

FIT for the Community:

Online parent training program for children with behavioral disorders shows promising results.

Susannah Grimm Poe, Ed.D., WVU Medicine Children's Neurodevelopmental Center; Amy D. Herschell, Ph.D., WVU Dept. of Psychology; Cheryl McNeil, Ph.D., WVU Department of Psychology.

Results of a two year evaluation of the effectiveness of a free online behavioral training program, designed for use by home visiting professionals with parents of children with disruptive behavior disorder, resulted in significant improvements in skill acquisition and child behavior that were maintained over time. Family Interaction Training (FIT), a collaboration between CDC and AUCD, was developed from common components of several evidence-based parenting programs.

Evaluation Procedure

Seventy-seven clinicians were recruited from West Virginia Head Start, Early Head Start, and Home Visitors; Tennessee Act Early Initiative; Success 4 Kids and Families, and The American Occupational Therapy Association to review and evaluate the FIT program, and to test it with a family.

Year 1: Can FIT be successfully learned through self-study?

- 110 Participants enrolled
- 83 participants completed all 3 time points.
- Knowledge of FIT principles improved across all 3 time points
- Knowledge of general behavior principles improved from baseline to 2-week followup, but declined at 3-month follow-up.

Year 2: Can clinicians independently implement FIT? Is using FIT associated with improved child behavior?

- 77 participants
- 49 participants completed all 3 time points.
- Knowledge of FIT and general behavioral principles followed pattern of Year 1
- Mastery of FIT skills improved from baseline to 2-week follow-up, maintained at 3-month follow-up.
- Significant improvements in child behavior from 2-week to 3-month followup.

Module 1 – Strengthening the Parent-

- 1. Introduction and Key Concepts
- 2. Communication

Child Relationship

- 3. Praise
- 4. Using Attention Strategically
- 5. Scheduled parent/child playtime

Components of the FIT curriculum:

Module 2 – Structuring the Environment to Prevent Misbehavior

- 6. Module 2 Key Concepts
- 7. Establishing Routines and Family Rules
- 8. Giving Clear Directions

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- 9. Anticipating Problems, Using Redirection, and Easing Transitions
- 10. Helping Your Child Calm Down

Module 3 – Effective Strategies for Addressing Misbehavior

- 11. Module 3 Key Concepts
- 12. Time Out
- 13. Logical Consequences and Removal of Privileges
- 14. Conclusion

Conclusion

- Participants strongly endorsed the use of FIT materials, with 94% of Year 1 and 98% of Year 2 participants indicating that they would continue to use FIT.
- FIT materials effectively improve short-term, but not long-term knowledge, and participants indicated that additional systems or administrative support would be helpful.
- Despite declines in knowledge, improvements in the acquisition of FIT skills appear to be maintained over the long-term, and are associated with significant improvements in child behavior.





