



PCIT with Adoptive Families: Building Relationships and Enhancing Parenting Skills

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TIES for Families

- 20-year-old program started as UCLA TIES for Adoption
- Mental health services for children in LA County transitioning to adoptive home
- TIES Transition Model
- PCIT began at TIES-South Bay in 2009

Behavior Management First

"...helping foster parents and children gain control over children's behavioral problems allows the dyads to develop relationships that would not otherwise be possible. The behavioral problems interfere with parents' ability to respond in nurturing ways and to commit to the children's long-term development, and this interference in turn undermines the children's ability to trust in the caregiver's ability." (Dozier and Rutter, 2008)

PCIT Objectives

For Parents:

- Maximizes feelings of competency

For Children with Disruptive Behaviors:

- Increases feelings of safety through predictability and clarity of rules.

For Relationship:

- Enhance parent-child attachment bonding

Common Issues for Adoptive Parents

- Grief and Loss
- Shame and Inadequacy
- Loss of Control
- Anxieties about past/ Fears for future
- Unrealistic expectations

Special Emphases for Adoptive Families

- Focus on calm voice and recovery
- Emphasize rationale for active ignore
- Level 3 Coaching observations, help parents notice positive behavior change
- Ready to respond to traumatic play

Modifications for Adoptive Families

- Behavioral Obs & Reflections > Praises
- Modifying Swoop and Go- Parent may need to stay in room (swoop and go toys)
- ↑ Parent sessions and/or check-ins
- Focus for parent on enhanced relationship and behavior change < Numbers

Case Example

- 4-year-old Latina girl living with her biological older sister and their Caucasian adoptive parents. Placed one year prior to PCIT treatment.
- Disruptive Bx: Noncompliance, tantrums, dawdling, controlling bx.
- Anxiety Sx: Hypervigilance, hyperarousal, excessive worrying.
- Parent Factors: Anxious mother, unresolved trauma, high-achieving, negative attributions,

Addressing common parent issues through PCIT

Common Experience	Common Reaction	PCIT Intervention
Grief/Loss & Shame/ Inadequacy	Feel like not “real” or “deserving” parent	During coaching help parent notice child’s positive response to parent

Addressing common parent issues through PCIT

Common Experience	Common Reaction	PCIT Intervention
Loss of Control	Feel powerless	Empower parent by showing how parent skills → child improved behavior

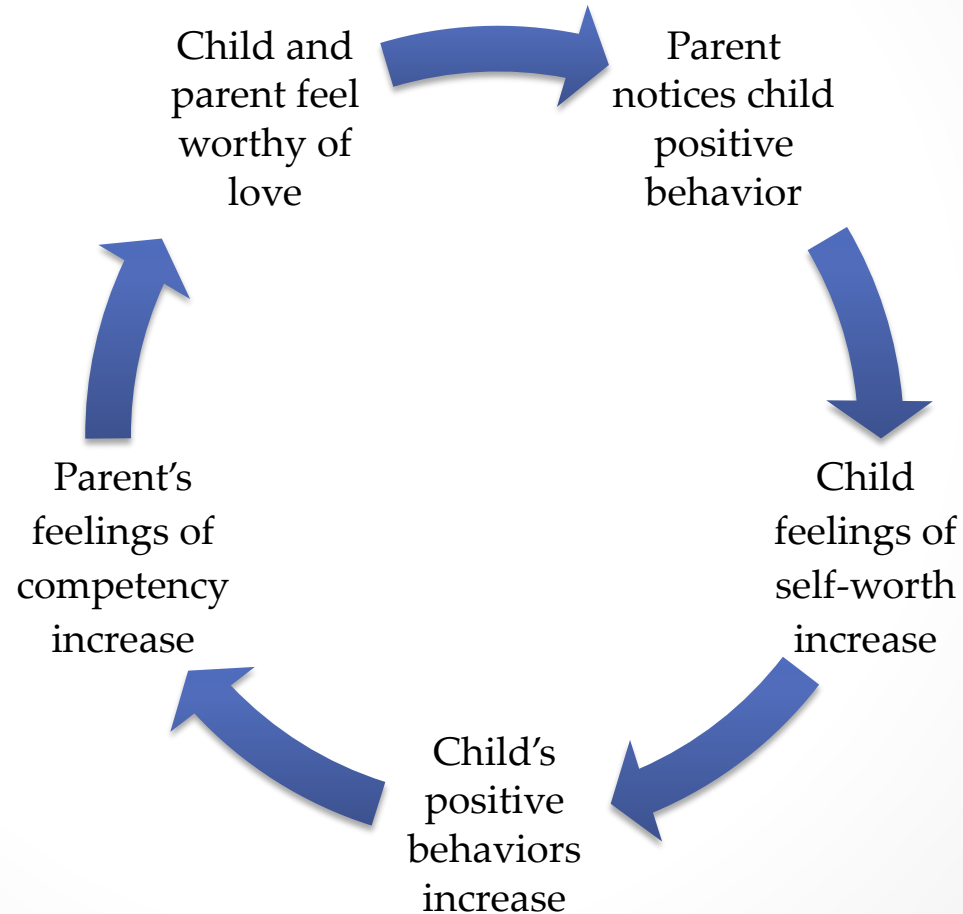
Addressing common parent issues through PCIT

Common Experience	Common Reaction	PCIT Intervention
Anxieties about past & Fear for future	Feel hopeless that things will ever be better	Ground family, slow them down, and help stay in moment. Show child's positive behaviors and provide hope for the future and positive relationship.

Addressing common parent issues through PCIT

Common Experience	Common Reaction	PCIT Intervention
Unrealistic expectations for child	Worries about child's dev. and bxs.	Psycho-education in the moment through observations

relationships in adoptive families



Summary: What makes PCIT work?

- Grounding parent and child in the moment (In-vivo observations)
- Building parent confidence-showing parenting skills in action
- Fostering attachment by helping parent notice positives in child
- Provide hope for the child's future

Future Directions

- Expand the data set
- Observe level of effectiveness with modifications and emphases
- Include Quality of Attachment questionnaire

Why our Adoptive Families need it

" ...helping foster parents and children gain control over children's behavioral problems allows the dyads to develop relationships that would not otherwise be possible. The behavioral problems interfere with parents' ability to respond in nurturing ways and to commit to the children's long-term development, and this interference in turn undermines the children's ability to trust in the caregiver's ability." (Dozier and Rutter, 2008)

Thank you

- Thanks to TIES PCIT Team! Current, Past, and Future
- Thank you to UC Davis for the Training and Continued Support of our PCIT program!

