CHILD PARENT RELATIONSHIP THERAPY: IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

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PARENTAL STRESS
Parents are reporting increasing levels of stress.
Stress affects parents, which then affects their children.

It’s a trickle down effect.
Stress can become a cycle

- Parent stress leads to child stress which leads to more parent stress.
Among Children, Cumulative Stress:

- Academic achievement
- Externalizing behavior
- Symptoms of depression

Morales and Guerra (2006); Puff and Renk (2014)
Parents experience:

- Higher levels of anger and irritability
- Increased feelings of being overwhelmed
- Impacts on their physical health and emotional well-being
Parents experience, cont.

- Feeling that they do not manage their stress levels effectively

- Furthermore, parents with high levels of stress tend to more easily lose patience with their children
Stress:

- Is additive
- Sources are multifaceted
- Parents with high stress struggle to focus on their children’s need

(APA, 2014; Landreth & Bratton, 2006; Rahe, 1974; Selye, 1974)
Parents Report:

- Stress has increased over past year
- Higher levels of anger/irritability
- Increased nervousness/anxiety
- Higher levels of feeling overwhelmed
Parents report:

- Stress impacts physical health and emotional well-being
- Not doing enough to manage stress
- When stressed, easily lose patience with child
- Cite money, family responsibilities, & housing costs
Parental Stress

- Average stress levels have declined, but parents report higher levels of stress compared to non-parents.

- Stress causes psychological and biological responses

- Chronic stress can lead to:
  - Depression
  - High blood pressure
  - Hypertension
  - Decreased immune functioning
Parental Stress

- Reactions to stress to trigger stress responses and the body becomes dysregulated

- Stress responses activate the entire body, to include:
  - Endocrine, autonomic, & immune system
  - Cognitive, motor, emotional, & sensory functions

- Evidence shows that parents experiencing stress exhibit decreased functioning ability

[APA, 2014; Berk, 2010; Cicchetti & Walker, 2001; Danforth, 2007]
CHILD PARENT RELATIONSHIP THERAPY
Child Parent Relationship Training (CPRT)

- 10-session, strengths-based, play therapy-based parent training model

- Aimed at augmenting the parent-child relationship, as well as helping parents become better attuned to their child’s needs and worldview

- Parents are viewed as the therapeutic agents of change.

(Landreth & Bratton, 2006)
CPRT

- Manualized protocol
- Focuses on importance of parent-child relationship
- Overriding goal: strengthen relationship, increasing parent’s feelings of trust, warmth, & familial affection
- Improve problem-solving strategies and family interactions
Both parent & child have opportunity for personal change and growth

Therapeutic goals for parents
- Understand and accept child’s emotional world
- More realistic attitudes of self and child
- More effective parenting skills
- Recapture joy in parenting

(Bratton, Landreth, Kellam, & Blackard, 2006; Landreth & Bratton, 2006)
EVIDENCED-BASED
Different Groups of Parents in CPRT Studies

- Religious and ethnic background:
  - Christian
  - Israeli
  - First Nations People/Native American
  - Hispanic/Latino
  - African-American
  - Korean
  - Chinese immigrants
  - Jamaican
  - Sudanese

- Marital status:
  - Single Parents
  - Couples
  - Divorced Parents

Different Groups of Parents in CPRT Studies

- **Types of Parents:**
  - Grandparents
  - Foster parents
  - Homeless parents
  - Adoptive parents
  - Children w/ Chronic Illnesses

- **Varying Legal Concerns:**
  - Nonoffending parents
  - Incarcerated mothers
  - Incarcerated fathers
  - Family violence

Research Outcomes

- **Parental Stress**
  - Decreased parental stress

- **Parenting**
  - Improved parenting skills and practices
  - Increased joy in parenting
  - Increased parenting self-efficacy
  - More competent in parenting role

- **Child**
  - Improved understanding of child
  - Improved communication with child
  - Increased parental acceptance
  - Growth of unconditional love

- **Partner**
  - Improved partner relationships
  - Improved partner unity
  - Improved co-parenting
  - Improved partner communication

Family
- Improved family functioning

Personal Growth
- Improved confidence
- Improved self-esteem
- Increased empathy
- Increased empathic behavior

[Athanasious & Gunning, 1999; Bornsheuer-Boswell, Garza, & Watts, 2013; Bratton & Landreth, 1995; Chau & Landreth, 1997; Cornett & Bratton 2014; Costas & Landreth, 1999; Edwards, Ladner, & White, 2007; Foley, Higdon, & White, 2006; Garza, Watts, & Kinsworthy, 2007; Glazer & Kottman, 1994; Glover & Landreth, 2000; Harris & Landreth, 1997; Kidron & Landreth, 2010; Kinsworthy & Garza, 2010; Kolos, Green, & Crenshaw, 2009; Lee & Landreth, 2003; Ryan, 2007; Smith & Landreth, 2003; Tew et al., 2002; Yuen et al., 2002]
Child Outcomes

- Reduction in internalizing behavior
- Improvement in externalizing behavior
- Reduction in behavior problems
- Improved relationship building with parents and teachers
- Reduced stress in teacher-child and parent-child relationships
HOW IT WORKS
10 weeks

- Weekly 2-hour group sessions: parents & counselor

- Weekly 30-minute play session: parent & child
Each Week:

- Learn new concepts
- Rules of Thumb
- Experiential component
- Video segments
- Watch play sessions (and give feedback)
- In-class worksheets
- Given homework assignments
New Concepts

- Reflective responding
- “Be With” Attitudes:
  - I am here; I hear you
  - I understand
  - I care
- Play Session Do’s & Don’ts

- Limit Setting
- Choice Giving
- Self-Esteem Building
- Encouragement v. Praise
- Using the Skills Outside the Play Sessions
Rules of Thumb

- Focus on the donut, not the hole.
- What’s most important may not be what you do, but what you do after what you did.
- You can’t give away what you do not possess.
- When a child is drowning, don’t try to teach her how to swim.
- If you can’t say it in 10 words or less, don’t say it.
- Big choices for big kids, small choices for small kids.
Experiential

- Role plays
- Practicing
- Processing
Videos
- Learn various concepts
- Watch actual play sessions with play therapists

Taped Play Sessions
- Watch 1 or 2 parents each week
- Give support
- Receive feedback
In-Class Worksheets

◦ Learn the concepts in class

◦ Get to practice with the therapist and other parents

Homework

◦ Simple things that are done at home

◦ Examples:
  ◦ Notice one new physical characteristic about your child
  ◦ 30-second burst of attention
  ◦ Complete worksheet at home
  ◦ Play sessions
  ◦ Sandwich Hug or Kiss
  ◦ Practice choice giving
WHY IN SCHOOLS?
Help improve student’s overall success

Help support classroom readiness

Parents learn how to better help their child learn:
  • Self-control
  • Self-responsibility
  • Build self esteem
Questions?
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Resources: CPRT materials available at http://cpt.unt.edu/shopping/publications
REFERENCES


