

Parent-child interaction therapy: a comparison of standard and abbreviated treatments for oppositional defiant preschoolers.

Nixon RD, Sweeney L, Erickson DB, Touyz SW.

Department of Psychology, University of Sydney, Australia. reg.nixon@flinders.edu.au

Families of 54 behaviorally disturbed preschool-aged children (3 to 5 years) were randomly assigned to 1 of 3 treatment conditions: standard parent-child interaction therapy (PCIT; STD); modified PCIT that used didactic videotapes, telephone consultations, and face-to-face sessions to abbreviate treatment; and a no-treatment waitlist control group (WL). Twenty-one nondisturbed preschoolers were recruited as a social validation comparison condition. Posttreatment assessment indicated significant differences in parent-reported externalizing behavior in children, and parental stress and discipline practices from both treatment groups on most measures compared with the WL group. Clinical significance testing suggested a superior effect for the STD immediately after intervention, but by 6-month follow-up, the two groups were comparable. The findings indicate that abbreviated PCIT may be of benefit for families with young conduct problem children.