What is PCIT?

- Therapy for children ages 2.5-7 with disruptive behavior problems
- Split into two phases:
  - CDI - Child-Directed Interaction
  - PDI - Parent-Directed Interaction
Populations

- Disruptive behaviors
  - Primary (ADHD, ODD)
  - Secondary (ASD, Disabilities, Trauma)
- Problems with parent-child relationship
- Conduct problems
- Has also been applied with
  - Separation anxiety disorder
  - Maternal depression
  - Preschool teachers (TCIT)
Theoretical Basis

● Attachment Theory (Bowlby)
● Behavior Modification (Skinner)
● Social Learning Theory (Bandura)
● Parenting Styles (Baumrind)
Advantages of PCIT
Assessment-Driven

- Parent rating form completed weekly to track improvements in behavior
- Mastery criteria for both CDI and PDI Skills
- Treatment continues until family meets graduation criteria (av. 12-16 weeks)
- Not time-limited
Live Coaching

- Therapist coaches parent with child in session
- Traditionally, therapists use bug-in-ear and one-way mirrors, but research has shown in-room coaching to be efficacious as well
- Why live coaching?
  - Allows better assessment of dyadic interactions
  - Allows mistakes to be corrected quickly, as well as for positive use of skills to be recognized
Empirically Supported

- At least 9 randomized controlled trials as of 2011, all with medium to large effect sizes (SAMHSA, 2011)
- Studies found:
  - Reductions in behavior issues and noncompliance
  - Generalization to other settings (home and school) and untreated siblings
  - Positive changes in parenting styles
  - Maintenance of treatment gains at 1, 2, and 6 year follow up
Structure of PCIT

- Therapy Orientation/Baseline
- CDI Teach
- CDI Coach (3-6 sessions)
- PDI Teach
- PDI Coach (3-6 sessions)
- Graduation
Child-Directed Interaction (CDI)

- Overall goal is to strengthen parent-child attachment
- Modeled from play therapy
- Creates strong relational foundation so that discipline techniques are more effective when introduced during PDI
- Parents master skills through live coaching and 5 minute daily home practice – “special time”
CDI Toys

- Toys that encourage creativity:
  - Blocks
  - Legos
  - Crayons and Paper
  - Play Sets (Dollhouse, Farm, Garage)

- Toys to avoid:
  - Toys that encourage rough or aggressive play (balls, bats, toy soldiers)
  - Toys that require limit setting (paints, bubbles)
  - Toys with pre-set rules (board and card games)
  - Pretend toys (puppets, costumes)
CDI - Don’ts

- Avoid during “Special Time”!
  - Commands
  - Questions
  - Criticisms
- Take away the lead from the child, can show disapproval, and tend to lead to unpleasant interactions
CDI – The Do’s
The PRIDE Skills
P – Praise (Labeled)

- Labeled vs. Unlabeled
- Ex. of Labeled Praise: “Great sharing!” “Thank you for cleaning up your toys.”
- Reasons to Praise:
  - Shows child approval
  - Increases behavior
  - Increases self-esteem
  - Makes interaction more positive
R - Reflect

- Repeating/paraphrasing what child says
  - Ex. Child: “I’m making s’ghetti!”
  - Parent: “Yes, you’re making spaghetti!”

- Reasons to Reflect:
  - Allows child to lead conversation
  - Increases speech and communication skills
  - Demonstrates acceptance
I - Imitate

- Imitating what child is doing with toys
- Ex. “You’re drawing a tree. I think I’ll draw a tree, too.”
- Reasons to Imitate:
  - Shows approval
  - Lets child lead
  - Increases self-esteem
  - Increases likelihood that child will imitate parent
  - Teaches turn-taking
D- Describe

“Sportscaster” skill – gives a play-by-play of what child is doing
Ex. “You’re putting the red block on top of the green block. Now you’re adding a yellow block!”

Reasons to Describe:
• Allows child to lead
• Increases child’s ability to focus and stay on task
• Teaches concepts and organizes child’s thoughts
E - Enjoyment

- Enjoyment is conveyed through:
  - Facial expressions
  - Positive touch
  - Tone of voice
- Enjoyment will increase positivity between child and parent, and decrease likelihood that child will act out
Best Way to Learn the Skills...

- Find a partner and practice CDI skills with them!
How to Handle “Bad” Behavior during CDI

● Active Ignoring
● Ignorables:
  ○ Whining
  ○ Crying/yelling
  ○ Talking back
● *As soon as child engages in positive behavior, STOP ignoring and use a PRIDE skill!*
Behaviors you CANNOT ignore

● Destructive or aggressive behavior
● These behaviors end Special Time
  ● Ex. “Susie, special time is over because you hit me. We will play again tomorrow.”
Parent-Directed Interaction (PDI)

- Creates structure and consistency
- Teaches parents how to give effective commands and use a consistent discipline routine
- Relies on use of parent attention only
  - no material rewards/punishments
  - Skills are practiced in play situations before they are used in real-life situations
Becoming a Certified PCIT Therapist

- Requirements:
  - Have a master’s degree or higher in a mental health field, and be independently licensed or be receiving clinical supervision under someone who is independently licensed (for a psychology doctoral student, have completed at least 3 years of training)
  - 40 hours live training or 30 hours live/10 hours online training with PCIT Trainer
  - Afterwards, complete a year of continuous training, including completion of 2 PCIT cases and have several sessions observed by PCIT trainer
Want to Learn More?

- [http://pcit.ucdavis.edu/pcit-web-course/](http://pcit.ucdavis.edu/pcit-web-course/)
  - “PCIT for Traumatized Children”
  - 10-hour PCIT course for therapists
  - meets part of PCIT training requirement
- Pcit.org
- Pcit.ucdavis.edu
Sources

- [http://www.pcit.org/](http://www.pcit.org/)
Questions?

- aciceri@austinchildguidance.org