

PCIT for Children with Autism: Successes and Challenges

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Disclosures

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Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

- What is Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)?
- How has PCIT grown in Iowa?
- What is the evidence base for using PCIT with children who have autism?
- What modifications are commonly made when PCIT is used with children who have autism?

What is PCIT?

- Dyadic intervention for young children with disruptive behaviors and their caregiver(s).
 - 100% parent-mediated intervention
- Developed by Eyberg in 1970s.
- Eyberg was influenced by:
 - Baumrind (authoritative parenting)
 - Hanf (differential social attention, direct commands, praise for compliance, TO, parent coaching)

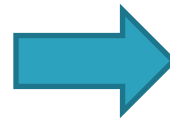
What is PCIT?

- Eyberg added assessment to her intervention model
 - Direct (Dyadic Parent-Child Interaction Coding System; DPICS)
 - Indirect (Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory; ECBI)
- Evidence base: PCIT has strong marks for treating young children with externalizing behavior and their caregivers (e.g., Thomas, 2017)

What is PCIT?



- 2 Phases:
 - Child Directed Interaction (CDI; PRIDE + selective attention)
 - Parent Directed Interaction (PDI; effective directions + consistent follow through)



Praise
Say what you like

Reflect
Say what they say

Imitate
Do what they do

Describe
Describe what they do

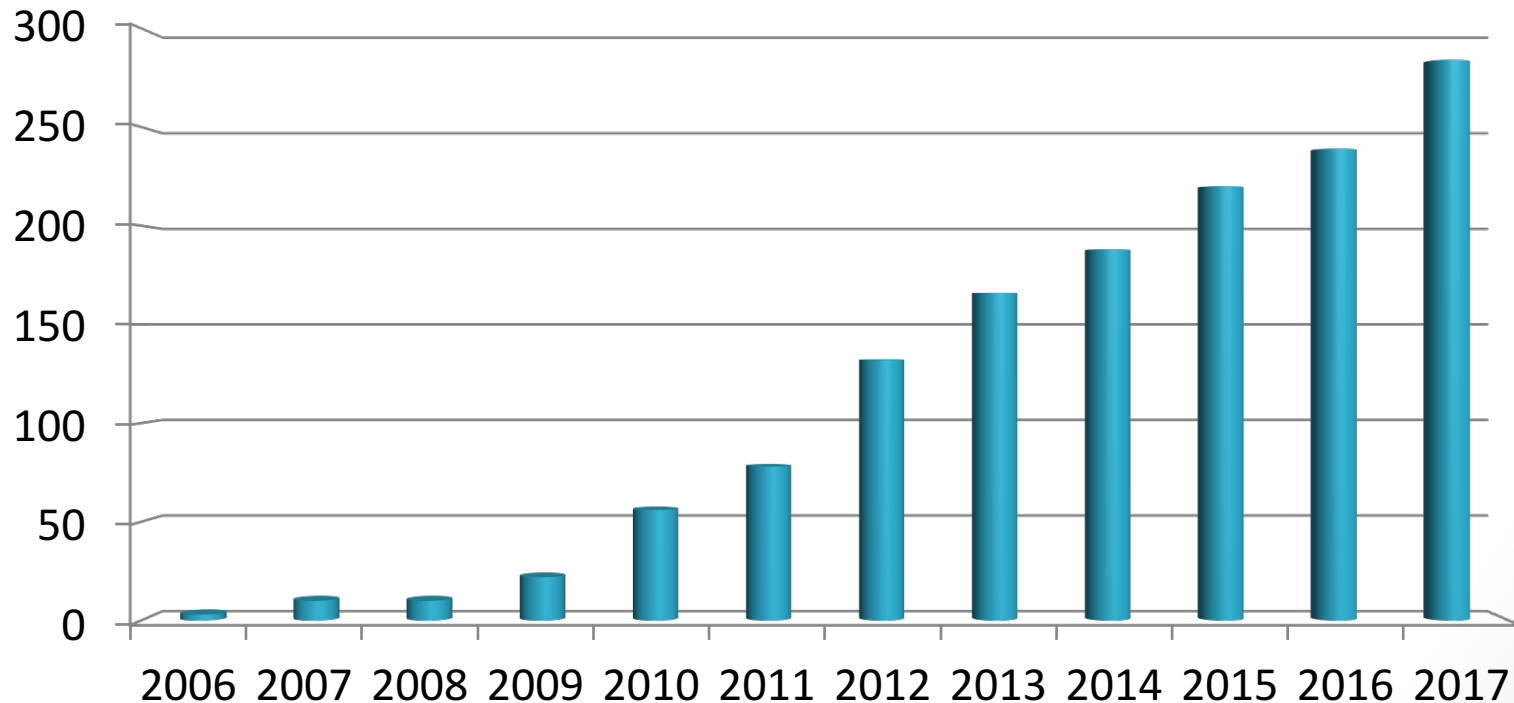
Enjoy
Relax and have fun

www.pcit.lab.uiowa.edu

- <https://youtu.be/UqBSPPAso4>

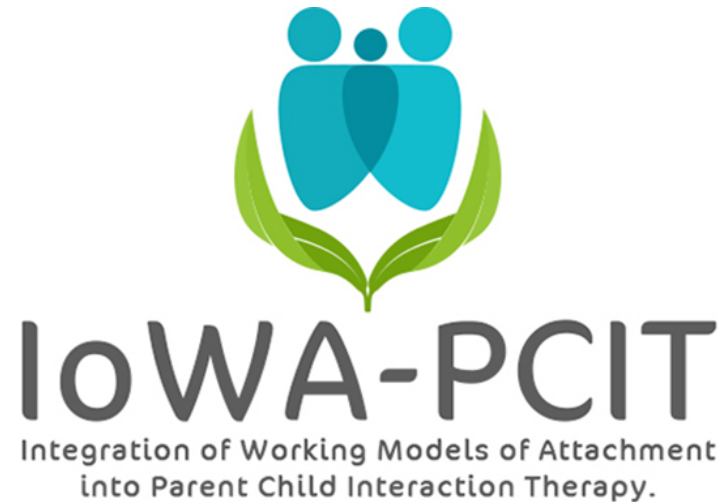
Growth of PCIT in Iowa

**Cumulative Number of Iowa* Therapists
Trained in PCIT Since 2006
(Troutman, 2017)**



*plus 67 Nebraskans and 19 Minnesotans

What is IoWA-PCIT? (Troutman, 2016)



- An attempt to integrate behaviorism and Bowlby's attachment theory into parent coaching
- IoWA-PCIT is consistent with other PCIT traditions (e.g., PCIT International, UC Davis)
- Strategies and coaching are slightly modified with the clinical application of attachment theory in mind.

What is IoWA-PCIT? (Troutman, 2016)

IoWA-PCIT aims to:

- Promote secure attachment while addressing behavior problems
- Address resistance to changing patterns of interaction
- Improve retention

Using PCIT with children who have autism

- Why might this be a good idea?
- What is the evidence base?

A Good Idea?

- PRIDE skills similar to child-led play skills used in:
 - developmental interventions
 - e.g., Floortime/PLAY project (Solomon et al., 2014)
 - Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions (NDBIs)
 - e.g., ImPACT, ESDM (Schreibman et al., 2015)
- Children with autism are at an increased risk for externalizing behavior problems, especially ADHD symptoms (Leyfer et al., 2006)
- Parent-mediated (“parent training”) approaches are increasingly being incorporated into autism interventions (Bearss, 2015)
- PCIT availability in areas without “autism services” and areas with waiting lists for “autism services.”

The Evidence Base

- 2 published randomized trials
 - Solomon et al. (2008): focus on social functioning of older children, though also showed decrease in disruptive behavior compared to WL controls. 12 sessions total.
 - Ginn et al. (2015): decrease in disruptive behavior and parenting distress compared to WL controls with CDI alone. 8 sessions total.
- Additional unpublished randomized trial (Allen, Harrington & colleagues)
 - Suggests PDI phase may work better with children who have milder autism symptoms
- Additional single subject and case series data supportive of PCIT approach (e.g., Masse et al., 2016).

Common Modifications for Autism

Use visuals to aid understanding of what to expect.

- Visual schedule
e.g., cards from Masse & Girard's
flip book for PDI



- Social narrative
- Visual labels



Common Modifications for Autism

Teach and coach parents to scaffold their language and play models during CDI.

“...The most essential feature of our hypothesis is the notion that developmental processes do not coincide with learning processes. Rather, the developmental process lags behind the learning process; this sequence then results in zones of proximal development.” Lev Vygotsky (1935)

Scaffolding Expressive Language


Increasing Language Complexity	
Child's Initiation	More Complex Response
Preintentional or nonconventional gestures	Intentional gestures and single words
Word approximations or single words	Single words and two-word phrases
Two-word phrases	Simple phrase speech
Phrase speech	Phrase speech with descriptors
Phrase speech with descriptors	Complex phrase speech

Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2010

Common Modifications for Autism

Possible PDI modifications

- More supportive prompting (gesture or physical prompts)
- Avoid using time out for escape-maintained behavior
- Eliminate the time out chair
- Stop PCIT after the CDI phase



Should this child be getting a NDBI?

Should this child be getting Functional Communication Training (FCT) to address behavior concerns?

Does this child have enough receptive communication to understand PDI demands?

Should this child be getting Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to address skill deficits?

Does this child need social skills training?

"I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail."

Maslow (1966)

Learn more about PCIT!

<https://pcit.lab.uiowa.edu/>



IoWA-PCIT

Integration of Working Models of Attachment
Into Parent Child Interaction Therapy.

Learn more about PCIT!

UC Davis web course

<https://pcit.ucdavis.edu/pcit-web-course/>



Learn more about PCIT!

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 17 & 18, 2018

Midwest Parent - Child Interaction Therapy Conference

Engaging Families, Engaging Systems

DOUBLETREE HOTEL DOWNTOWN | 1616 DODGE STREET | OMAHA, NEB. 68102



Open call for program proposals. Accepted via email through Dec. 1
Visit PCIT.ChildrensOmaha.org for more information or email PCIT@ChildrensOmaha.org

Learn more about using PCIT with children who have autism!

- Coming soon:

McNeil, C.B., Quetsch. L.B., & Anderson, C.M. (in press). *Handbook of Parent-Child Interaction Therapy for Children on the Autism Spectrum*. New York: Springer.



Thank you

- Beth “Go the Distance” Troutman, PhD, for letting me borrow her slides on IoWA-PCIT dissemination!

Questions?

“Local Expert”

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