PCIT with Toddlers (PCIT-T): Improving Attachment & Emotion Regulation

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18th Annual Conference on Parent-Child Interaction Therapy for Traumatized Children

October 17, 2018
Sacramento, California
## Disclosure & Conflict of Interest Statement

**Emma I Girard, Psy.D.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Research Funding</th>
<th>Advisor/Consultant</th>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Speakers’ Bureau</th>
<th>Books, Intellectual Property</th>
<th>In-kind Services (example: travel)</th>
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PCIT with Toddlers Book Released!

Springer Publishing:


Also available on Amazon
Acknowledgements
Co-Authors of PCIT-Toddlers

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Jane R. Kohlhoff, Ph.D.
Susan S.J. Morgan, MMH
Cheryl B. McNeil, Ph.D.
PCIT-T Mini Workshop Overview

• Introduction
  • Theory & core assumptions
  • PCIT-T compared to standard PCIT
  • Research evidence-base

• Assessment
  • Measures
  • DPICS-T
  • Transitional cue cards

• CDI-T
  • CARES model
  • Case study

• PDI-T
  • Tell-Show-Try Again-Guide
  • PDI-T coding

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PCIT-T
Intro, Theory, Data

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Toddlers

- Rapid language acquisition
- Increased physical mobility
- Independence/autonomy vs separation anxiety
- Limit testing & desire to master environmental constraints

Limited capacity for emotional and behavioural control

Disruptive Behaviors in Toddlers

- Tantrums
- Aggression (e.g., hitting, biting, pinching)
- Fussiness (e.g., screaming, whining, crying)
- Anger, frustration, head-banging
- Child abuse and neglect
- Separation anxiety or withdrawal from parent
- Attachment difficulties (e.g., rejection of parent, difficult to comfort)
- Parental stress (e.g., anxiety, dissatisfaction, difficulty coping, lack of confidence)

Attachment Theory

John Bowlby

“An infant requires a “warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his/her mother (or permanent mother substitute)” (1952, p.11)

Ainsworth’s Infant Attachment classifications

• Secure - B
• Insecure-avoidant - A
• Insecure-resistant (anxious/ambivalent) - C
• Disorganised/ disoriented - D

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1. THE FIRST 2 YEARS IS A ‘CRITICAL’ PERIOD

“...the first 1001 days from conception until age 2 as a springboard for neuro-cognitive development, life-long health and well-being and socioeconomic success” National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, Harvard University.

2. IMPORTANCE OF THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

• “There is no such thing as a baby; there is a baby and someone” Winnicott, 1947

• Toddlers are growing in independence but still reliant on caregiver(s) to meet their physical and emotional needs

• Attachment system is being consolidated; still malleable

Adaptations of PCIT for younger children

- **Parent-Child Attunement Therapy (PCAT)** - Dombrowski, Timmer, Blacker, and Urquiza (2005)

- **Bagner and colleagues** - Bagner, Garcia, & Hill, 2016; Blizzard, Barroso, Ramos, Graziano, & Bagner, 2017
PCIT-T Model Assumption

• The parent (or caregiver’s) role is to meet the needs, both emotional and physical of the infant or toddler...

....and in doing so to help the child develop the skills and capacities that will optimize social-emotional functioning across the lifespan

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Three PCIT-T Core Principles

1. Disruptive behaviors in toddlers = emotional dysregulation Tronick & Beeghly, 2011; Patterson, 1982

2. Early parent-child attachment relationship = vehicle through which the child develops the capacity for emotion and behavior regulation Bowlby, 1988; Sroufe, 1995

3. Toddlers have the capacity to learn how to listen and that parents can play a key role in helping this skill to develop Bloom, 2013; Hamlin et al., 2007; Thompson, 2012, 2015
What is Emotion Regulation (ER)?

• “The process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions.” Gross, 1998, p. 275

• What does that mean for toddlers?
  • Children aged 12-24 months require scaffolding provided by caregivers to assist in learning ER
  • Caregivers themselves need good ER to provide/teach ER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PCIT</th>
<th>PCIT-Toddlers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE OF CHILD</td>
<td>2 - 7 YEARS</td>
<td>12 - 24 MONTHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME MEASURE</td>
<td>ECBI</td>
<td>DECA(-I or –T)/BITSEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LENGTH OF SESSION</td>
<td>45-60 MINUTES</td>
<td>30-45 MINUTES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAY ROOM SET UP</td>
<td>3 ZONES (FLOOR, TABLE, CABINET)</td>
<td>ALL FLOOR OR LOW TABLE SAFETY AREA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOY SELECTION</td>
<td>CREATIVE / IMAGINATION TYPE</td>
<td>PULL TOYS, MUSIC, SORTING, FARM HOUSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFLECTIONS MASTERY CRITERIA</td>
<td>10 REFLECTIVE STATEMENTS</td>
<td>75% VERBALIZATIONS COOING / BABBLING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I’ &amp; “E’ OF PRIDE</td>
<td>OBSERVE FOR SATISFACTION</td>
<td>ACTIVE COACHING OF ANIMATION &amp; ENJOYMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILD MISBEHAVIOR EXPERIENCE BIG EMOTION</td>
<td>DIFFERENTIAL ATTENTION</td>
<td>-----</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CARES: ER (child &amp; adult)</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMPLIANCE TRAINING</td>
<td>Time-Out</td>
<td>Tell-Show-Try Again-Guide</td>
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PCIT-T in a nutshell

• **Child Directed Interaction - Toddlers (CDI-T)**
  - Do and Don’t skills
  - Emotion labeling, emotion coaching & other positive skills
  - CARES model (for child and parent) - for “big emotions”
  - Under-Reaction and Redirection – for minor provocative, attention-seeking actions
  - Age appropriate limit setting – for aggressive and destructive behaviors
  - Check-in questions & discussion - to enhance caregiver reflective capacity

• **Parent Directed Interaction – Toddlers (PDI-T)**
  - Teaching listening skills through a guided compliance procedure:
    
    *tell-show-try again-guide + labeled praise for listening*

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Goals of PCIT

**CAREGIVER SKILLS**
- Quality of caregiver speech
- Caregiver distress
- Understanding toddler’s developmental needs
- Ability to assist the child in regulating emotions
- Caregiver’s emotion regulation

**CHILD BEHAVIOR**
- Social-emotional functioning
- Social skills
- Emotion regulation

**CAREGIVER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP**
- Reciprocal enjoyment
- Caregiver perceptions of the child, self & relationship
- Child perceptions of the caregiver (available, safe, reliable, nurturing)

Where’s the evidence?
Initial development and pilot study (2014)

- Retrospective file review, n=29 toddlers, CDI phase only
- PCIT-T associated with significant improvements in:
  - Child behavior (ECBI)
  - Parent skills (DPCIS)
  - Consumer satisfaction (TAI)

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Waitlist controlled trial & longitudinal follow-up study

• 66 toddlers randomly allocated to PCIT-T (CD-TI only) or Waitlist; PCIT-T group showed significant improvements in:
  • Externalizing & internalizing behaviors (CBCL)
  • Parent skills (DPCIS)
  • Parental emotional availability (EA scales)*

• 18 toddlers followed-up 4 months after PCIT-T (CDI-T only)
  • 85% of the children classified as “Disorganized” on the SSP were no longer disorganized at follow-up

PCIT-T: Measures, DPICS, Transitions

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PCIT-T Assessment Outcomes

**Required Outcomes**

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment
- DECA-Infant (ages 12-18 months)
- DECA-Toddler (ages 18-36 months)
  Or
- The Brief Infant Toddler Social Emotional Assessment (BITSEA)

**AND**

- Dyadic Parent-Child Interaction Coding System (DPICS-IV) weekly
- Behavioral Observation DPICS Pre/Post Tx

Developmental Checklists if Needed Center of Disease Control – Act Early

**Your Child at 1 Year**

- **Child's Name**
- **Child's Age**
- **Today's Date**

**Social/Emotional Development**
- Can say stranger names?
- Does the child say "bye-bye" when leaving a familiar place?
- Shows fear of strangers?
- Shows fear of strangers?

**Movement/Physical Development**
- Uses one hand to hold auntie or uncle?
- Can clap hands?
- Can throw a ball?
- Can sit up without help?

**Language/Communication**
- Does the child show any signs of language delay?
- Does the child follow directions?
- Does the child respond to their name?
- Can the child follow simple instructions?

**Cognitive Learning/Thinking, problem-solving/solving**
- Can identify and name basic shapes?
- Can count to 5 or more?
- Can build a block tower?
- Can participate in a simple game?

**Your Child at 18 Months (1½ Yrs)**

- **Child's Name**
- **Child's Age**
- **Today's Date**

**Social/Emotional Development**
- Can interact with others?
- Can show emotions?
- Can follow simple rules?
- Can follow simple instructions?

**Movement/Physical Development**
- Can walk a straight line?
- Can jump up and down?
- Can throw a ball?
- Can run a short distance?

**Your Child at 2 Years**

- **Child's Name**
- **Child's Age**
- **Today's Date**

**Social/Emotional Development**
- Can interact with others?
- Can show emotions?
- Can follow simple rules?
- Can follow simple instructions?

**Movement/Physical Development**
- Can walk a straight line?
- Can jump up and down?
- Can throw a ball?
- Can run a short distance?


www.cdc.gov/actearly | 1-800-CDC-INFO

Learn the Signs. Act Early.
Emotion Labeling
• Not a mastery criteria category
• It is an important skill for parents to identify and label children’s emotions (“You seem happy,” “You look sad.”).
• It is helpful for toddlers to be exposed to feeling words so that they can learn to recognize emotions and associate behaviors with corresponding emotional states.
• Additionally, use of this skill is intended to increase children’s emotional vocabulary, an important step in communication and emotion regulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do Skills</th>
<th>Tally Count</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Mastery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotion Labeling</td>
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<td>Behavioral Description</td>
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<td>Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labeled Praise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unlabeled Praise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
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<td>0 ≤ 3</td>
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<td>Commands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative Talk</td>
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What About the Lower Half of DPICS?

- Do you show attention to ....
  - Imitation?
  - Enjoyment?

- Are these skills left out in the “cold” during our standard PCIT coaching?

  ..... Be Prepared.....

More “Other Positive Skills” in PCIT-Toddlers

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## Other Positive Skills in PCIT-T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Skills</th>
<th>Circle One</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imitate</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Enjoyment</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Affection</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual Eye Contact</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animated Tone of Voice</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animated Facial Expressions</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Style at Developmental Level</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs Practice</td>
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CDI-T Mastery Criteria

- 10 Labeled Praises
- 10 Behavior Descriptions
- 10 Reflections*
  - 75% rule when limited verbalizations and language opportunities present during 5-minute coding
- ≤ 3 Questions, Commands & Critical Statements

Child-Directed Interaction-Toddlers (CDI-T)

CARES model

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**CDI-T**

**Includes the core components of standard PCIT**
Building a strong positive relationships between the parent and toddler through dyadic play situation

PRIDE Skills
Positive attention to shape positive behavior
“in vivo” coaching

**Unique Features has emphasis on:**
Emotion regulation and consideration of child development
Education on typical toddler development
Age appropriate limit sitting for dangerous or aggressive behavior

CARES

The C.A.R.E.S. model

• A series of techniques that parents can use to help toddlers manage emotions
• Used whenever the child appears to be experiencing a ‘big emotion’
• Most effective if used quickly, before the child’s emotions escalate
• Provides ‘scaffolding’ for the child as he/she learns to regulate their own emotions

Come in

- Move your body physically close to child
- Make movements calm and slow
- By moving closer the child sees you are present and available to them
- Increases the child’s sense of trust in the caregiver

Assist Child

- Helps child problem solve current issue
- Establishes early teaching experiences
- ‘Perform with child’ versus ‘do it for child’
- Example:

  (child) starts to fuss when unable to sort toy

  (parent) slowly turns toy while child remains holding toy to show placement in toy sort

Reassure Child

- Creates opportunity for increased trust
- Verbal statement that the child will be taken care of by caregiver
- Example:
  (parent) “It’s ok, Mommy/Daddy is here.”
  (parent) “I’ve got you, you’re alright.”
Emotional Validation

- Label the child’s feelings
- Creates sense of understanding & support
- Helps to build emotional vocabulary and understanding
- Helps the child to learn that emotions are okay
- Example
  
  (parent) “I know it’s sad/frustrating when...”
  
  (parent) “You’re proud/happy because...”

Soothe Child

- Provides sense of safety & security
- Gives physical cues everything is ok
- Model for child relaxed & calm demeanor
- Example

  (parent) Give cuddle to child or soft caress
  (parent) Use quiet, soothing tone of voice

Additional points about C.A.R.E.S.

- The C.A.R.E.S. steps are provided in any order & often simultaneously

- REDIRECTION is used after C.A.R.E.S.
  - Use toys with sounds for distraction
  - Note if child tired, hungry, wet and address
  - Move to different area/location
  - Increase facial and verbal animation

- Coaching around the C.A.R.E.S. model will most likely need to be directive in early sessions

- Under reaction and redirection used for minor behaviour and absence of a big emotion

Aggressive Behavior

Get Down to Child Level, Cover & Hold Their Hands in Yours, Give Direct Eye Contact While Stating in Firm Tone: "No Hurting."

Look Away from Child While Still Covering Their Hands for 3 seconds

Return Direct Eye Contact, State in Firm Tone: "No Hurting. Gentle Hands."

Quickly physically rotate child from around the waist toward another toy while facing away from the parent

Redirect with PRIDE Skills and Provide C.A.R.E.S. as Needed

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Adult C.A.R.E.S.

• Parents are taught to use ‘C.A.R.E.S. for adults’
  • “The more EMOTIONAL REGULATION we can create in ourselves the greater the benefit to our children.“

• The therapist uses C.A.R.E.S. too!

Check Cognitions Clue into Yourself

Before beginning special time with your Toddler recognize:

- Your thoughts/reasons why you are spending time together
- The feelings you bring into play
- How your body language demonstrates your current style of engagement

Assist Self

If not emotionally ready for play implement relaxation techniques to help refocus energy:

- Deep breathing
- Quick shower
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Call to supportive system

Reassure Self

Parenting presents challenges and no one technique works for all children therefore use:

Positive self talk

Remind yourself of tender moments

Foresee future event that will take place with your child that brings joy

Emotional Awareness

Toddlers are remarkably good at sensing emotions. They seem to track and respond to stress.

Special time allows for fun and connection to be experienced when we engage in play with positive thoughts and emotions.

Sensitive & Soothing

Similar to using a soothing voice with your toddler, be kind and sensitive to yourself in how you reassure yourself and the tone of your own self-talk. Remind yourself learning is a process of trial and error, plotting and adjusting courses.

Parent-Directed Interaction – Toddler (PDI-T)
PDI Standard Versus PDI Toddler

**PDI Standard**

- Primary focus on compliance training/discipline strategies
- Time-out/back-up room for noncompliance
  - **Assumption:** Child *knows* what to do but *chooses* not to do it
- Parents coached to remain firm, calm, and consistent when delivering commands

**PDI-Toddler**

- Teaching listening skills
- Guided compliance procedures
  - **Assumption:** Child may not know what to do and must be taught to do it
- Parent coached to deliver commands in a clear but upbeat, enthusiastic manner
PDI Standard Versus PDI Toddler (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PDI Standard</th>
<th>PDI-Toddler</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Commands are <strong>not</strong> limited to pre-specified concepts and phrases</td>
<td>• Commands <strong>are</strong> limited to pre-specified concepts and phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A positive touch (e.g., rubbing the child’s back) is <strong>not</strong> required to be paired with a labeled praise for compliance</td>
<td>• A positive touch (e.g., rubbing the child’s back) <strong>is</strong> required to be paired with a labeled praise for compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A parent is <strong>not</strong> required to be in close proximity to the child prior to issuing a command</td>
<td>• A parent <strong>is</strong> required to be in close proximity to the child prior to issuing a command</td>
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Tell

Show

Try Again

Guide

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# PDI-T Mastery Criteria

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Parent Skill</th>
<th>Mastery Level to be Achieved</th>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Delivery of the PDI-T Guided Compliance Sequence</td>
<td>75% effective commands during a five-minute sequence mastered at the outset of the session</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75% effective follow through to effective commands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Use of the Directive Language Stimulation</td>
<td>Satisfactory Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Use of the Procedure for Physical Aggression, Destruction of Property, and/or Self-Injurious Behavior (if applicable)</td>
<td>Satisfactory Implementation</td>
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PCIT with Toddlers (PCIT-T)
Thank you!

Contact Information:
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www.PCIT-Toddlers.org
References


References


References


