and mental illness in adolescence.

> **Unfortunately, projections suggest that fewer than 10% of the children who need mental health services for ODD/CD actually receive them. Less than half of those receive "empirically validated" interventions (Chambless & Hollon, 1998).**

Populations "At Risk": Children from low-income, low education, highly stressed or isolated families, single-parent families, and families where there is considerable discord, maternal depression, or drug abuse are at particularly high risk for developing conduct disorder (CD) (Webster-Stratton, 1990). Children whose parents' discipline approaches are inconsistent, physically abusive, or critical are also at high risk for developing challenging behaviors (Ogbu, 1978) as are children whose parents are disengaged and uninvolved in their children's school experiences. Children whose teachers' classroom management strategies are critical, emotionally distant, and lacking in clear rules and teaching in social skills and conflict management are more likely to become aggressive. Moreover, children who are temperamentally more impulsive, inattentive, and hyperactive are more likely to receive less encouragement and support and more punishment from teachers and to experience more peer rejection and social isolation at school (Field, 1991; Rutter, Tizard, Yule, Graham, & Whitmore, 1976; Walker & Buckley, 1973). Such responses on the part of teachers and peers increase children's risk for developing behavior problems. Furthermore, the risk of conduct disorder seems to increase exponentially with the child's exposure to each additional risk factor (Coie et al., 1993; Rutter, 1980).

Risk Factors Related to Conduct Problems

Toddler/Preschool Age — Elementary School Age



In sum, there are multiple risk factors contributing to the development of CD in children and to the subsequent development of drug abuse. Nonetheless, it is evident from the research that there are no clear-cut causal links between single factors and the child's behavior. Most of these factors are intertwined, synergistic, and cumulative. Multiple risk factors result in an unfolding cycle of events over time with cumulative effects on a child's vulnerability (Rutter, 1980). Consequently, prevention programs need to target multiple risk factors at strategic time points, particularly those that offer potential for change. Enhancing protective factors such as positive parenting and teaching skills, parent involvement with schools as well as other support systems and interventions that strengthen children's emotional regulation skills, social competence and school readiness will help buffer against the development of conduct problems and other mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression.

Rationale for School-Based Programs: There are three important reasons for including parents, teachers and schools as partners in developing early school-based mental health intervention programs designed to prevent the development of conduct problems and eventual drug abuse. First, offering this training to parents in schools will be less stigmatizing than a clinic setting, and will make programs more available to parents of children from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Moreover, a related advantage is the sheer number of high-risk children and families that can

be identified and offered additional support services in this non-stigmatizing setting. Schools hold the potential for providing one of the most efficient and effective service delivery methods for gaining access to large numbers of high-risk families with children who can benefit from early intervention. Schools are ideally positioned to provide both parent and classroom interventions.

Secondly, interventions offered in schools that promote collaboration between teachers and parents offer a greater chance of increasing consistency of approaches across settings (from home to school) and the possibility of sustained effects. Moreover, a classroom-wide intervention (teacher and child training) is preferable to "pull out" programs for high-risk students because there are increased opportunities for more prosocial children to model appropriate social skills and to provide the entire classroom with a common vocabulary and problem-solving steps to use in resolving everyday conflicts. Thus, social competence is strengthened for the lower risk as well as the aggressive children and the classroom environment generally fosters appropriate social skills on an ongoing basis. Additionally, with a classroom-based model, while formal social skills training may consist of two to three sessions each week, teachers can provide informal reinforcement of the key concepts throughout the day as children encounter real problems. Thus, the dosage of intervention is greatly magnified. We conclude that school-based interventions offer an opportunity for more accessible child, teacher and parent preventive interventions that coordinate the efforts of families and school personnel to help children who are at high risk for developing CD and depression.

A third reason for emphasizing the importance of training teachers and school personnel (i.e., school psychologists and nurses) to deliver the parenting and classroom interventions is the variability in levels of training of staff and in the quality of parenting and classroom curriculums currently being offered. Many teachers and school counselors have had little formal training as parent educators or conducting groups or in parent counseling techniques. Classroom teachers often have little training in behavior management strategies and social skills curricula. The importance of teacher training is emphasized by the clear consensus among child development experts that the essence of successful early school years resides in the quality of the child-teacher relationship and the abilities of teachers to provide a positive, consistent and responsive environment. A national survey, Phillips et al. (Phillips, Voran, Kisker, Howes, & Whitebrook, 1994) reported that teachers serving predominantly low-income children used significantly more "harsh," "detached," and "insensitive" behaviors with children than teachers serving middle- and upper-income children. Sadly, consistent and positive classroom experiences may be the least available for the children who are most at risk. Training teachers and school personnel in the effective delivery of empirically validated parenting and classroom social skills programs will enhance the quality of services that teachers and school personnel deliver.

Finally, Gerald R. Patterson's theoretical work on childhood aggression strongly influenced the development of this series of parent and teacher training programs (Patterson, 1982). Patterson's social learning model emphasizes the importance of the family and teacher socialization processes, especially those affecting young children. His "coercion hypothesis" states that negative reinforcement develops and maintains children's deviant behaviors and the parents' and teachers' critical or coercive behaviors. The parents' or teachers' behaviors must therefore be changed so

that the children's social interactions can be altered. If parents and teachers can learn to deal with children's challenging behaviors and to model positive and appropriate problem-solving and discipline strategies, the children can develop social competence and reduce aggressive behavior at home and at school.

Rationale for Parent Programs in Multiple Settings: The parenting programs may be offered in a variety of settings such as churches, mental health centers, pediatricians' offices, businesses, boys and girls clubs, sports clubs and health maintenance centers. In these settings parent groups can be supportive and ongoing, addressing the evolving challenges of parenting.

Theoretical Assumptions

The Incredible Years program is based on well-established cognitive behavioral/ social-learning principles that describe how behaviors are learned and how they can be changed. At the core of this approach is the simple idea that people change as a result of the interactions they have on a daily basis with one another. One of the implications of this focus on interpersonal interactions is that, when children misbehave and families become disrupted, it is necessary to change the parents' behavior as well as the child's. This approach does not assume that the child is at fault (that is, he or she is a "bad egg"), or that the parent is inept. Rather, the emphasis is placed on helping parents' interactions with their children become more positive and on changing parents' responses to specific child behaviors.

The Incredible Years: Parent, Teacher & Child Training Series has been extensively researched in dozens of randomized control group trials by the developer and by independent researchers, including higher risk children (ages 2-8 years) as well as children with diagnoses such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder, ADHD and developmental delays. The data from these randomized control group studies involving clinic families (with children that have diagnosed conduct problems or ADHD) and non-clinic families indicate that parents who have taken the course are able to significantly reduce children's behavior problems and increase their prosocial behaviors. Moreover, parents report that they feel less stress and are more confident and comfortable about their parenting skills after completing the program. In addition, one- and three-year follow-up assessments have indicated that more than two-thirds of the clinic-referred families have continued to maintain positive parent-child interactions, positive child behavior and are in the normal range for challenging behaviors. Thus, the cycle of aggression and abuse appears to have been halted for the majority of treated families whose children once exhibited conduct problems. The data from all the studies suggest that parent-training discussion groups that include the Parents and Children video vignettes are a highly effective and cost-efficient method for improving parent-child relationships, reducing young children's conduct problems and increasing their emotional and social behaviors. (see articles and references on website).

Ultimate Outcomes Expected and Short-term Objectives

Longitudinal research has consistently shown that young children diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Conduct Problems and ADHD are at higher risk for mental illness, delinquency, depression, spouse and child abuse, adjustment problems and drug and alcohol abuse as adolescents and adults. In addition, their parents are at higher risk for abusing these challenging children. The long-range goals of these Incredible Years programs are twofold:

First—to improve the poor long-term prognosis for children with conduct disorders by identifying, intervening with and supporting families by delivering the evidence-based IY Basic parenting program;

Second—to deliver the IY Basic parent program as a prevention program for families of young children to prevent serious childhood behavior problems from developing in the first place.

The short-term proximal goals of the series are to:

Promote parent competencies and strengthen families' support:

- Increase parents' positive relationships and attachment with their children through child-directed play, coaching methods and special time together.
- Increase parents' understanding of child temperament, normal developmental landmarks and encourage developmentally appropriate behavior expectations.
- Increase parents' positive communication skills, such as the use of coaching skills, praise and positive feedback to children, and reduce the use of criticism and unnecessary commands.
- Improve parents' limit-setting skills by replacing physical punishment with nonviolent, proactive discipline strategies and by promoting positive strategies such as: ignore, distract and redirect, natural and logical consequences, and problem-solving and empathy skills.
- Improve parents' understanding of how to set up household rules, predictable routines and healthy lifestyles, to promote children's responsible behavior and successfully monitor their children's behavior.
- Improve parents' ability to teach their children emotion self-regulation skills and to problem-solve.
- Increase family support networks and parents' involvement with schools and teachers.

Promote child competencies:

- Increase children's language skills, emotional self-regulation, social skills and school readiness.
- Increase children's problem-solving skills and effective anger management strategies.

- Decrease children's negative attributions and increase empathy skills.
- Decrease children's aggressive behavior and related conduct problems such as noncompliance, peer bullying and rejection, stealing and lying.
- Decrease children's anxiety and depression while increasing their resilience.
- Increase children's on-task school behaviors, reading skills and academic competence.

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Targeted Populations for Basic Preschool Program

The Parents and Children Series—Basic Preschool Programs 1–4 is a practical and versatile program that can be used to teach effective child management and relationship building skills to many different types of participants.

1. **All parents with children 3 to 6 years of age.** The series was originally designed to teach parents how to foster positive behaviors in their children and to give parents some effective techniques for dealing with common behavior problems. The series can be used as a preventive program that helps parents avoid escalating behavior problems through early intervention.
2. **Parents of children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Problems and Attention Deficit Disorder, 3 to 6 years of age.** The program has been extensively researched with over 2000 families with children with conduct problems and ADHD. Our data indicate that the parents in these families were able to make significant improvements in their children's behavior after completing the course. The children in our studies displayed a wide variety of challenging behavior issues including highly aggressive behaviors such as hitting and kicking; destructive acts; negative and defiant attitudes; whining, yelling, smart talk, and interrupting; anxiety and depression, language delays and with high levels of noncompliance to parental requests and hyperactivity.
3. **Parents at risk for abuse or neglect.** The program is suitable for parents who are at risk for abuse and neglect because of their own childhood abuse, or because of minimal social and economic support. It is also appropriate for parents who have been reported for child abuse and neglect. Parents of children who are highly aggressive and non-compliant have an increased risk of involvement with Child Protective Services for abuse or reporting feeling "out of control" when they discipline their children. Our research indicates that parents who participated in the Basic parent training program were less likely to verbally attack or criticize their children or use physical punishment such as spanking and hitting compared with parents who did not participate in the program. The program was well received with over 85% of socioeconomically disadvantaged parents attending greater than two-thirds of the sessions.
4. **Foster and adoptive parents.** The program is appropriate for foster and/or adoptive parents. Frequently these parents are caring for children who have challenging behavior and who distrust adults. The program's focus on building a strong, positive relationship or bond between the parent and child is an important beginning step for these children to begin to trust their caregivers. In addition, the programs' emphasis on predictable rules, routines and positive discipline is especially relevant for the needs of these children.
5. **Teenagers taking baby-sitting classes or family life courses.** Parts of this program could be used to teach adolescents how to play and read with children and how to discipline appropriately. The program could also be an educational resource for groups of teenagers who are studying the normal growth and development of preschool children.

6. **Family therapists, social workers, child psychologists, teachers, nurses, physicians, Child Protective Service workers, and day care providers.** The program has been used to teach parenting skills to childcare workers and other professionals who work with parents and children. It has also been used to illustrate play therapy skills as well as behavior management principles and cognitive problem-solving strategies in early childhood programs for teachers and psychology students.

The program has been researched and found effective with parents of all educational and socioeconomic levels and cultural backgrounds. The video vignettes show examples of mothers and fathers, representing Caucasian, African American, Asian, Spanish, Indigenous, and new immigrant backgrounds.

Basic Preschool Parent Program Format and Content

The Preschool version 1.0 and 2.0 of the Basic parent training series (Programs 1–4) is an 18–20 week program for parents, involving group discussion of a series of video vignettes. It is guided by cognitive social learning and attachment theory. The program teaches parents interactive child-directed play and reinforcement skills (Eyberg, Boggs, & Algina, 1995; Eyberg & Matarazzo, 1980; Hanf & Kling, 1973); nonviolent discipline techniques (Forehand & McMahon, 1981; Patterson, 1982); logical and natural consequences; and problem-solving strategies (D'Zurilla & Nezu, 1982).

The ADVANCE series (Programs 5, 6 & 7) that addresses other family risk factors such as depression, marital discord, poor coping skills, problem solving, and lack of support is recommended as a supplement to the Basic program for high-risk populations.

It is recommended that the **School Readiness** or **Attentive Parenting** program be used as an alternative to this Basic 2.0 program for universal prevention for non-high risk families with typical children to enhance parent's social, emotional and persistence coaching methods, interactive reading and problem solving teaching. These two programs include video vignettes and parent group discussion facilitated by trained leaders.

Contents and Program Mechanics

The parent training program curriculum materials include:

- **Video Vignettes** for the 13 parts of the Preschool Basic 2.0 program, which include video clips summarizing key behavior management "principles" and interviews with parents using the program.
- Comprehensive leader manuals for each program (consisting of "how to" including leader questions for discussion, role-play practices, home activities, and interpretation of video vignettes).
- Parent weekly "refrigerator notes" (brief points to remember for the week).
- Parent weekly assignments for home activities.

- Book for parents titled *The Incredible Years: A Trouble-Shooting Guide for Parents of Children Ages 3–8*, 3rd edition (also available in audible format in both English and Spanish).
- Book for group leaders or therapists entitled, *Collaborating with Parents To Reduce Children's Behavior Problems*.
- Parent Pyramid® poster. Pyramid shows how the programs build a positive foundation first with an emphasis on relationship skills before beginning to discuss proactive discipline strategies.
- Arc of Emotion Regulation poster.
- Calm Down Thermometer poster.
- Books for children: *Wally's Detective Books* (set of 4).
- Refrigerator magnet.

The program uses multiple learning approaches: video modeling, group discussion, problem solving and support, practice activities within sessions, home activities, reading assignments (or audio), self-monitoring checklists and individual goals, and group leader teaching methods and support. The program is highly interactive, collaborative, and self-reflective.

There are also sample session "Experts in Action" programs showing group leaders facilitating active parent groups using this curriculum. These programs are very useful for group leaders' learning process. See website for details.

There is also a home-based version of this program that can be used by IY trained leaders for parents who cannot attend the groups or who need additional coaching. See website for further details.

The Incredible Years®: Basic Preschool Parent Program 2.0 Version (Ages 3–6)

Preschool Basic Parent Training Program. This program includes a leader's manual and collaborative therapist book, participant's books, and video vignettes divided into four programs/topics:

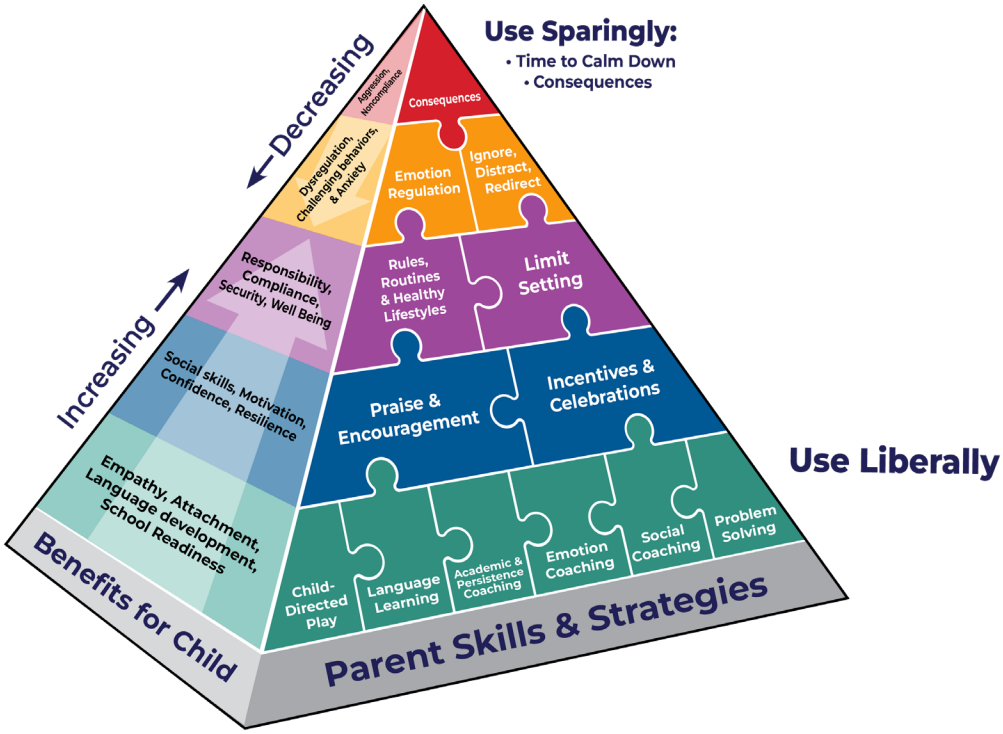
Program One: Strengthening Children's Language, Social Skills, Emotional Regulation and School Readiness Skills

Program Two: Using Praise and Incentives to Encourage Cooperative Behaviors

Program Three: Proactive Discipline

Program Four: Managing Misbehavior

The leader's manual contains the video narration, an edited recap of each parent-child interaction, a concise statement of important points, discussion topics and questions, summary of key principles, parent interviews, homework assignments, handouts, and a list of recommended readings. Brief video vignettes of parents interacting with children in family life situations illustrate parenting concepts. Group leaders use these video scenes to facilitate group discussion, self-reflection and problem solving. Course participants quickly identify possible problems and learn effective alternatives by watching the video examples. Participants discuss the principles of positive and intentional parenting and practice new skills through role-playing practices and home practice activities. The program can be offered for groups of 10 to 12 participants, and is covered in 18 to 20 two-hour sessions for high risk populations or for those with children diagnosed with ODD or CD or ADHD. For a prevention population the program may be offered in 14 sessions, but often additional sessions are needed.



The Parenting Pyramid®

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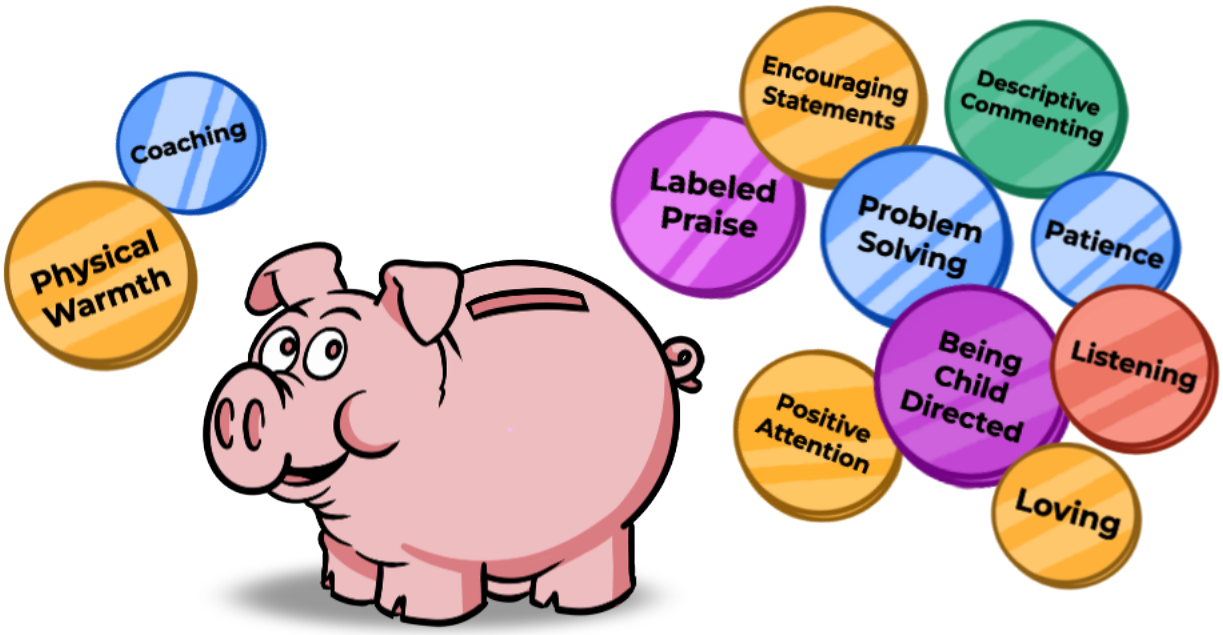
Note: Although the content of this program is structured in presentation, the group leader should remain flexible in conducting the sessions. It usually takes nine two-hour sessions to complete the first two programs, but some groups may take longer. One group might discuss a vignette for 15 minutes, while another might spend little time with it. The group leader must therefore respond flexibly to the needs and goals of the group. It is highly recommended that there be two leaders for each group, and even better to have a male and a female leader if feasible. On-site childcare is provided for those parents who cannot arrange or afford baby-sitting.

It is critical to begin with the first two program topics: (1) Program One: Strengthening Children's Language, Social Skills, Emotional Regulation and School Readiness Skills and (2) Program Two: Using Praise and Incentives to Encourage Cooperative Behaviors. Program 1 covers ways for parents to play with children, encourage language development and conversations, use academic and persistence coaching, emotional literacy and social skills. Next program 2 covers ways to use praise and incentives to encourage children's cooperation, foster creativity, build self-esteem, and strengthen prosocial behavior. There are several advantages to beginning with these two programs.

Each topic within the full program builds on the previous one to ensure that participants learn the parent-child relationship foundational skills outlined in the first two programs before moving to the proactive behavior management, limit setting and emotional regulation approaches described later in Programs 3 & 4. If parent participants have difficulty with material in a particular program group leaders are encouraged to show additional vignettes and do more practice sessions before moving to subsequent programs.



Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account!

The first two program topics:

- Build positive attachment/bonding between the parents and children rather than focusing on behavior problems.
- Help parents understand how their child-directed play and coaching interactions with their children can promote language development, persistence when frustrated, emotional literacy and positive social behavior with peers.
- Help parents and children feel good about their responses to each other.
- Help parents give children consistent positive attention, approval, and praise for target social behavior rather than negative attention for misbehavior.
- Promote parents' empathy for their children, understanding of developmental and temperament differences and realistic goals.
- Promote group cohesion and trust by starting with discussion of positive parenting concepts.

Often, when parents have completed the first two programs, they already see positive increases in their children's prosocial behaviors and their identified goals. Once they have built up a "bank" of positive feelings and parenting interactions with their child it becomes easier to draw on them when discipline is required. Moreover, the positive behaviors which are being taught and encouraged serve to replace the children's inappropriate behaviors. After completing the first two components of the program, the leader progresses to Program (3) Proactive Discipline and (4) Managing Misbehavior. Here the focus of the group is to decrease the targeted challenging behaviors. (See appendix for content and objectives of Basic Program.)

How is Basic Preschool Version 2.0 different from Basic Version 1.0?

This 2.0 version of the Basic Preschool Program has been updated and refreshed (2025) with new video vignettes representing new and culturally diverse families, family structures and current issues. 30% of the vignettes are also "legacy vignettes", that is, video vignettes from the 1.0 Basic version that have been highly evaluated by parents and group leaders. The 2.0 version still follows the same parenting pyramid with 4 programs and uses the same Incredible Years group leader methods and processes. It has expanded some content related to promoting language development and conversations, building healthy lifestyle routines, teaching emotional self-regulation skills and beginning problem solving skills.

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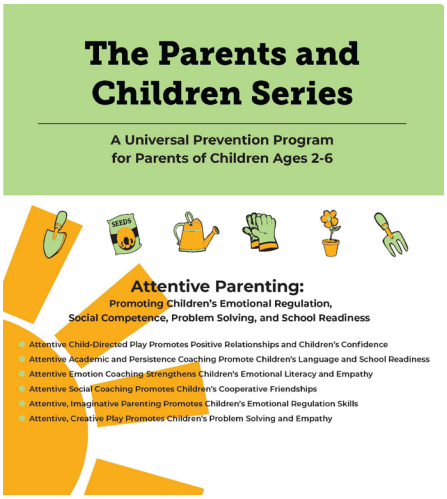
The Incredible Years® Parenting Training Series

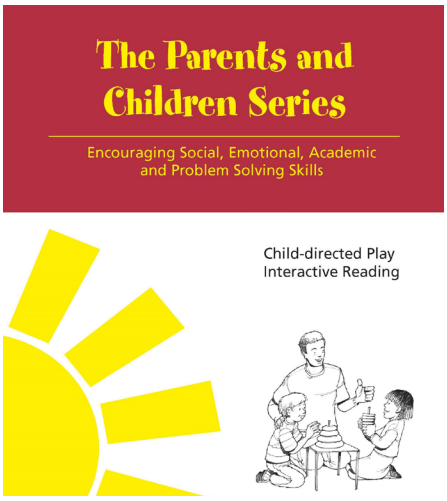
The Incredible Years®: Attentive Parenting Program (Ages 2–6 years)

The Attentive Parenting program is a "universal" program that can be offered to all parents to promote their children's emotional regulation, social competence, problem solving, reading and school readiness. The program is delivered in 6-8 2-hour sessions depending on the age of the parents' children. There is a toddler version (ages 2-2 ½) and a preschool version (ages 3-6 years) and also a mixed age version. This program focuses on helping parents learn academic, social and emotional coaching methods, and on helping parents learn to promote their children's self-regulation and problem-solving skills. The program may be shown as a stand-alone prevention curriculum. Some parts of the Attentive Parenting Program may be offered as parent booster sessions after the Basic Program has been completed as a way to sustain their parenting efforts.



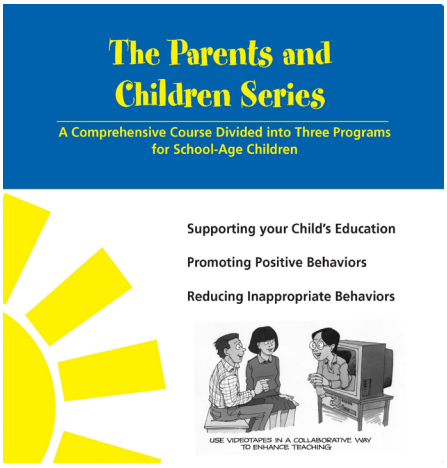
The Incredible Years®: School Readiness Series (Ages 3–5 years)

The School Readiness series consists of two programs. The first focuses on helping parents learn academic, social and emotional coaching through child-directed play. The second program helps parents understand how engaging in interactive and reading skills are effective ways of helping strengthen children's language skills, emotional regulation, social skills and pre-reading skills. The series may be shown as a stand-alone curriculum.



The Incredible Years®: School Age Basic Parent Program (Ages 6–12 years)

The content of the School Age Basic Parent Training Program parallels the Preschool Basic programs except there is more emphasis on special time, responsibilities & chores, enforcing rules, after school monitoring and logical consequences. (See appendix for content and objectives.) The Supporting Your Child's Education Program (below) is included in the leader's manual and can be offered following programs 9 and 10, or, can be integrated into programs 9 and 10 on protocol suggested in agenda section.



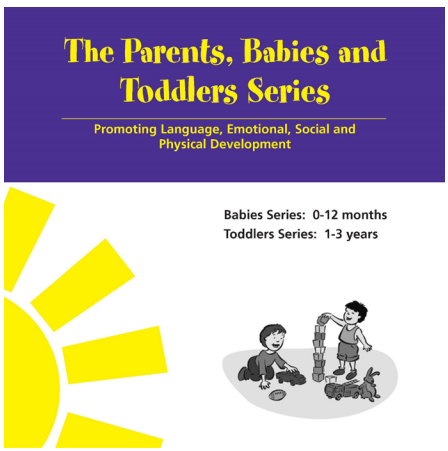
The Incredible Years®: Supporting Your Child's Education Program (Ages 6-12 years)

Academic performance has been implicated for children with behavior problems. Children with behavior problems may manifest low academic achievement and low intellectual functioning during the elementary grades and through high school. Reading disabilities and language delays in particular are associated with challenging behaviors. Despite the documented links between underachievement, language delays, reading disabilities, and conduct disorders, there have been few attempts to increase the effectiveness of parent training programs by adding an academic skills training component for parents. Parents need to know how to help their children not only with their antisocial problems, but also with their academic difficulties (e.g., reading and writing). In addition, parents need to know how to work with teachers and schools in order to foster a supportive relationship between home and school settings. Such a coordinated effort between home and school regarding social, emotional and academic goals would offer the possibility of better generalization of child improvements across settings. problems, but also with their academic difficulties (e.g., reading and writing).

The Supporting Your Child's Education Program offers parents strategies for reading and doing homework with their children, fostering supportive relationships with teachers, and setting up coordinated plans between home and school when necessary. This program can follow the completion of the first two program topics covered in the School Age program because it builds on the behavioral principles that were introduced and applies them to academic skills. This program can also be offered as a follow-up booster after the Basic Preschool series is completed.

This program is included as part of the School Age Basic Program curriculum.

The Incredible Years®: Baby and Toddler Programs (Ages 0–3 years)



The baby and toddler programs are for parents of children ages 0–3 years. The method and process of delivering these programs is the same as for the preschool Basic program. The content of the programs emphasize becoming a new parent, developmental milestones, temperament differences, safety proofing and parenting approaches that build a positive parent-child attachment (See tables appendices for content and objectives). Baby and Toddler programs can be purchased jointly or separately.

There is a supplemental "Well-Baby" Program for group leaders who are working with Pediatricians. Information can be found on our website: www.incredibleyears.com.

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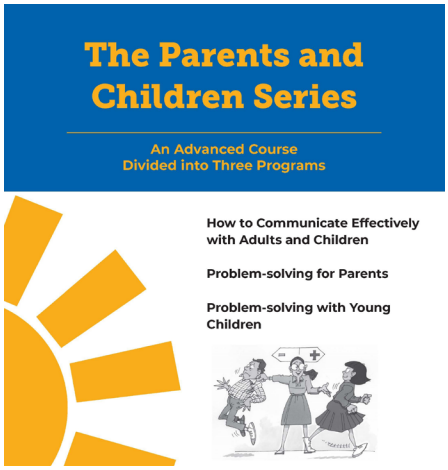
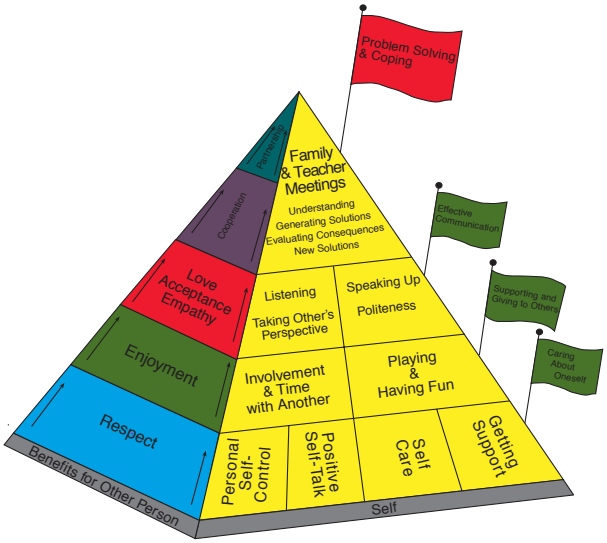
The Incredible Years®: Advanced Parent Program (Ages 4-12 years)



The Advanced Parent Training Program is a broader-based family intervention, focused on more of the parents' interpersonal issues and conflict management. It consists of a leader's manual and video vignettes divided into four segments: Personal Self-Control and Effective Communication Strategies, Problem Solving Between Adults, Helping Children To Problem Solve, and Family Meetings. Offered to groups of parents who have completed the School Age Basic program, the Advanced program takes 9–10 two-hour sessions to complete. It reviews the material covered in the Basic program and helps parents understand how to apply the principles of communication and problem solving to other relationships. (See appendix for the content and objectives presented in the Advanced program.)

We have assessed the extent to which families maintain intervention program effects and identified the characteristics of families who show treatment relapses or fail to show clinically significant effects. In several studies, we have shown that a family's ability to benefit from Basic parent training is influenced by factors such as maternal and paternal depression, marital discord, single-parent status, negative life stressors, and socioeconomic status (Webster-Stratton, 1985a, 1990a, 1990b). These data point to the need to bolster the parent program for some parents by providing an ongoing expanded intervention program which focuses on parents' specific needs, including life crises management, depression management, problem-solving, and marital therapy, as well as on the child's needs for training in social skills, problem-solving and emotional regulation strategies. While intervention cannot pretend to alter a family's life stressors, it can help by teaching both parents and children how to cope more effectively in the face of stressful situations.



Advanced Pyramid for Building Relationships®

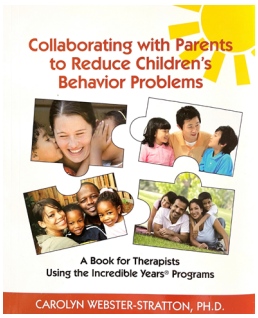
Training Methods

The parent programs are designed as group discussions with 10-12 parents per group and two group leaders. The group format fosters a sense of community support, reduces isolation, and normalizes parents' experiences and situations. This cost-effective group approach also allows for diverse experiences with problem solving in a variety of family situations. Each parent is encouraged to have a partner or close friend participate in the program.

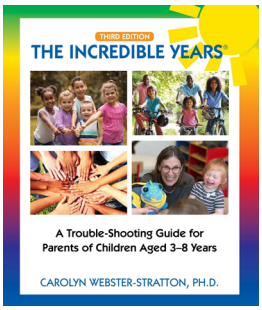
Video modeling. Because the extent of young children's behavior problems has created a need for services that exceeds available personnel and resources, this intervention was designed to be cost-effective, widely applicable, and sustaining. Video modeling promised to be effective and cost-efficient. Modeling theories of learning suggest that parents can improve parenting skills by watching video examples of parents interacting with their children in ways that promote children's prosocial behaviors and decrease inappropriate behaviors (Bandura, 1977). This method of training is more accessible, especially to less verbally oriented parents, than other methods such as didactic instruction, written handouts, or a sole reliance on group or individual discussion without video modeling. It promotes generalization and long-term maintenance of positive behaviors by portraying a variety of parent models in many situations. Furthermore, video modeling is cost-effective because it can be widely disseminated and used in a group format.

The programs show parents and children of different sexes, ages, cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, and temperaments interacting with each other in common family situations, such as eating dinner, getting dressed in the morning, coming home from school, doing chores, playing, and practicing calm down methods. The leader uses these vignettes to trigger group discussion. Participants identify parenting principles by watching examples of interaction that are positive, less effective, or neutral. By showing different examples, the notion of "perfect parenting" is disproved, and parents are given the chance to learn from their reflections on different approaches and what might work best for their child. The video vignettes stimulate group discussion and problem solving, and the leader ensures that the discussion addresses the topic and is understood by all parents. After each vignette, the leader stops the video scene and asks open-ended questions about the interactions. Parents react to and discuss the episodes and develop alternatives. Vignettes called "principles" can be shown to highlight key concepts. Reflection interviews can also be shown to show how parents seen in the videos have used the strategies they have learned in the IY Basic program to achieve their goals.

Collaborative process. In this collaborative training model, the leader is not an "expert" who dispenses advice to parents. Meaning "to labor together," collaboration implies a reciprocal relationship that uses the leader's and parents' knowledge, strengths, and perspectives equally. In this non-blaming and nonhierarchical model, the leader promotes collaboration through reflection, summary of points made by parents, reframing, reinforcement, support and acceptance, humor and optimism, encouragement of each member's participation, teaching of important concepts, and role-playing practice exercises. By using a collaborative process, the program becomes culturally sensitive as each individual's personal goals and values are respected and



"connections" with the past are relevant to current perspectives and attitudes. Approximately 60 percent of a session is group discussion, problem solving, and support; 25 percent is video modeling (25 to 30 minutes of video); and 15 percent is teaching. More information about the collaborative process can be found in the following article and book (Webster-Stratton & Hancock, 1998; Webster-Stratton, 2012).



Weekly homework practice activities. Every session also involves a home assignment or activity, which should be presented as an integral part of the learning process. The home activities help transfer the learning that takes place in group sessions to real life at home and stimulate discussion at later sessions. Home activities also convey the message that passive involvement in the group will not work magic; parents must work at home to make changes. Parents are provided with *The Incredible Years* parent book and asked to read a chapter each week to prepare for the next session (Webster-Stratton, 2006). Audio versions of the parent book are also available for those who cannot read or don't have the time to read. Parents are asked to observe behaviors at home, record their thoughts and feelings on a Record Sheet, or try out a parenting strategy. At the start of each session, the leader asks parents to share their positive experiences as well as barriers to doing their home activities and reading. The leader can then assess whether parents are integrating the material into their daily lives. Parents are more likely to take the home activities seriously if they know the leader is going to review them each week.

HOME ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

To Do:

PLAY for 10 minutes each day with your child doing a child-directed activity such as:
- coloring or painting together
- playing with some unstructured toys (e.g., Legos, pots and pans, blocks, dress up)
- playing with play dough

KEEP TRACK of play periods on the "Record Sheet: Child-Directed Play Times" handout.

To Read:

Handouts and Chapter 1, *Child-directed Play*, in **The Incredible Years** parent book or audiobook.

Each week, when parents arrive at the group, they put the week's home assignment in a folder, check off whether or not they were able to complete the assignment, and pick up the leader's comments on the previous week's assignment. These folders offer quiet group members another opportunity for communicating with the leader and provide a private place for questions and comments that parents do not want to share with the group. The self-monitoring checklists encourage parents to monitor themselves; parents often ask if they can get credit for a homework assignment turned in a week late. The leader's review of home assignments often includes written feedback and stickers, sweets, cartoons, or cards to applaud the parents' achievement.

Weekly evaluations. Parents evaluate each group session by completing a brief weekly evaluation form, which gives the leader immediate feedback about participants' responses to the leader's style, the group discussions, and the content presented in the session. If a parent is dissatisfied or is having trouble with a concept, the leader will call that parent to resolve the issue. If the difficulty is shared by others, the leader can bring it up at the next session. (See Appendix for form.)

Resources needed: In order for parent groups to be well attended, group leaders need to have available childcare with qualified child care providers, transportation for those who need it, healthy food and a room large enough for a circle of 10-12 people. Evening meetings are necessary in order to make it possible for two parents to participate. TV monitors and computer equipment and flip charts are needed for training.

Program Features Leading to Ease of Replication/Independent Replications Studies

The media format of all these training programs increases the consistency, fidelity, and transportability of the program implementation, and makes it easier and less costly to implement and maintain in real-world settings. As can be seen above, all the programs include extensive leader's manuals, handouts, books, video vignettes, and detailed information about the group process and activities which facilitates the replicability of the program. Independent studies have replicated our findings with the parent intervention programs with differing ethnic and cultural groups, and with both younger and somewhat older children. The collaborative process of working with parents and teachers lends itself to a culturally sensitive approach to training. Please see the reference section and website for studies by the developer and independent investigators.

Training and Qualifications of Group Leaders

Group leaders may come from many disciplines, including nursing, psychology, counseling, social work, education, medicine and psychiatry. It is optimal if the group leader can represent the culture of the group if possible. Even though the program materials are extensive and comprehensive, we find that the program has a greater chance of being disseminated successfully if the group leaders receive training first. In this training workshop we model the collaborative teaching process and help leaders understand the importance of group processes such as: identifying participants' personal goals, weekly home activities, effective use of role plays, use of metaphors, buddy calls, self-talk training, weekly check-ins, values exercises and methods of responding to resistance.

Certification/Accreditation

Group Leader Certification: We highly recommend certification for the group leaders in order to enhance the quality and integrity of the programs. This certification requires participants to attend authorized training workshops delivered in-person or on-line by certified mentors or trainers. These are arranged through the Incredible Years headquarters. Certified trainers are available to go on-site to train leaders if there are a minimum of 10 participants. Additionally, once group leaders are certified they are eligible to progress to be trained as peer coaches and eventually to mentor status which allows them to offer introductory workshops (see below).

Group leader certification is required if the program is to be evaluated as part of a research program. This certification requires successful completion of:

- Attend a 3-day authorized training by Certified IY Mentor or Trainer. Or, on-line training which involves 5 3-hour sessions.
- Application form and background questionnaire.
- Completion of two 18- to 20-week parent groups for treatment protocol and 14-sessions for prevention protocol; submission of session checklists.
- Self-Evaluations (using the Peer and Self-Evaluation Form) of at least two sessions (one from each group).
- Peer evaluations of at least two sessions (one from each group) by co-leader.

- Submission of weekly evaluations and final cumulative evaluations from two groups. (Evaluation forms are provided in the Appendix section.)
- Two letters of recommendation from professionals familiar with your work.
- One page letter outlining your experience and interest in IY program delivery and certification.
- Passing video review from certified trainer/mentor.

Certified Peer Coach: A certified peer coach is a certified group leader who has been certified/accredited after demonstrating competency as a peer coach using the IY coaching methods and processes.

- Application.
- Completion of minimum of 6 IY groups.
- Participated in Peer Coaching Training Workshop (at least 2 days or 3 on-line 3-hour sessions).
- Nominated by certified Mentor or Trainer.
- Peer Coaching Video Review by Trainer.
- Complete Peer Coaching with 3 Dyads (6 different group leaders).
- Evaluations from group leaders receiving peer coaching (minimum 6 evaluations).
- Self-Evaluations of peer coaching given (minimum of 3).
- Letter explaining interest in certification and goals for peer coaching.

Certified Mentor: Once a person has become certified as a group leader and as a peer coach, they are then eligible to be invited to become a mentor of group leaders. Certification as a mentor requires:

- Application.
- Complete multiple parent groups (more than eight).
- Video feedback from certified trainer.
- Additional training to be a mentor.
- Completion of introductory leader training groups with a certified trainer.
- Ongoing trainer supervision and observations of parent groups.
- Mentor six group leaders and submit group leader evaluations.
- Attend mentor meetings.

Introductory training includes teaching regarding engaging families (for review see Webster-Stratton, 1998a) and methods and assessment tools to evaluate program effectiveness. Once training has been completed, certified mentors and trainers provide ongoing technical assistance. A detailed description of our dissemination strategies can be found in the following reference on our website:

"Adopting and Implementing Empirically Supported Interventions: A Recipe for Success," In A. Buchanan (Ed.) *Parents and Children—What Works?* (pp. 127-160) Aldershot: Ashgate.

Webster-Stratton, C. & McCoy, K. P. (2015). "Bringing The Incredible Years programs to scale." In K.P. McCoy & A. Diana (Eds.), *The science and art of program dissemination: Strategies, successes and challenges. New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development,* 149, 81-95.

Recommended Evaluation Tools

Demographic Information

Parent Perceptions:
- Parenting Practices Interview (PPI)
- Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1991)
- Parenting Stress Index (PSI) (Abidin, 1983)
- Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (ECBI) (Eyberg & Ross, 1978)
- Parenting Scale (Arnold & O'Leary)

Child Perceptions:
- Wally Problem-Solving Test

Observations:
- Laboratory and Home Visits of Parent-Child Interactions (DPICSR) (Robinson & Eyberg, 1981) (Webster-Stratton, 1987)
- Observations of Peer Play

Parent Observations:
- Parent Daily Reports (PDR) (Chamberlain & Reid, 1987)

Teacher Perceptions:
- Behar Preschool Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ) (Behar, 1977)
- Teacher Behavior Checklist (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1991)

Social Validity Measures:
- Ongoing Session Evaluations (See Appendix)
- Parent Final Program Satisfaction Questionnaire (See Appendix)

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Summary of Developer's Evaluation Results

Treatment Intervention:

First the Basic program was evaluated as a treatment program in a series of eight randomized studies by the developer's team with more than 1000 children ages three to seven referred for conduct problems. The Basic program significantly improved parental attitudes and parent-child interactions, reduced parents' use of violent forms of discipline, and reduced child conduct problems (Webster-Stratton, 1982a; Webster-Stratton, 1982b; Webster-Stratton, 1984; Webster-Stratton, 1989; Webster-Stratton, 1990b; Webster-Stratton, 1994; Webster-Stratton, Hollinsworth, & Kolpacoff, 1989).

The ADVANCE program has been shown to be a highly effective treatment for promoting parents' use of effective problem-solving and communication skills, reducing maternal depression, and increasing children's social and problem-solving skills (Webster-Stratton, 1994). Users have been highly satisfied with both programs, and the dropout rates have been low regardless of the family's socioeconomic status. Effects have been sustained up to three years after intervention (Webster-Stratton, 1990b). Two 10-year studies have shown the long term effects of this intervention (Webster-Stratton, Rinaldi, & Reid, 2011b; Scott, Briskman, & O'Connor, 2014).

Prevention Intervention:

Next, the Basic program was evaluated as an indicated prevention program in two randomized trials with over 600 Head Start families (Webster-Stratton, 1998; Webster-Stratton, Reid & Hammond, 2001). This population was considered to be at higher risk for conduct disorder because of the increased number of risk factors associated with poverty. Results indicated that the parenting skills of Head Start parents who received training and the social competence of their children significantly improved compared with the control group. These data supported the hypothesis that strengthening parenting competence and increasing parental involvement of high-risk low-income mothers in children's school-related activities will help prevent children's conduct problems and promote social competence (Webster-Stratton, 1998b). These findings have been independently replicated in many other studies conducted in Canada, Holland, Ireland, Iran, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Scotland and the US.

For updated reviews of studies please see website, **https://www.incredibleyears.com/research/library**, and the following references:

Webster-Stratton, C., and Bywater, T. (2019). The Incredible Years Series: An Internationally Evidence-based Multi-model Approach to Enhancing Child Outcomes. *APA Handbook of Contemporary Family Psychology*, B. Fiese, Editor.

Menting, A. T .A., Orobio de Castro, B., and Matthys, W. (2013). "Effectiveness of the Incredible Years parent training to modify disruptive and prosocial child behavior: A meta-analytic review," *Clinical Psychology Review 33*(8).

Piscitello, J. & Webster-Stratton, C. (2026). The Incredible Years Parent Program: Four Decades of Evidence-Based Parenting Support, Research and Delivery. In T. Del Vecchio, T. D., Ph.D. And Terjesen, Ph.D., *Handbook of Behavioral Parent Training*, American Psychological Association.

Foundational Studies of the Basic Program by Developer & University Team

Universal Prevention: In the first study, 35 non-clinic families were randomly assigned to the Basic parent training program or to a waiting-list control group. Results indicated that the Basic treatment caused highly significant attitudinal and behavioral changes in treated middle-class, non-clinic mothers and children (ages 3 to 6) compared with control groups. Nearly all the changes were maintained at the one-year follow-up (Webster-Stratton, 1981; Webster-Stratton, 1982a; Webster-Stratton, 1982b).

Indicated Prevention: A second study randomly assigned 35 clinic families (with children having conduct problems) to one of three groups:

- One-on-one personalized parent therapy.
- Video-based group therapy (Basic).
- Waiting-list control group.

These clinic families were high risk because of the large number of single parents, low socioeconomic status, low mean education level, high prevalence of child abuse, and the deviant nature of the children. The Basic treatment was as effective as high-cost, one-on-one therapy and both treatments were superior to the control group in regard to attitudinal and behavioral changes. Moreover, at the one-year follow-up, no differences were noted between the two treatment groups, and most of the children continued to improve. The Basic program was five times more cost-effective than one-on-one therapy, using 48 hours of therapist time versus 251 hours of therapist time. Approximately 70 percent of both treatment groups maintained significant positive behavioral changes at the one-year follow-up. Families who had little or no social support were most likely to relapse following treatment (Webster-Stratton, 1984; Webster-Stratton, 1985).

Indicated Prevention: A third study was conducted to ascertain the most efficient and effective component of the Basic program. Parents of 114 conduct-problem children, ages 3 to 8, were randomly assigned to one of four groups:

- Individually or self-administered video modeling therapy (IVM).
- Video-based group therapy (Basic).
- Group therapy alone (GD).
- Waiting-list control group.

Compared with the control group, mothers in all three treatment groups reported significantly fewer child behavior problems, more prosocial behaviors, and less use of spanking following treatment. Fathers in the IVM and Basic groups, and teachers of children whose parents were in the Basic and GD groups, also reported significant reductions in behavior problems compared with control subjects. Data collected from home visits indicated that, for all treatment groups, mothers, fathers, and children exhibited significant behavioral changes. Relatively few differences were noted between treatment groups on most outcome measures, but the differences found consistently favored Basic treatment. Cost-effectiveness, however, was the major advantage of the IVM treatment (Webster-Stratton, 1990b; Webster-Stratton, Kolpacoff, & Hollinsworth, 1988).

At the one-year follow-up, 93.1 percent of families were assessed. All significant behavioral changes reported immediately after treatment were maintained one year later. Moreover, parent report data indicated that both mothers and fathers perceived

a further reduction in child behavior problems. Few differences were found among the three treatment groups except for the differences in consumer satisfaction, which indicated that the Basic treatment was superior. With each of the treatment programs, 70 percent of the sample showed clinically significant improvements to within normal ranges (Webster-Stratton et al., 1988).

Indicated Prevention: A fourth study was conducted to determine how to enhance the effectiveness of the self-administered video therapy while maintaining its cost-effectiveness. Parents of 43 conduct-problem children were assigned to one of three groups:

- Individually administered video modeling program (IVM).
- IVM plus therapist consultation (IVMC).
- Waiting-list control group.

In comparison with the control group, both groups of mothers receiving treatment reported significantly fewer child behavior problems, reduced stress levels, and less use of spanking after intervention. Data from home visits indicated that both treatment groups exhibited significant behavioral changes. Relatively few differences on the outcome measures existed between the two treatment conditions, but IVMC children in the video plus therapist consultation group were significantly less deviant than the children in the individually administered video program suggesting that combined treatment was superior (Webster-Stratton, 1990a).

Selective Prevention: A fifth study examined the effectiveness of the Basic program as a universal prevention program with a sample of 362 Head Start mothers and their four-year-old children. Eight Head Start centers were randomly assigned to two groups:

- An experimental group in which parents, teachers, and family service workers participated in the intervention.
- A control group in which parents, teachers, and family service workers participated in the regular center-based Head Start program.

The results from observations at the post-intervention assessment indicated that mothers in the intervention group made significantly fewer critical remarks and commands, used less harsh discipline, and were more nurturing, reinforcing, and competent in their parenting when compared with mothers in the control group. Intervention mothers reported that their discipline was more consistent and that they used fewer physically and verbally negative discipline techniques. They also used more appropriate limit-setting techniques. In turn, the children of mothers in the intervention group exhibited significantly fewer negative behaviors and conduct problems, less noncompliance, less negative affect and more positive affect, and more prosocial behaviors than children in the control group. One year later, most of the improvements noted in the intervention mothers' parenting skills and in their children's affect and behavior were maintained, including increased contacts with new teachers, as compared with mothers in the control group (Webster-Stratton, 1998b).

Selective Prevention: A sixth study examined the effectiveness of the Basic program and the teacher training program (described below) with a sample of 272 Head Start mothers and 61 teachers. Fourteen Head Start centers were randomly assigned to two groups:

- An experimental condition in which parents, teachers, and family service workers participated in the prevention program.
- A control condition in which parents, teachers, and family service workers participated in the regular center-based Head Start program (CONTROL).

Assessments pre- and post-intervention included teacher and parent reports of child behavior and independent observations at home and at school. Home observations indicated that mothers in the intervention group were significantly less harsh and critical in their discipline approaches, significantly more positive and nurturing, and used more problem-solving approaches in their interactions with their children than mothers in the control group. Intervention mothers reported that their discipline was more positive and less harsh or punitive, that they used more monitoring, and that they were more involved in activities with their children than control mothers. Teachers reported that mothers in the intervention group were more involved in their children's education. Children of mothers who attended six or more intervention sessions received lower ratings on independent observations of inappropriate behavior than children in the control group and were observed to exhibit significantly fewer negative behaviors and conduct problems, less noncompliance, and less negative affect than children in the control group.

Results of classroom observations indicated that teachers in the intervention group were significantly less critical in their discipline approaches and more positive in their interactions with their students than teachers in the control group. Teachers from the intervention condition reported making significantly more effort to involve parents in their classrooms than control teachers. Students in the intervention classrooms were observed to exhibit significantly fewer negative behaviors and noncompliance with teachers and less physical aggression with peers than students in control classrooms. Intervention children were more engaged or on-task in the classroom and had higher school readiness scores (e.g., friendly, self-reliant, on task, low disruptive) than control children. Overall classroom atmosphere was significantly more positive for intervention classrooms than control classrooms. Teachers also reported the intervention students to be more socially competent than the control students.

One year later most of the improvements noted in intervention mothers' parenting skills and in their children's affect and behavior were maintained. Results indicate that this prevention program is a promising strategy for reducing risk factors leading to delinquency by promoting social competence, school readiness, and reducing conduct problems (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 1999).

Summary Regarding Evaluation of Basic Program

As noted above, the Basic program appears highly effective in reducing child conduct problems by promoting social competence, reducing parents' violent methods of discipline, and improving their child management skills. For clinic children with conduct problems, the cycle of aggression appears to have been halted for approximately two-thirds of the treated families. For the high-risk Head Start children, protective factors such as positive parenting and children's social competence were enhanced.

Study of the ADVANCE Program

Indicated Prevention: A seventh study, examined the effects of adding the ADVANCE intervention component to the Basic intervention. Parents of 78 families with children

with ODD/CD (conduct disorder) received the Basic parent training and then were randomly assigned to either ADVANCE training for 12 weeks or no further contact. Families were assessed at one month, one year, and two years after treatment through parent and teacher reports of child adjustment and parent distress (i.e., depression, anger, and stress) and direct observations of parent-child interactions and marital interactions such as discussing a problem. For both treatment groups, child adjustment and parent-child interactions significantly improved and parent distress and child behavior problems decreased. These changes were maintained at follow-up. ADVANCE children showed significant increases in the total number of solutions generated during problem solving, most notably in prosocial solutions, as compared to aggressive solutions, in comparison with their counterparts. Observations of parents' marital interactions indicated significant improvements in ADVANCE parents' communication, problem solving, and collaboration when compared with parents who did not receive ADVANCE training. Only one family dropped out of the ADVANCE program, which attests to its perceived usefulness by families. All the families attended more than two-thirds of the sessions, with the majority attending more than 90 percent of the sessions.

Study of Child Training—Dina Dinosaur Curriculum

Indicated Prevention: The Dina Dinosaur curriculum for children was evaluated in two randomized trials with conduct-disordered children ages 4 to 7. In the first study, families of 97 children with early-onset conduct problems were randomly assigned to one of four groups:

- Child training only. (CT)
- Parent training only. (Basic and ADVANCE)
- Combined parent and child training intervention.
- Waiting-list control group.

Results showed that the combined parent and child training was more effective than parent training alone and that both were superior to the control group. The child training program resulted in significant improvements in observations of peer interactions. Children who had received the Dinosaur curriculum were significantly more positive in their social skills and conflict management strategies than children whose parents got parent training only or than controls. One year later the combined parent and child intervention showed the most sustained effects (Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1997).

Indicated Prevention: A second study randomly assigned 158 clinic families to one of six groups:

- Child training only. (CT)
- Child training and teacher training. (TT)
- Parent training. (PT)
- Parent training and teacher training.
- PT+CT+TT
- Waiting List Control.

Results replicated the findings of parent and child training and showed that teacher training significantly enhanced parent training in terms of classroom and peer behavior changes (Webster-Stratton, Reid & Hammond, 2001).

Risk Factors Reduced

As noted above, the program appears to be highly effective in reducing child conduct problems and promoting children's social competence by reducing parents' violent discipline and improving their positive child management skills and relationship. The cycle of abuse and aggression appears to have been halted for approximately two-thirds of the treated families.

See book on website, *The Incredible Years: Parents, Teachers, and Children's Training Series: Program Content, Methods, Research and Dissemination*, by Carolyn Webster-Stratton, 2011, for detailed reviews of studies and description of programs.

https://www.incredibleyears.com/research/library

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Certification

1. Becoming a Certified Group Leader
2. Certification Road Map
3. Certification Application Form
4. Peer & Self-Evaluation Form
5. Group Leader Collaborative Process Checklist

Introduction

Becoming a Certified* Incredible Years Group Leader

Receiving Incredible Years® (IY) Group Leader Training from a certified IY Mentor/Trainer is the first of eight steps toward becoming certified as an IY Group Leader.

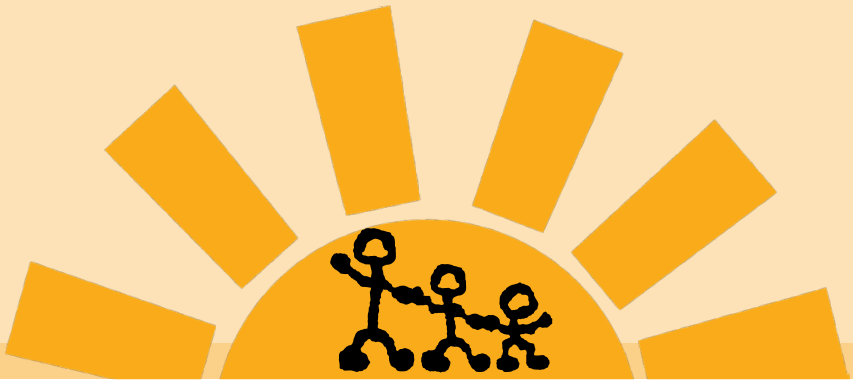
After attending the initial group leader training, it is highly recommended you engage in ongoing peer review, coaching, and consultation from certified Peer Coaches, Mentors, or Trainers.

Participating in this continued coaching and consultation process is not only helpful in assuring your clinical competence but also gives you the opportunity to continue on the path to becoming a certified Group Leader.

Becoming certified means you are offering the program with high quality and fidelity. Our research shows that certified group leaders have stronger, more sustainable outcomes (and lower drop-out rates) than when programs are offered by non-certified group leaders.

This portfolio will help you keep track of each of your certification steps in one spot. You will find group checklists, fidelity measurements, evaluations, and more!

*The terms “Certified” and “Accredited are used interchangeably.



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Why Become Certified?

The certification/accreditation process is considered to be of value for many reasons:

+ The process of certification is considered part of the ongoing training process (after the initial workshop) wherein the leader shows videos of their sessions and receives feedback and consultation from accredited coaches and mentors on their group leadership ability.

+ The certification process maximizes the quality of IY group leader performance and program delivery fidelity. Certified group leaders implementing the full program have been shown to produce results similar to those in the published literature*.

+ Group Leader certification will grant listing as a Certified IY Group Leader with our center. Incredible Years® may recommend Certified IY Group Leaders for potential employment as a leader of groups.

+ Certified leaders will be invited to Incredible Years® workshops that provide consultation, updates on our program materials and methods, as well as provide a forum for sharing ideas and developing a support network with other group leaders.

+ Certification grants eligibility for an invitation to continue training to become an Incredible Years® Certified Peer Coach and/or Mentor of group leaders in selected programs.

*Webster-Stratton, C., Reid M.J., and Marsenich, L. 2014. Improving Therapist Fidelity During Implementation of Evidence-based Practices: Incredible Years Program. *Psychiatric Services,* Vol. 65 No. 6. 65:789–795.

Map to Becoming Certified

Basic steps to become a certified IY Group Leader

The Incredible Years®

START

1. Attend an IY training.

2. Acquire the appropriate program for your population.

(You may do this step prior to attending training.)

3. Self Study using Leader's Manual & videos (with coleader).

(You may begin self study prior to training if you have the program materials.)

4. Start recruitment and planning for your groups.

5. Implement first group & start video recording your sessions to review weekly with co-leader.

6. Obtain consultation with an IY Peer Coach, Mentor, or Trainer and continue weekly peer review.

7. Share video of one session for certification review from an authorized IY mentor/trainer.

(If your agency has an IY Peer Coach or Mentor, ask them to review your video with you first to decide if it is ready to be sent to an authorized IY Mentor/Trainer for certification review.)

8. Implement second group. Continue weekly peer review and ongoing consultation. Prepare your follow-up video for certification review.

9. Once video review passes, send all paperwork to IY headquarters. Application is reviewed and certification is awarded. Congratulations!

See next page for what comes next, once you are certified as a group leader.

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Getting Started

ATTEND A CERTIFIED TRAINING

The very first step toward certification is to attend a certified Incredible Years® Training Workshop.

To achieve positive outcomes similar to those reported in published studies, group leaders should attend an authorized training from one of our certified Incredible Years® Mentors or Trainers, as well as undergo the Incredible Years® certification process.

Open-enrollment training workshops are offered regularly online through the Incredible Years headquarters. They are delivered over 5 3-hour sessions, spread out over 2-3 weeks. Also, our certified Incredible Years® trainers can provide on-site face-to-face training in your community upon request. These in-person training workshops are delivered over 3 full days. Both online and in-person training workshops are delivered in small groups (online maximum 15 people; in-person maximum 25 people), designed to give leaders a detailed introduction to the content and process of leading the IY groups, with role playing, practice mediating vignettes, and troubleshooting difficult issues. This is the first step in the training process.

We recommend your agency complete our Agency Readiness Questionnaire in planning for launching an IY program and leader training workshop selected. It is important to carefully select your group leaders for training and to include 2 people from your agency. Contact us for more information at: incredibleyears@incredibleyears.com

BACKGROUND QUALIFICATIONS

Group leaders come from many disciplines, including counseling, social work, psychology, psychiatry, nursing, and education. It is recommended that potential Group Leaders have prior training in child development, and cognitive social learning theory. They should have at least two years' experience with young children, as well as an understanding of parenting skills and family interactions.

Group leaders should possess excellent interpersonal skills, leadership skills, and have had involvement with group activities and an awareness of group dynamics.

Checklist for Group Leader Video Review
How to Prepare Your Video for Certification Review

_____ Application form filled out
_____ Review and prepare video for review with video time codes
_____ Leader Collaborative Process Checklist filled out for this video
_____ Session Agenda Checklist for this video
_____ The camera is focused on you, the leader
_____ You (the group leader) are the main leader for the full session
_____ There are at least six (or more) parents in the group who are attending this session

FIRST you will have your group session video reviewed - once you have passed your video review, THEN send the rest of your paperwork to Incredible Years headquarters. We will be in communication with you throughout this process to let you know what items we still need, and when you should send them!

Ideally, you will have peer coach feedback and/or consultation before submitting a video for certification.

Please contact us for more information, at incredibleyears@incredibleyears.com

Keep in mind: sometimes a leader will need a 3rd review before their video passes.

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Paperwork

ONCE VIDEO REVIEW PASSES, SEND ALL PAPERWORK TO IY HEADQUARTERS

_____ Application form*

_____ Letter discussing your interest in becoming certified; your goals, plans, and philosophy of effective parenting and your clinical experience (one page)

_____ Background Questionnaire*

_____ Two professional letters of reference

_____ Parent weekly* and final* evaluations for two groups (Minimum 6 parents finishing each course)

_____ Attendance Lists for two groups (at least 50% retention)

_____ Session agenda checklists* for all sessions from two groups

_____ Two co-leader peer evaluations*

_____ Two self-evaluations*

_____ Passing video review report from Certified IY Mentor or Trainer

*These forms can be found in this manual AND/OR for download on our website: incredibleyears@incredibleyears.com

There is a certification application fee which includes up to two video reviews and supervisory reports, review of application materials, and certificate of certification. Contact us for the current fee.

Send Materials to:
Email: incredibleyears@incredibleyears.com

Incredible Years, Inc.
Certification Committee
3240 B Street NW, Suite D
Auburn, WA 98001 USA

Application for Certification as an Incredible Years® Parent Group Leader (Basic)

NAME: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

_____

_____ Zip: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK: _____

Email: _____

OCCUPATION_____

Month/Year of Basic Training: _____

Trainer: _____

APPLICATION BILLING INFORMATION (NAME & ADDRESS):

Organization/Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Provence: _____ Postal Code:_____

Country: _____

Email for receipt: _____

This form must accompany your submission of video for review.

Please include the following with your video submission:

- A brief letter outlining the session/topic covered and population served
- A Self-evaluation that corresponds to the session(s) you are sending for review
- The session checklist (indicating the vignettes shown) from the session(s) you are sending for review
- A Collaborative Process Checklist that corresponds to the session(s) you are sending for review.

Please see website and leader's manual for certification application requirements. Contact Incredible Years office with any questions: incredibleyears@incredibleyears.com

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Incredible Years® Parent Group Peer and Self Evaluation Form

Please ask your co-leader to comment on your group leader skills for one of your group sessions, using this form. Also use this form to self-evaluate your session. Afterwards talk about these evaluations together and make goals for your next session. Reviewing video of your own group leader skills is a valuable learning experience and part of continuing to learn to deliver the program with high fidelity.

Leader's Name _____

Please comment on the parent group leader's session(s) based on the following criteria:

I. Leader Group Process Skills	***Comments***
Builds rapport with each member of group	
Encourages everyone to participate	
Models open-ended questions to facilitate discussion	
Respects and affirms cultural differences	
Honors each parents' goals for themselves and their children	
Reinforces parents' ideas and fosters parents' self-learning	
Encourages parents to problem-solve when possible	
Fosters idea that parent will learn from each others' experiences	
Helps parents learn how to support and reinforce each other	
Views every member of group as equally important and valued	
Identifies each family's strengths	
Creates a feeling of safety among group members	
Creates an atmosphere where parents feel they are decision-makers and discussion and debate are paramount	

II. Leader Leadership Skills	*Comments*
Ground rules posted for group and reviewed	
Started and ended meeting on time	
Explained agenda for session and invited input	
Emphasizes the importance of homework	
Reviews homework from previous session	
Summarizes and restates important points	
Focuses group on key points presented	
Imposes sufficient structure to facilitate group process	
Prevents sidetracking by participants	
Knows when to be flexible and allow a digression for an important issue and knows how to tie it into session's content	
Anticipates potential difficulties	
Predicts behaviors and feelings	
Encourages generalization of concepts to different settings and situations	
Encourages parents to work for long-term goals as opposed to "quick fix"	
Helps group focus on positive	
Balances group discussion on affective and cognitive domain	
Predicts relapses	
Reviews handouts and homework for next week	
Evaluates session	

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III. Leader Relationship Building Skills	***Comments***
Uses humor and fosters optimism	
Normalizes problems when appropriate	
Validates and supports parents' feelings (reflective statements)	
Shares personal experiences when appropriate	
Fosters a partnership or collaborative model (as opposed to an "expert" model)	
Fosters a coping model as opposed to a mastery model of learning	
Reframes experiences from the child's viewpoint and modifies parents' negative attributions	
Strategically confronts, challenges and teaches parents when necessary	
Identifies and discusses resistance	
Maintains leadership of group	
Advocates for parents	

IV. Leader Knowledge	***Comments***
Demonstrates knowledge of content covered at session	
Explains rationale for principles covered in clear, convincing manner	
Prepares materials in advance of session and is "prepared" for group	
Integrates parents' ideas and problems with important content and child development principles	
Uses appropriate analogies and metaphors to explain theories or concepts	

V. Leader Methods	*Comments*
Uses video examples efficiently and strategically to trigger group discussion	
Uses role play and rehearsal to reinforce learning	
Reviews homework and gives feedback	
Uses modeling by self or other group members when appropriate	

VI. Parents' Responses	*Comments*
Parents appear comfortable and involved in session	
Parents complete homework, ask questions and are active participants	
Parents complete positive evaluations of sessions	

Summary Comments:

Name of Evaluator _____

Date: _____

Check:

_____ Leader Self-Evaluation
_____ Co-Leader/Peer Evaluation
_____ Peer Coach
_____ Mentor/Trainer

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Parent Group Leader Collaborative Process Checklist (rev. 2025)

This checklist is designed for group leaders to complete together following a session, or for a group leader to complete for him/herself when reviewing a video of a session. By watching the video of a session and looking for the following points, a leader can identify specific goals for progress. This checklist is designed to complement the checklist for the specific session, which lists the key content that should be covered.

Leader Self-Evaluation (name):_____

Co-leader Evaluation: _____

Certified Trainer/Mentor Evaluation:_____

Date: _____

Session Topic:_____

SET UP *Did the Leaders(s):*	YES	NO	N/A
1. Set up chairs in a semicircle that allowed everyone to see the TV?(Avoid tables.)	____	____	____
2. Sit at separate places in the circle, rather than both at the front?	____	____	____
3. Write the agenda on the board?	____	____	____
4. Have last week's home activities ready for the parents to pick up, complete with praise and encouragement written on them?	____	____	____
5. Plan and prepare for daycare in advance?	____	____	____
6. Prepare and lay out the food, in an attractive manner?	____	____	____

REVIEW PARENT'S HOME ACTIVITIES
Did the Leader(s):

7. Begin the discussion by asking how home activities went during this past week - how they addressed their short term goals?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

8. Give every parent the chance to talk about his/her experiences and select parents strategically for spontaneous practice to demonstrate successes or refine approach?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

9. Praise and encourage parents for what they did well and recognize their beginning steps at change, rather than correct their process?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

10. Highlight key "principles" that parents' examples illustrate? (e.g., write them on flip chart or paraphrase idea in terms of how it addresses their goals.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

11. Explore with individuals who didn't complete the home activities what made it difficult (barriers) and discuss how they might adapt home activities to fit their needs and goals?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

12. Ask about and encourage "buddy calls" and explore barriers to calls and solutions?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

13. If a parent's description of how they applied the skills makes it clear that s/he misunderstood, did the leaders accept responsibility for the misunderstanding rather than leaving the parent feeling responsible for the failure? (e.g., "I'm really glad you shared that, because I see I completely forgot to tell you a really important point last week. You couldn't possibly have known, but when you do that, it's important to..." vs "You misunderstood the assignment. Remember, when you do that, it's important to...")

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

14. Make sure that the discussion is brought back to the specific topic at hand after a reasonable time without letting free flowing discussion of other issues dominate?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

15. Limit the home activity discussion (approximately 20-30 minutes) to give adequate time for new learning?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

WHEN BEGINNING THE TOPIC FOR THE DAY

Did the Leader(s):

16. Begin the discussion of the topic with open-ended questions to get parents to think about the importance of the topic?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

17. Do the benefits and/or barriers exercise regarding the new topic?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

18. Paraphrase and highlight the points made by parents - write key points on the board with their name?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

WHEN SHOWING THE VIGNETTES

Did the Leader(s):

Number of vignettes shown in session: _____ PRINCIPLES: _____ Reflections: _____

19. Focus parents on what they are about to see on the vignettes and what to look for?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

20. Pause vignette to ask an open-ended question about what parents thought was effective/ineffective in the vignette (focus on parent thoughts, feelings & behaviors, and child's perspective)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

21. Acknowledge responses one or more parents have to a vignette?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

22. Paraphrase and highlight the points made by parents - writing key points on the board?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

23. Move on to the next vignettes after key points have been discussed, rather than let the discussion go on at length?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

24. Use vignettes to trigger appropriate discussions and/or practices, tailored to children's developmental level?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

25. Redirect the group to the relevance of the interaction on the vignette for their own lives (if parents become distracted by some aspect of the vignette, such as clothing or responses that seem phony)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

26. Refer to parents' goals for themselves and their children when discussing vignettes, learning principles and setting up practices?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

PRACTICE AND ROLE PLAYS

Did the Leader(s):

27. Get parents to switch from talking about strategies in general to using the words they could actually use? (e.g., from "She should be more specific" to "She could say, John, you need to put the puzzle pieces in the box.")

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

28. Ensure that the skill to be practiced has been covered in the vignettes or discussion prior to asking someone to role play practice it. (This ensures the likelihood of success.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

29. Do several large group role plays/practices over the course of the session? Break down practices according to child developmental readiness.
Number of role plays: _____

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

30. Do role plays/practices in pairs or small groups (following large group practices) that allow multiple people to practice simultaneously? Dyads should be matched by child language and play ability.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

31. Use all of the following skills when directing role plays:

a. Strategically select parents and clearly describe their parent role?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

b. Skillfully get parents engaged in role play practices?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

c. Provide each person with a description of his/her role (age of child, level of misbehavior, developmental level)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

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d. Provide enough "scaffolding" so that parents are successful in their role as "parent" (e.g., get other parents to generate ideas for how to handle the situation before practice begins)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

e. Invite other workshop members to be "coaches" (call out idea if the actor is stuck)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

f. Pause/freeze role play/practice periodically to redirect, give clarification, problem-solve different approach or reinforce participants?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

g. Take responsibility for having given poor instructions if role play/practice is not successful and allow actor to rewind and replay?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

32. Process role play/practice afterwards by asking how "parent" felt and asking group to give feedback?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

33. Process role play by asking how "child" felt in role?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

34. Solicit feedback from the group about strengths of parent in-role?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

35. Offer detailed descriptive praise of the role play/practice and what was learned?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

36. Re-run role play, changing roles, involving different parents, or with child of different play or language developmental level or temperament (being in role as child is helpful for parents to experience their child's perspective is a different way of responding)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

LEADER GROUP PROCESS SKILLS

Did the Leader(s):

37. Build rapport with each member of the group?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

38. Encourage everyone to participate and view everyone as equally important and valued?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

39. Respects and affirms cultural differences?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

40. Honors each parents' goals for themselves and their children?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

41. Use open-ended questions to facilitate discussion and reflection?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

42. Reinforce parents' ideas and foster parents' self-learning and confidence?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

43. Encourage parents to problem-solve when possible?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

44. Foster the idea that parents will learn from each others' experiences?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

45. Help parents learn how to support and reinforce each other (celebrate each other's successes)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

46. Foster parents' understanding of the value of developing their own support network?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

47. Identify each family's strengths?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

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48. Create a feeling of safety among group members?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

49. Create an atmosphere where parents feel they are decision-makers and discussion and debate are paramount?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

50. When needed, provide parents with information about important child developmental milestones?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

51. Explore parents' cognition, affect modulation, and self-regulation as well as behaviors?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

52. Help parents understand the relationship between thoughts, feelings and actions for themselves and their children?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

53. Encourage parents to model, prompt, teach, and discuss with their children calm down methods for coping with traumatic events?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

ENDING GROUP - REVIEW & HOME ACTIVITIES

Did the Leader(s):

54. Begin the ending process with about 15 minutes remaining?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

55. Summarize this session's learning? (One way to do this is to review or have the parents review each point on refrigerator notes out loud.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

56. Review or have parents review the home activity sheet, including why it is important, and how they will try to do it?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

57. Talk about any adaptations to the home activity for particular families?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

58. Show support and acceptance if parents can't commit to all the home activities? (Support realistic plans.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

59. Have parents complete the Self-Monitoring Checklist and commit to goals for the week?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

60. Ask about buddy check ins (by phone, email, or text)?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

61. Have parents complete the evaluation form?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

62. End the session on time?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently

The goal in the group sessions should be to draw from the parents the information and ideas to teach and support each other. Parents should be the ones who generate the principles, describe the significance, highlight what was effective and ineffective on the video, and demonstrate how to implement the skills in different situations.

Remember, people are far more likely to put into practice what they talk about and practice than what they hear about. (Webster-Stratton)

Summary Comments:

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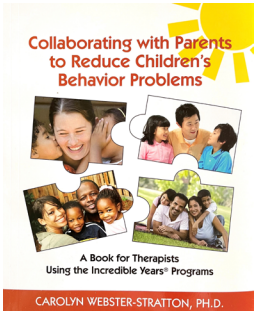
Hot Tips for Using the IY Group Leader Manual - Questions, Vignettes, Principles, Buzzes, Using Puppets, Tailoring Handouts & Setting Up Practices

Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Ph.D.

Introduction

Critics of manual-based psychotherapies or Interventions assume that manuals are rigid, inflexible, and offer little individual client or group leader variation. But just as a chef improvises and adapts recipes to create exciting, original meals, the experienced group leader will adapt a manualized intervention with sensitivity to the group's needs and goals for themselves and their children.

Although the Incredible Years® Parenting Program is a structured therapeutic program with detailed manuals, session protocols, home assignments, and handouts, its ultimate success is dependent on a skilled group leader who tailors it to the families' individual needs. **Therapeutic principles can be manualized, but individualized, culturally sensitive, and empathic intervention cannot.** A high degree of clinical sophistication is a necessary requirement for successful delivery of this intervention. Attending certified group leader training workshops, arranging ongoing supervision from IY coaches, mentors and trainers, and peer review and becoming certified/ accredited as a group leader will enhance the leader's broader understanding of the program as a whole and how to implement it in a flexible, individual, culturally sensitive and collaborative way.



A key element of this intervention is the collaborative leadership style of the group leader. This collaborative approach ensures that the parents "own" the material because the basic principles have been drawn from them by the skilled group leader. See Parts 3 and 4 of the introduction for more information about the collaborative style as well as the book *Collaborating with Parents to Reduce Children's Behavior Problems* by Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Incredible Years Press (2012).

Tip #1

Don't be too manual dependent by focusing on reading all the questions, thereby avoiding eye contact with parents when asking questions (glance down briefly). The questions are meant to be guides or suggestions to facilitate group discussion about the video vignettes and principles. In general, you can start with an open-ended question such as, *"What do you think of that father's approach?" or, "How do you think the child (or father) felt in that instance?" or, "What do you think the benefits of this approach is for achieving the goals you have for your child?"* Then listen carefully and follow the parents' lead, validate parents' insights, ask more questions to explore parents' reflections and pull out key interaction principles from their ideas.

Tip #2

One or two questions may be sufficient. It is not necessary to ask all the questions in the manual. These questions are simply examples of kinds of questions you might pursue. If the points raised in the questions have already been discussed previously then proceed with a different question or follow up on another point that may have been initiated by a parent. By digging in and exploring parents' responses to your questions you can often find a "principle" and acknowledge the parents' insights. It is important this question asking does not become a question and answer test rather a discussion and assessing its relevance to the parents' goals.

Tip #3

Each part of a program is not necessarily meant to be covered in one entire two-hour session! In general, 8-10 vignettes may be covered in a two-hour session. Pace yourself according to the parents' difficulty or familiarity with the material and the group's talkativeness. Sometimes a particular concept or topic is new to a group (e.g. persistence or self-regulation or social coaching) and it may take 2 sessions to adequately cover the material. The prevention protocol allows for 1 session per topic to complete in 14 sessions. However, it is important to allow for some flexibility in the number of sessions. For the higher risk populations or for the treatment model (diagnosed children with ODD or ADHD) or for groups where English is not their first language you will need 18-20 sessions to complete the program. See Part 5 for session checklists and protocols.

Tip #4

Carefully plan the most appropriate vignettes for each group. Those vignettes marked with an asterisk reflect vignettes that are some of the developer's favorites. However, try to study all the vignettes and choose those that best reflect the learning needs or goals, family structure, ethnic diversity and language of the parents in your group. Some vignettes are in Spanish with English subtitles and some reflect indigenous populations, new immigrant families and different ethnicities. There is much to be gained from parents viewing vignettes that reflect a variety of families from different cultural backgrounds. Parents universally around the world regardless of culture have similar goals to promote their children's well-being, school success and attachment.

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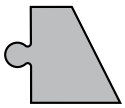
Tip #5



Show most of the Principles and Reflections vignettes. The **PRINCIPLE** vignettes are key parent child management concepts we want to be sure the parents understand. Many of these principles will have been derived from the group discussions. Viewing these Principles video clips will serve to validate the ideas and principles parents came up with themselves. These Principles vignettes are always shown after parents have discussed the vignette and have had time to come up with their own ideas or rationale for their use.

The **Parent Reflections** are shown so that parents can see how the parents shown in the vignettes have used the IY principles to achieve their individual goals. These are often very motivating interviews for parents as they can encourage them to try out something they might have resisted trying. Showing these adds to the power of the video modeling. Occasionally you may decide to show some reflections instead of the actual vignette of the same parent to provide variety to your group discussions. The reflections are discussed in the same way the individual video vignettes are with pauses for reflection and sharing.

Tip #6

Brainstorms & Buzzes. You may **pause any vignette** with a brainstorm or group buzz of parents' reflections and insights regarding video vignettes shown. These buzzes may be done in pairs, triads or small groups. You can keep your group engaged by varying the different ways you do brainstorm/buzzes. Sometimes you might do break-out small groups according to development, or age, or language level of their children, or by buddy assignments, or by parent goals. Many buzzes can be done in a group session and are key to keeping everyone actively involved. Use brainstorm/buzz handouts and a timer to keep them short.

Tip #7

Roleplay/Practices. You can do practices following any vignette shown, not just when indicated in the manual. You can decide to do these practices when parents have questions about how to apply the skill to their child's goal, or when they seem tired from discussion and need a change, or when someone shares a good idea but learning would be better understood to actually see what their idea looks like. As with children, the best parent learning is when they practice the ideas to explore what the strategy sounds, looks and feels like. Think about these practices when you show a video vignette - you can pause the practice any time to give feedback, discuss different approaches and then replay the scenario to try out another idea. Remember to incorporate puppets in your practices to model social skills and feelings.

Tip #8

Do not change the order of the program pyramid. It is essential that programs one and two, Promoting Positive Behaviors, be covered first before programs three and four, Handling Misbehaviors are shown. It is recommended that the Advance Programs be offered after Programs 1-4 for higher risk families and those with children with diagnoses such as ODD and ADHD or, for child-welfare referred families.

Tip #9

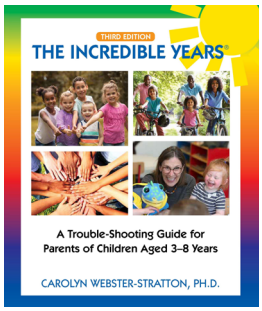
For high risk populations and diagnosed children do not try to do the entire BASIC series in fewer than 18-20, two-hour sessions. For prevention populations you can do the program in 14 sessions. Another idea, if you need to cut down the number of sessions to dovetail with a school term we suggest you just show foundational programs one and two in a 9-10 session Part 1 series. Later, the same parents could be offered programs three and four in another 9-10 Part 2 session series (make completing programs one and two a prerequisite for attending programs three and four in Part 2).

Tip #10

Tailor your recommended home activities and handouts to the material you cover in a particular session. You may tailor the handouts by telling parents which aspects of the home activities are recommended that week and then the following week indicate the additional parts to be completed. Additionally, parents complete self-monitoring checklists where they make decisions about their weekly goals and what is realistic for them to complete. A blank handout is provided in case you get behind and need to tailor the home activity according to material covered in that session.

Tip #11

Discuss and review home practice activities each week. Open each session with a discussion of their success with trying out some of the new parenting strategies as well as the barriers they encountered. Also ask about their reading assignments each week. This feedback can be done in small groups or pairs. Or, some weeks you may have each small group work on something different such as chapter reading, success with an approach or barriers to trying something different. The comments and reactions of parents trying new strategies will lead to spontaneous and relevant role play practices and key discussions.



Tip #12

Use weekly parent evaluations to tailor therapeutic group methods and content to parents' needs on an ongoing basis. Whenever a parent indicates a neutral or negative rating on one of the evaluation scales (group discussion, leadership skills, content of program, role play practices or use of video vignettes), call the parent and talk about how you will address this issue to make the program more meaningful for them. Periodically talk to the entire group about how you are using their evaluations to tailor the program to everyone's different learning needs and goals.

Tip #13

Encourage weekly buddy calls. Starting in session 2 or 3, parent home assignments involve parents getting in touch with their assigned parent buddy to take 5 minutes to share their experience with the assigned home activities. This can be done by phone, Zoom, email or text. This one-on-one exchange helps the group to develop supportive relationships more quickly and to reduce stress and depression. Pair up parents strategically, such as those who have children at similar developmental language and play levels or similar goals.

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Tip #14

Group leaders call or meet online with parents in your group weekly, especially for the treatment model of the program. A short weekly check-in with your parents provides an opportunity for you to connect privately to discuss parent feedback on their home experiences and progress toward their goals. This will enhance your relationship with each parent and may give you insights into what you want them to share in the group. Sometimes during these online calls you can set up a brief practice with their child.

Online calls are also a very helpful way to do make up sessions for times when parents have missed their group session. You can show them video vignettes, discuss key principles and explain home assignments.

Tip #15

Add in-person home or individualized coaching as needed. Sometimes you may want to add home coaching sessions for parents attending your group who are struggling with some of the parenting methods. This allows you to show and discuss additional vignettes tailored to their situation or child's developmental level. This also permits you setting up practice interactions with their children where you can coach, model and give feedback to parent-child play interactions

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Hot Tips for Role Plays or Practices in Incredible Years Parent Groups

by Carolyn Webster-Stratton

Setting up numerous role plays or practices in Incredible Years program delivery is critical to participants' learning processes. As a group leader you may think from your group discussions that parents or teachers understand the management principle or topic but when you see them practice "in action" you will have a better idea of their ability to put their ideas into real-life behaviors. There can be a discrepancy between how participants understand a strategy and how they actually behave. It can be very difficult to think of the right words to use with children, manage angry thoughts and stressful or depressed feelings when children argue or are disrespectful, or to follow through with consistent proactive or patient responses. Role play practices help parents and teachers to rehearse their behavior strategies, practice staying calm and using positive self-talk, and to get feedback from group leaders and other participant group members about their skills. Here are some tips for setting up successful role plays.

Set up a Large Group Role Play Practice

Practice should first be done in the large group so that you can scaffold and support a successful practice. This allows participants to observe exactly what you expect them to practice in the small group that will happen next. Without this example being set first often small groups often will deteriorate into personal stories or they may be confused about what they are supposed to be practicing.

- Remember you are the "director" of the role play and get to choose the actors, set the stage, and determine the script and roles for the things you want practiced. You also can pause, clarify, give feedback and replay the scenarios.
- Always make sure that you have covered the content to be practiced prior to doing the role play practice. For example, after watching video vignettes about persistent coaching and making a list of key principles on your flip chart you can say, *"we are going to practice persistence coaching with a 5-year-old child who is well behaved."* Begin with a simple role play that will illustrate the concept and achieve your learning objective for the participant learning that strategy. Later you will add complexity to the practice by having the child be inattentive or impulsive or be angry or anxious.
- Rather than ask for volunteers, select a parent or teacher participant you think understands the behavioral concept or strategy and can successfully play the role of the teacher or parent. Invite the participant to help you, e.g., *"John, would you come up and help me by being the parent/teacher in this next role play."* Then choose a participant to be child. *"Sally, will you be the child who is fearful and afraid to take risks?"*

- Group participants, rather than group leaders, should be the role play participants. Participants will learn more from being in the practices themselves. If you are in the role play yourself you will not be able to effectively scaffold the scripts and interactions or debrief the process.

Set the Scene and Build a Script

- Set up the role play practice by letting participants know the age of the child, developmental level, temperament of child, and what the child and parent/teacher will do.
- Start with your simple practice, *"we are going to practice social coaching with a well behaved 4-year-old child."*
- After this practice of this skill, expand the complexity. Ask the group for ideas for how the parent would respond using this skill with a child whose has a particular difficulty. For example the leader will say, *"In this practice, our parent is going to be practicing social coaching and Seth is going to be the child who is anxious, often plays alone, and is reluctant to play or initiate interactions with others. Our parent is going to use social coaching to try to build some of this child's confidence around their friendship skills. What words can they use for what behaviors? How can you bring in puppets here to enhance this child's learning?"*
- Using the participants' suggestions, walk through their part in the role play before the role play starts. Putting some sample scripts on the flip chart can be helpful. Give instructions to the child, letting them know whether to be cooperative or noncompliant and what their level of play and communication is.
- If the child will be noncompliant, let them know of the limits (e.g., you should fuss and whine, but please don't throw things or hit). This is very important because you don't want the role play to require management techniques that haven't been taught yet.

Scaffolding the Practice

- Both the leader and co-leader can serve as coaches for the role play. Often one leader supports the role of the parent and the other supports the role of the child.
- As the role play proceeds, freeze the scene at any time to give the parent feedback for their effective skills, or to redirect, or to clarify something you didn't explain well. Provide the parent role with plenty of scaffolding so they can be successful. Group members can also be asked to suggest ideas if the actor participant is stuck. Sometimes you can replay a scene using different ideas to discover which approach seems to work best. Or, you can replay a scene using a child at a different developmental level or temperament. For example, *"now let's try social coaching with a child who has very little language and think about how we can prompt sharing, or taking turns or using language."*

Debriefing the Practice in Large Group: Always debrief each role play.

- Start by asking for positive feedback from the group about the parent's effective skills: *"What did you see Thomas doing well? Or "what principles of ignoring did Maria use?"*

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- Debrief with the person playing child to get their perspective. Parents have often told us that playing the child and experiencing another adult's responses was very instructive and helped them understand the viewpoint of their child.
- Debrief with the parent afterwards to find out how they felt during the practice.
- When applicable, rerun the role play with a different response using the ideas of another parent. Sometimes you may want the person playing child to try the scene being in role as parent so they can experience practice in a different role.
- Reward all the actors with some special acknowledgement such as sticker, candy or prize. It is hard to put yourself in center stage and be viewed by others. Participants who do this help everyone learn and this effort needs to be highlighted.

After Large Group Practice Set up Small Group Practices

- Break up parents into small groups of 3 or 4 to practice what they saw modeled in the large group practice.
- Clearly describe how the role play will go, and repeat key instructions (what the parent role will be and how the child will respond).
- You may assign one person in the small group to support the role play by giving the parent ideas and giving positive feedback after the practice is over.
- For small group practices when you break out into triads for parent-child interactions you can ask the 3rd person to be the support person. Their assignment is to view the checklist, offer ideas as needed during the interaction and at the end to give the person in role as parent some positive feedback about what they liked best. The group leader then can ask for small group to share one key point hey learned in this practice experience and record it on their flip chart.
- While these small group practices are going on group leaders will go around to watch them and to offer suggestions as needed as well as positive feedback.
- After the small group practices, the group leaders will debrief the experience with the whole group, offering members of each small group a chance to feedback a key point or experience from their practice. These may be recorded on a flip chart as a summary of the experience.

Note: Be sure to be flexible with role plays and make these role play practices fun. The more fun they are, the more people will want to participate in them and will recognize how the help them to learn. See book for group leaders: *Collaborating with Parents to Reduce Children's Behavior Problems* by Carolyn Webster-Stratton at https://www.incredibleyears.com/

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Group Leaders Setting Up Role Play Practices

SCENARIO GOAL

Example: to promote target child social skill

DESCRIBE CHILD'S LANGUAGE AND PLAY LEVEL AND TEMPERAMENT

Example: functional play, typical language for 4 year old, anxious, withdraws from peer interactions

GROUP BRAINSTORMS DETAILS OF SCRIPT FOR TEACHER OR PARENT AND CHILD

Example: specific language words or social behaviors for child to learn; what parent or teacher will model, prompt with words, gestures, or visuals or coach and what will get positive attention or praise or a reward; Be precise about language to be used.

SELECT PARTICIPANTS FOR ROLE PLAYS AND CLARIFY ROLE OF ADULT, CHILD AND OBSERVERS

"Ready, Set, Action"

PAUSE AS NEEDED FOR POSITIVE FEEDBACK OR OTHER SUGGESTIONS FROM AUIDENCE REPLAY for new ideas or CONTINUE SCENARIO

DEBRIEF SCENARIO

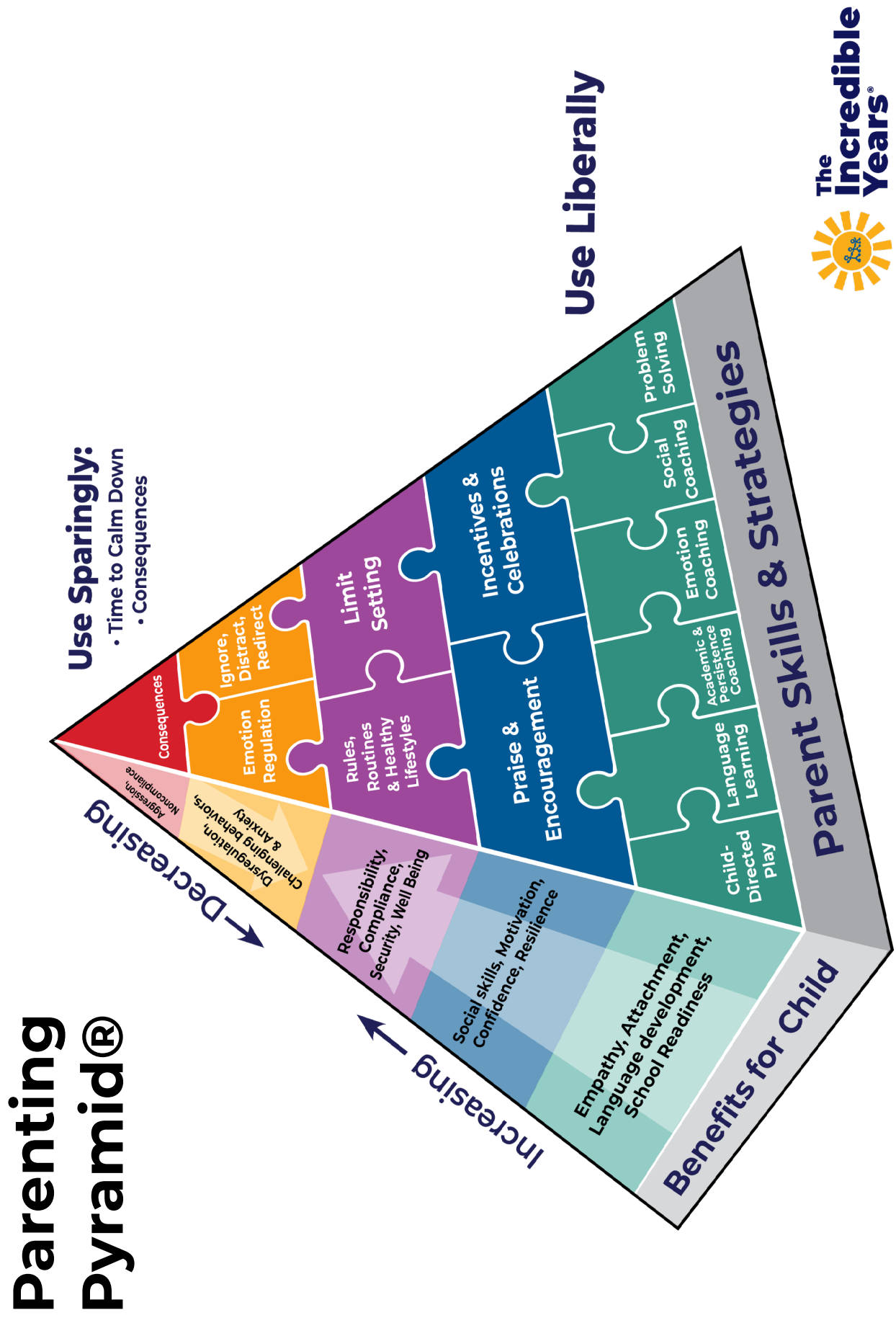
Example: ask what teacher or parent did well; how child felt and how person in role as parent or teacher felt

SUMMARIZE KEY LEARNING

REPLAY WITH CHILD OF DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS

BREAK OUT INTO TAILORED SMALL GROUPS FOR PRACTICE

Example: break out groups by developmental level or language of child


Parenting Pyramid®
Use Sparingly:
• Time to Calm Down
• Consequences
Use Liberally
Decreasing
Increasing
Consequences
Ignore, Distract, Redirect
Emotion Regulation
Limit Setting
Rules, Routines & Healthy Lifestyles
Incentives & Celebrations
Praise & Encouragement
Problem Solving
Social Coaching
Emotion Coaching
Academic & Persistence Coaching
Language Learning
Child-Directed Play
Aggression, Noncompliance
Dysregulation, Challenging behaviors, & anxiety
Responsibility, Compliance, Security, Well Being
Social skills, Motivation, Confidence, Resilience
Empathy, Attachment, Language development, School Readiness
Parent Skills & Strategies
Benefits for Child
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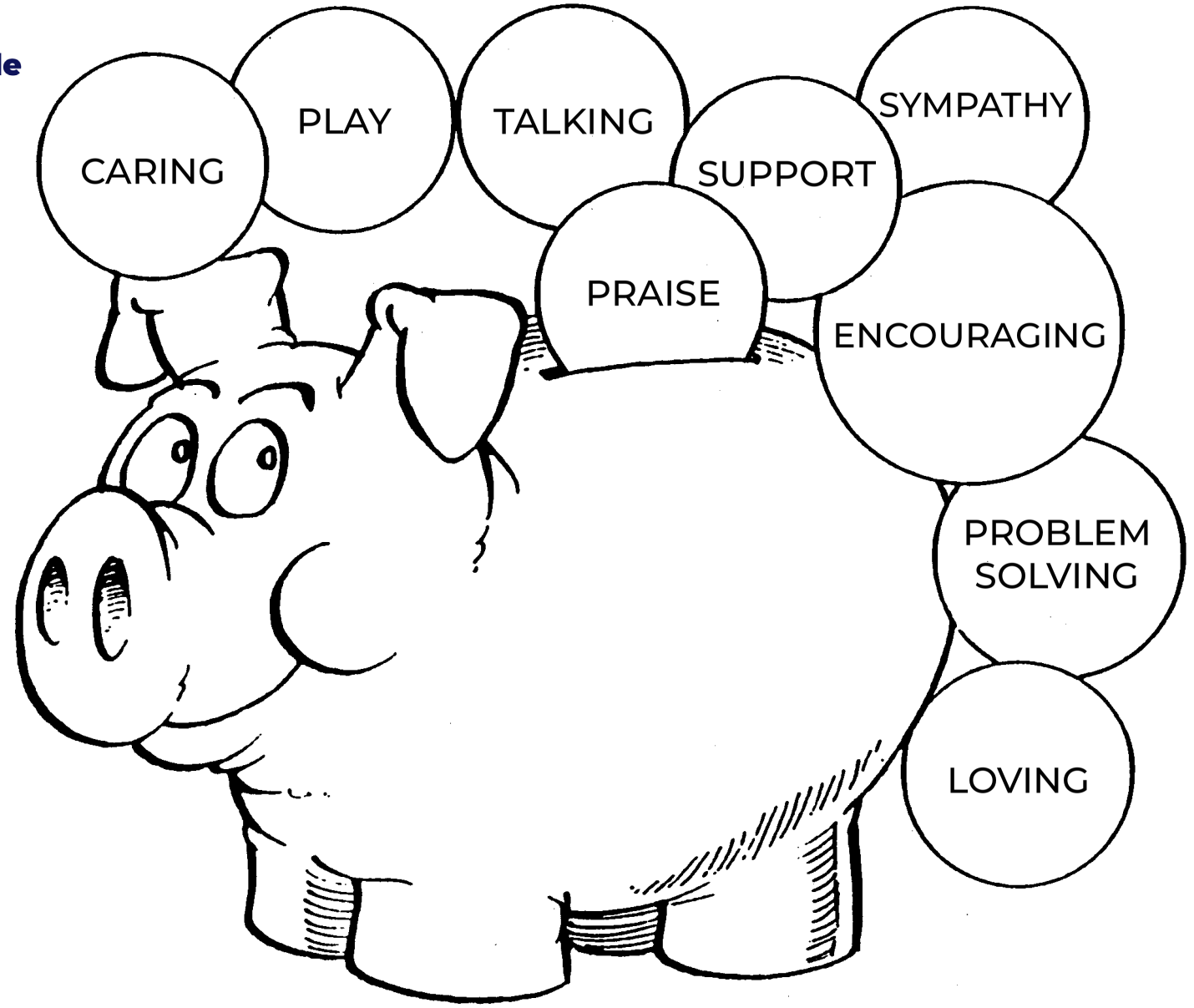

Remember to Build Up Your Bank Account

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How I am Incredible!

Child's Name and Age:_____

My Child's Strengths:

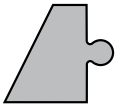
Adults that Support My Growing and Learning:

My Temperament *(e.g., activity level, adaptability, physical sensitivity, intensity, distractibility, persistence, predictability, quiet, anxious, angry):*

My Play and Language Level *(e.g., play alone, anxious or withdrawn, want to initiate play with others but don't know how, initiate but my social interactions are inappropriate, very few words, lots of language, inappropriate language):*

My Favorite Activities *(e.g., reading, soccer, games, music, cooking, building activities, drawing, pretend play):*

Social, Emotional, Persistence, Language and Academic Skills I am Learning *(e.g., helping others, calm down methods, speaking politely, taking turns, listening):*



My Parent's Goals for Me: *(e.g., helping my child follow directions, to better at school, improve their academic success, reduce my own anger and stress):*

How I am Incredible!

The "**How I am incredible!**" handout is used to help parents share information about their child's developmental level including language and play level, and sensory likes and dislikes. In addition, parents share their family support network and goals for their children. This form is completed in the first IY parent group meeting or home coaching visits and helps the group leader and other parents learn about the children in the group. During the first visit parents jot down what they know about their child at that time and share it with other parents. At subsequent meetings, parents add details about their child's specific developmental needs and make notes of any new discoveries they are making as they engage in child-directed play, coaching and develop strategies that they find helpful in supporting their goals. This form is also referred to by IY group leaders when tailoring role play practices geared towards each child's unique developmental level and language level. It is recommended that the template for this form be copied onto a large flip chart page, one for each child and then placed on the wall so that it can be easily added to each week. It is also fun to put a picture of each child at the top of the roof so everyone can get to know each other's incredible child.

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Serve and Return Conversations
Building Responsive Language

1 Parent Sets Up Serve
by spotlighting child's interests

- Get at eye-level and face to face
- Use intentional, descriptive commenting
- Follow your child's lead

2 Watch, Listen and Wait
for child to return your serve

- Child points, comments, or shows you something (verbally or nonverbally)

Return Child's Serve

3

- Respond with imitation, reflective commenting, and enthusiastic gestures
- Focus on your child's interests
- Use language most comfortable to you

4 Wait and Listen
for child to return your serve

5 Return Child's Serve
and expand the conversation

- Add new words intentionally
- Ask a few open-ended questions
- Share personal stories

Continue taking conversational turns as long as your child is interested.

- Taking turns is more important than the total number of words parents use.
- Enhance your interaction with books, puppets and pretend play, pictures, gestures, songs and games.
- "Serve and return" conversations build trusting relationships, and create feelings of safety and joy.

Serve and Return is a phrase popularized by Harvard Researchers (Center on Developing Child).

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Incredible Years Toolkit Posters

Use the Tool Metaphor for Building Parenting Tools

When helping parents learn key principles it can be useful for parents to see these as "building tools" they are learning to use from their parenting tool kit.

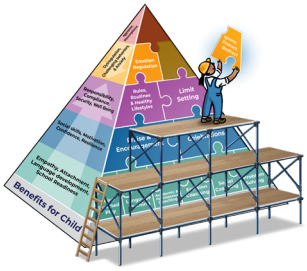
Using the Incredible Years Toolkit Posters (set of 3)

First poster – "Building Positive Behaviors"

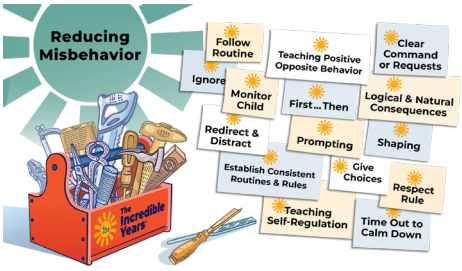
The first IY tool kit poster can be used to help parents learn the key "building tools" for strengthening positive behaviors. When a new parenting principle is identified in group discussions, group leaders can name it using the corresponding tool picture from the Incredible Years Tool Kit poster. Group leaders can expand on this building metaphor by explaining to parents a hammer is not the best tool for fixing every problem; rather it may be better to use the capacity building, foundational scaffolding, and nurturing tools to support healthy social, emotional, and academic growth.

Parents will learn that the bottom level of the parenting pyramid focuses on tools that they will use liberally such as child directed play, narrated commenting, academic, social, emotional and persistence coaching. These approaches not only build positive parent-child relationships but also help children identify and verbalize feelings. develop friendly social interactions and language and build resilience.

On the next layer of the parenting pyramid, parents learn how to use positive attention, praise, encouragement and tangible rewards to build specific social behaviors that are targeted by parents according to their goals and children's developmental level. Once parents have promoted a firm foundation of brain development, they often find they have fewer child problems to manage.



Second poster – "Reducing Misbehavior"



As the group moves up to the 3rd layer of the parenting pyramid, parents learn the importance of predictable routines, rules, and respectful limit setting to provide a predictable structure for children's exploratory behaviors and drive for independence, assuring their safety.

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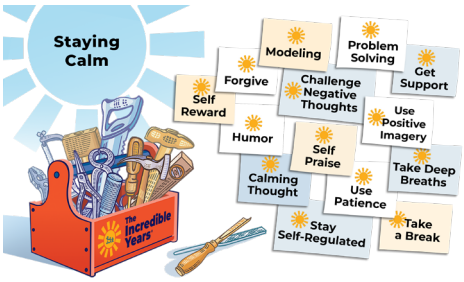
On the 4th layer parents are taught the least intrusive proactive discipline tools, such as ignoring, redirection and distractions to reduce target negative and challenging behaviors.

Finally, at the top level, discipline tools for managing highly aggressive, noncompliant and dysregulated behaviors are taught and used sparingly and strategically. Parents learn how to choose the most appropriate parenting tool based on the child's developmental needs, goals, and the underlying reason for the misbehavior.

Third poster – "Staying Calm"



Integrated throughout the program are tools parents can use for controlling upsetting thoughts, stepping back from stress and anger, and regaining focus on what is essential. Parents learn the value of patience, modeling, self-care, getting support, using calming self-talk, and problem solving. Parents first apply these tools to support their own emotion regulation, and then to learn how this modeling also benefits their children's development and sense of security. The tool kit metaphor helps parents realize all the different parenting strategies they have in their tool kit that will help them weather some of the uncomfortable, but inevitable, storms of parenting and life events.

See website for full-color tool kit poster set for purchase and for tool awards for download: www.incredibleyears.com.

Building Positive Behaviors

- Physical Warmth
- Fun Principle
- Self Praise
- Use Patience
- Positive Opposite
- Emotion Coaching
- Prompting
- Shaping
- Social Coaching
- Child Directed Play
- Interactive Reading
- Scaffolding
- Academic Coaching
- Persistence Coaching
- Labeled Praise
- Postive Modeling
- Listening
- Serve & Return Conversations
- Tangible Rewards
- Pretend Play
- Descriptive Commenting
- Show Love

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Reducing Misbehavior
Clear Command or Requests
Logical & Natural Consequences
Shaping
Respect Rule
Time Out to Calm Down
Give Choices
Teaching Self-Regulation
Establish Consistent Routines & Rules
Prompting
First... Then
Teaching Positive Opposite Behavior
Redirect & Distract
Monitor Child
Follow Routine
Ignore
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Hot Tips for Parents: Using Puppets to Promote Preschool Children's Social and Emotional Development

Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Ph.D.
21 March 2025

Preschool children are working to accomplish important developmental milestones of learning social and emotional skills, such as learning to share, help others, initiate social interactions, listen, and cooperate with peers. They are also developing emotional regulation skills, including recognizing and expressing emotions, controlling aggressive and anxious behaviors, and beginning problem-solving skills.

One effective way to promote these skills is through puppet play. Puppets help parents enter the child's imaginative world, allowing them to explore emotions of other characters (early empathy development), learn social behaviors, and conversation skills in a fun, engaging way.

With puppets, dolls, or action figures you can act out stories you are reading with children, make up fantasies, and explore solutions to pretend problems. You may be nervous at first using puppets, but try it out and before long you will experience the joy of entering into your child's thoughts, feelings and imagination, one of the most intimate places you can be at this age.

Benefits of Puppet Play:

- **Fosters Empathy:** Puppets help children experience and understand the feelings of others.
- **Supports Social Skills:** Through puppet scenarios, children practice important behaviors like greeting, sharing, and asking for help.
- **Encourages Emotional Expression:** Puppets allow children to express and talk about emotions, promoting emotional literacy and regulation.

Here are a few things to have your puppet do when playing with your child:

- **Modeling Social Greetings:**
  Puppet: “Hi, I’m Tiny Turtle! What’s your name?”
  Child responds, and the puppet thanks them for being friendly.
  Goal: Practice friendly greetings and social interactions.

- **Demonstrating Interest in Others:**
  Puppet: “What do you like to do?”
  The puppet shares its interests and encourages the child to ask, “What do you like to do?”
  Goal: Encourage curiosity and help children learn to show interest in others.

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- **Asking for Help:**
  Puppet: “I can’t get this block together. Can you help me?”
  When the child helps, the puppet thanks them.
  Goal: Teach how to ask for and offer help.

- **Expressing Emotions:**
  Puppet: “I’m embarrassed because I can’t ride my bike. Do you know how?”
  Ask the child what the puppet is feeling, and prompt them to say something to make the puppet feel better.
  Goal: Develop emotional expression and empathy.

- **Modeling Sharing:**
  Puppet: “I see you’re looking for a green block. Would you like mine?”
  If the child takes the block, the puppet expresses happiness.
  Goal: Teach sharing and connect actions to emotions.

- **Waiting for a Turn:**
  Puppet: “I’m going to wait until you finish. Can I have a turn then?”
  When the child shares, the puppet thanks them and expresses happiness.
  Goal: Teach patience and turn-taking.

Parent Role:

- **Praise:** Parents can use a playful or silly voice for the puppet, then go out of role as a parent to praise the child for their positive social behavior (e.g., sharing, helping, waiting patiently, taking turns, offering a friendly suggestion, asking for help, showing interest or empathy, being gentle and listening well with your puppet).

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- **Prompts:** Parents can quietly suggest responses for the child by whispering in their ear some ideas for what to say to the puppet. For example, *"You can tell the puppet you like trucks"* or *"You can say please when you want the book."* It's okay if the child doesn't immediately follow your suggestion; just move on to another activity as compliance is not required. The goal is to encourage imitation and praise positive social behavior.

Additional tips:

- **Keep It Simple:** Focus on one or two social skills per session.
- **Have Fun:** Puppet play should be an enjoyable experience for both the child and the parent.
- **Avoid Negative Behavior:** Puppets should model positive behaviors, never negative ones.

Note: If your child does not have the language skills to respond verbally to the puppet, it is still good for the puppet to model the words involved in the social interaction. You can also structure interactions that involve nonverbal responses from the child. *"Would you share that with me?"* *"Would you like to shake the puppet's hand?"* *"Can you help me build this tower?"* This way, the focus is on the child's friendly behavioral response to the puppet. You and the puppet can provide the verbal structure. This will support the child's eventual language development in these social situations.

Puppet play is a powerful tool to help preschool children develop crucial social and emotional skills. By modeling behaviors, providing praise, and encouraging interaction, parents can support children's growth in these areas in a fun and engaging way.

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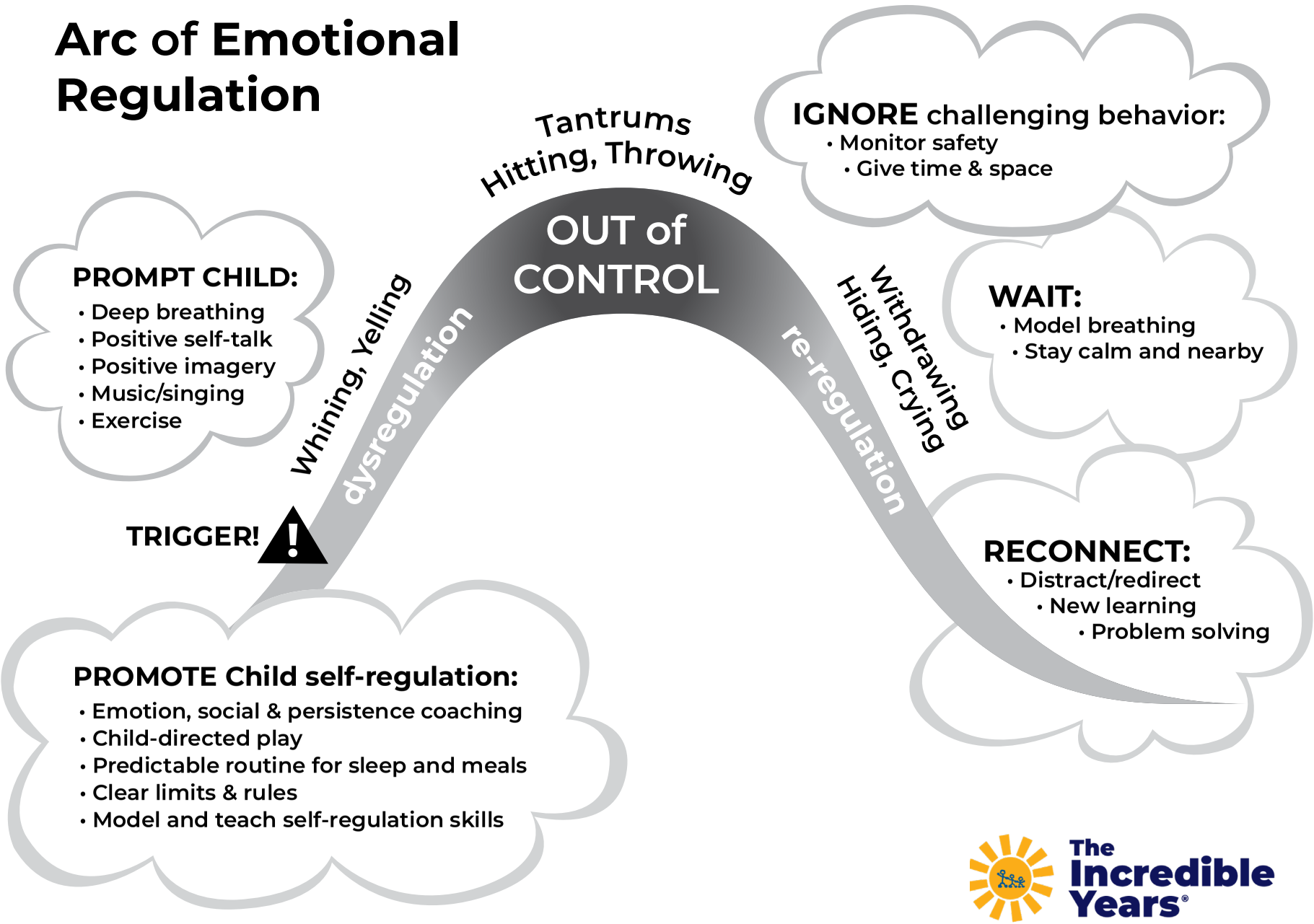
Arc of Emotional Regulation



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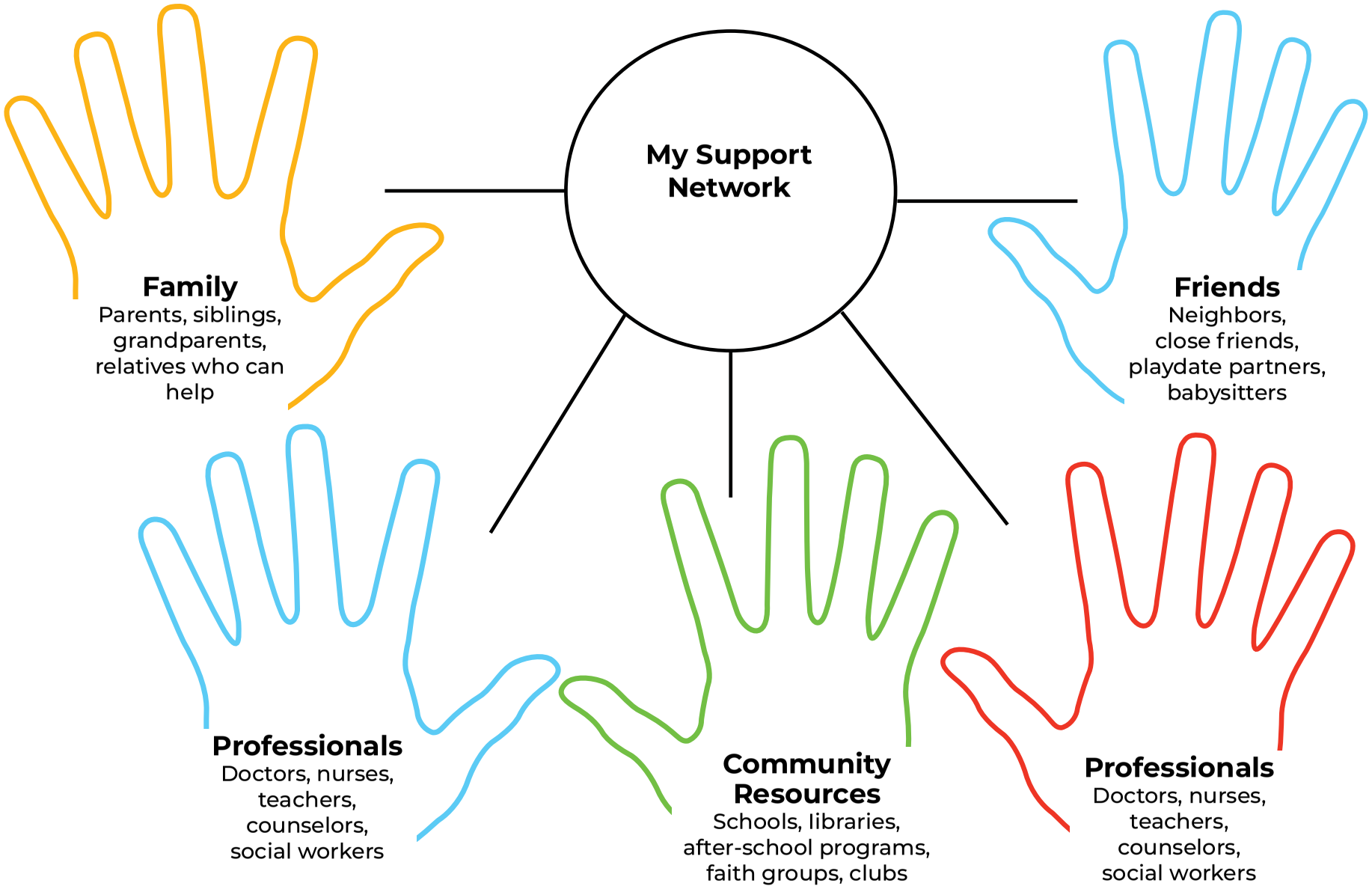
Visualize Your Support Network - Helping Hands

Write the names of your support people in the hands below. Each hand can represent a different group (e.g. family, friends, community resources, professionals, safety contacts).



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Building Your Support Network

A Guide to Identifying the People and Resources Who Help Keep Your Family Safe and Supported

Carolyn Webster-Stratton, MS, MPH, PhD

Visualize Your Support Network - Helping Hands

Write the names of your support people in the hands below. Each hand can represent a different group (e.g. family, friends, community resources, professionals, safety contacts.

Children do best when parents feel supported. Having a strong network of people you can rely on makes parenting less stressful and safer for your child. Use this handout to think about who is in your support circle and where you might want to add new connections. Write in the names here or on the IY ***Helping Hands*** graphic.

1. Family and Friends I Can Call On

- Who can help in an emergency?
- Who could watch my child if I needed a break?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Community Resources I Can Use

- Parenting groups, libraries, faith communities
- After-school programs, sports, or clubs
- Local crisis or support hotlines
  - _____
  - _____
  - _____

3. Professionals I Can Rely On

- Doctor, nurse, or counselor
- Teacher or childcare provider
- Social worker or community health worker
  - _____
  - _____
  - _____

4. Safety Contacts

- Emergency numbers (police, fire, ambulance)
- Crisis hotline / domestic violence hotline
- Trusted neighbor
  - _____
  - _____
  - _____

Reflection Questions

- Who do I feel most comfortable asking for help?
- Where might I need more support?
- What steps can I take this month to strengthen my network?
  - _____
  - _____
  - _____

Tip: It's okay to ask for help—building a network is a strength, not a weakness. The more support you have, the safer and happier your child will be.

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Coping Cycle:
Connect Positive Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors

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TRIGGER

Child yelling, whining, refusing, defiant, tantruming

Child Impact

Child feels secure, resilient, can self-regulate

Substitute Coping Thoughts for Upsetting Thoughts

"I can manage this! He is just testing limits."
"I can help by staying patient and in control."
"I can help her learn better behavior."
"She is still learning."

Parent Coping Behavior

- *ignore, give child time to regulate*
- *model taking deep breaths*
- *make a positive request*
- *stay consistent & calm*
- *distract & re-direct*
- *emotion coaching*

Calmer Feelings & Physiological Changes

- *reduced blood pressure*
- *calmness*
- *empathy*
- *confidence*

Discipline Hierarchies - Steps 1 - 4

For Nondisruptive & Disruptive Behavior

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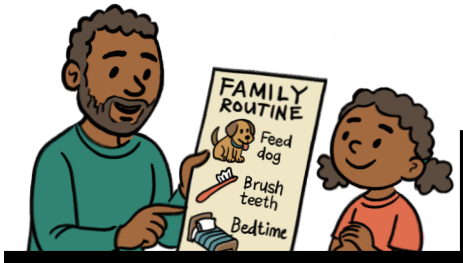

1 Rules & Routines

- Nonverbal Cues
- Clear Rules
- Predictable Schedules
- Clear Transitions

2 Effective Limit Setting

- Positive Verbal Redirection
- Distraction & Re-engagement

3 Emotion Regulation

As child begins to get upset, coach calm down strategies:

- Deep breaths
- Coach feelings
- Positive visualization
- Turtle shell
- Positive Self-Talk

4 Ignore, Distract, & Redirect

- **IGNORE** non-aggressive behavior (tantrums, whining)
- **COACH & PRAISE**

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Discipline Hierarchies - Steps 5 - 8*

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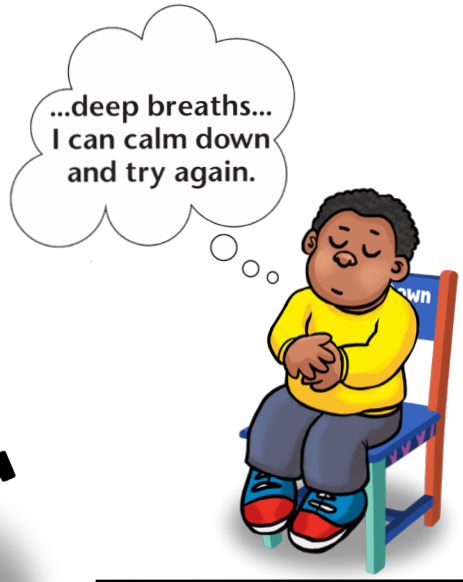
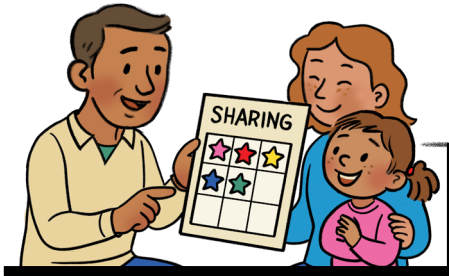
5 Logical Consequences

- Loss of computer or screen time
- Activity removed
- Loss of privilege
- Work chore imposed



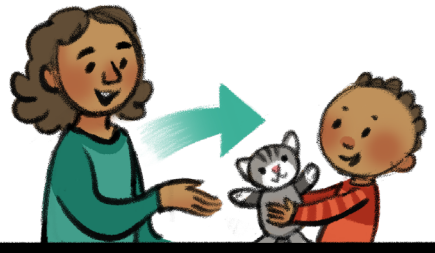
6 Positive Time Out

- For aggressive or destructive behavior
- 3-5 minutes Positive Time Out to Calm Down



7 Review Behavior Plan

- Increase positive attention for positive behavior
- Use incentive to motivate positive behavior
- Check that no attention is given to negative behavior
- Parent/Teacher conference to coordinate home/school plan
- IEP referral



8 Practice for Success

- Model, coach & practice positive alternate behaviors in child play times
- Reconnect with child after discipline encounters
- Continue to use responsive interaction and build positive relationships

**Always use the lowest and least intrusive approach first*

1) Calm Down Procedure for Aggression (Ages 3-6)

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Child hits

Check in with child who was hit

"I'm sorry he hit you. He made a mistake."

Command

"You hit. You need to go to the Calm Down Area."

Wait 5 seconds

Child goes to Calm Down Area

3-5 minutes
No attention given

...deep breaths... I can calm down and try again.

Parent praises child's first positive behavior

"That's so friendly the way you're sharing."

Parent ends time & re-engages child

"Your body is calm. You can play with your blocks."

Child calm

for last 2 mins

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2) Child Resists Going to Calm Down Area (Ages 3–6)

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Child hits

Check in with child who was hit

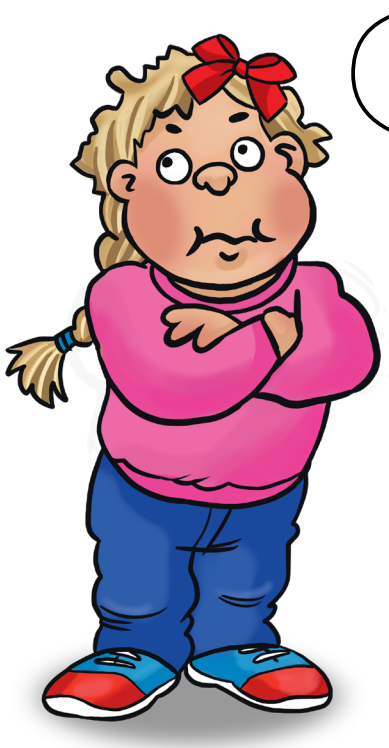
"I'm sorry she hit you. She made a mistake."

Command

"You hit. You need to go to the Calm Down Area."

Wait 5 seconds

Child refuses to go to Calm Down Area



Parent gives one warning

"You can go by yourself, or I can help you."

Child complies

No attention given for 3-5 minutes, last 2 mins child is calm

Parent ends time & re-engages child

"Your body is calm. You can play with your blocks."

Parent praises child's first positive behavior

"That's so friendly the way you're sharing."

3) Child Refuses to Stay in Calm Down Area (Ages 3–6)

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Child leaves Calm Down Area before time is over

Parent praises child's first positive behavior

"That's so friendly the way you're sharing."

Parent gives warning

Loss of Special Privilege	OR	Alternate Space
"If you can't stay in the Calm Down Area, you'll lose your lego time."		*"If you can't stay in the calm down area, you'll go to the Calm Down Room."*

Child stays in Calm Down Area

3-5 mins, last 2 minutes child is calm

Parent ends time & re-engages child

"You are calm and can come play now."

Child leaves Calm Down Area

Parent takes child to Calm Down Room

"You need to go the room to calm down."

Child stays in Calm Down Room

No attention given for 3-5 mins, last 2 mins child is calm

STOP

If child does not go after warning, parent follows through with consequence. Calm Down time is dropped.

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4) Compliance Training for Highly Oppositional Childen (Ages 3-6)

Transition Statement

"It's almost time to put toys away."

(set timer)

Command

Brief, polite, startup command:

"It's time to put toys away!"

Child Complies

"You did a great job cleaning up today!"

Praise

Wait 5 seconds

Child Refuses

Warning

*"**If** you don't put the toys away **then** you will go to the Calm Down Area."*

Wait 5 seconds

Child Refuses

When Calm Down time is over, repeat the command

"Go to Calm Down Area"

- Safe, boring place
- No attention from anyone
- 1 minute per year of age up to 5 minutes

Child Complies

"Thank you for listening and helping."

* If Child continues to resist:
- Alternate Calm Down Space (Scenario 3)
- Consequence/Loss of Privilege (Scenario 3)

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