



Parenting Wisely

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Parenting Wisely is a set of interactive, computer-based training programs for parents of children ages 3-18 years. Based on social learning, cognitive behavioral, and family systems theories, the programs aim to increase parental communication and disciplinary skills. The original Parenting Wisely program, American Teens, is designed for parents whose preteens and teens are at risk for or are exhibiting behavior problems such as substance abuse, delinquency, and school dropout. Parents use this self-instructional program on an agency's personal computer or laptop, either on site or at home, using the CD-ROM or online format. During each of nine sessions, users view a video enactment of a typical family struggle and then choose from a list of solutions representing different levels of effectiveness, each of which is portrayed and critiqued through interactive questions and answers. Each session ends with a quiz. All nine sessions can be completed in 2 to 3 hours. Parents also receive workbooks containing program content and exercises to promote skill building and practice.

Adaptations of the original Parenting Wisely program have been created for various groups of youth. One of these adaptations, Young Children, targets children ages 3-9 years. Although the studies reviewed in this summary primarily evaluated the original version of Parenting Wisely, the Young Children version was also evaluated, as were adaptations created to be implemented with groups of parents.

Descriptive Information

Topics	Mental health promotion, Substance abuse prevention
Areas of Interest	Alcohol (e.g., underage, binge drinking), Tobacco/smoking, Violence prevention
Outcomes	Outcome 1: Child problem behaviors Outcome 2: Parental knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors Outcome 3: Parental sense of competence
Study Populations	Age: 0-5 (Early childhood), 6-12 (Childhood), 13-17 (Adolescent) Gender: Female, Male Race: Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, White, Race/ethnicity unspecified (See Study Populations section below for percentages by study)
Settings	Other community settings, Rural and/or frontier, Suburban, Urban
Implementation History	Approximately 220,000 people have participated in Parenting Wisely. The program has been implemented in Australia, Canada, France, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.
Replications	This intervention has been replicated. (See Replications section below)
Adaptations	Program materials have been translated into Spanish and French.
Adverse Effects	No adverse effects, concerns, or unintended consequences were identified by the applicant.
Public or Proprietary Domain	Proprietary
Costs	The American Teens program kit, available in English (\$659) and Spanish (\$599), includes the interactive CD-ROM; 5 parent workbooks; 5 program completion certificates; 10 agency referral cards; 20 informational parent brochures; a poster announcing Parenting Wisely; evaluation forms, scoring keys, and a program evaluation guide (on floppy disk); parent sign-up forms; a

	<p>service provider's guide; and a curriculum (on floppy disk) for working with parent groups. Additional parent workbooks can be purchased for \$6.75 to \$9 each, depending on the quantity purchased. Other materials, including videos, are also available. Assuming materials are purchased to serve 100 parents, the cost per participant is \$14. The cost decreases as the number of participants increases.</p> <p>An online version of American Teens is also available. One-month, 3-month, 6-month, and 1-year subscriptions can be purchased at a cost depending on the number of users (e.g., a 6-month subscription for 100 parents is \$2,040).</p> <p>Information on materials for other versions of Parenting Wisely, including Young Children (for children ages 3-9), Urban Teens (for youth in the United Kingdom), and Foster and Residential Care (for youth involved in foster or residential care), is available on the program Web site, http://www.familyworksinc.com.</p>
Institute of Medicine Category	Selective, Universal

Outcome 1: Child problem behaviors

Description of Measures	<p>This outcome was measured using the Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (ECBI), a 36-item tool designed to assess parent perceptions of child behavior problems. The ECBI yields two scores: an intensity score, which is the frequency of each behavior, and a total problems score, which is the sum of the number of times a parent indicated the behavior was a problem.</p> <p>The Parent Daily Report was also used to measure this outcome. Parents report on their child's behavior using a list of 23 negative and 28 prosocial behaviors commonly displayed by children.</p>
Key Findings	<p>In one study, parents were randomly assigned to an intervention group receiving Parenting Wisely or to a usual care control group. Children of Parenting Wisely participants showed significant improvement on the ECBI total problems score ($p < .001$) compared with children of control group parents, a finding associated with a medium effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.76$). These children also showed a significant decrease in negative behaviors as measured by the Parent Daily Report compared with children of parents in the control group ($p < .001$). The effect size for this finding was also medium (Cohen's $d = 0.69$).</p> <p>In an Australian study, parents were randomly assigned to one of two groups receiving Parenting Wisely, one using a group format and one using an individual format, or to a wait-list control group. Children of parents who received Parenting Wisely showed significant improvement on the ECBI intensity score ($p < .001$) and total problems score ($p < .001$) at posttest compared with children of control group parents. The effect sizes were large (eta-squared = 0.26 and 0.29, respectively). At the 3-month follow-up, these children continued to show significant improvement on the ECBI intensity score and total problems score compared with children of control group parents ($p < .001$). The effect sizes for these findings were also large (eta-squared = 0.20 and 0.30, respectively).</p> <p>In a study conducted in Appalachia, parents were randomly assigned to an intervention group receiving Parenting Wisely or to a no-treatment control group. Children of Parenting Wisely participants showed significant improvement on both the ECBI total problems score and problem intensity score compared with children of control group parents at both the 1-month and 4-month follow-ups ($p < .001$). The effect sizes for both findings were large (eta-squared = 0.35 and 0.36, respectively).</p> <p>A Canadian study compared children of parents who received Parenting Wisely (the American Teens or Young Children version), in one of three ways: individually, in a group, or both individually and in a group. Children of parents in all groups showed significant improvement on both the ECBI intensity score and total problems score at the posttest and 1-year follow-up. Children of parents who completed only the individual program showed significant improvement on the ECBI intensity score ($p < .01$ at posttest, $p < .05$ at the 1-year follow-up) and total problems score ($p < .01$ at posttest, $p < .05$ at the 1-year follow-up). Likewise, children of parents who completed only the group program showed significant improvement on the ECBI intensity score ($p < .0001$ at both time points) and total problems score ($p < .0001$ at posttest, $p < .001$ at the 1-year follow-up). Children of parents who completed both the individual and group programs showed significant improvement on the ECBI intensity score after the individual sessions ($p < .05$), after the group sessions ($p < .0001$), and at the 1-year follow-up ($p < .05$). These children also showed significant improvement on the total problems score after the individual sessions ($p < .01$), after the group sessions ($p < .0001$), and at the 1-year follow-up ($p < .05$).</p> <p>One study compared parents who were randomly assigned to receive Parenting Wisely through either an interactive multimedia format (IM) or a noninteractive videotape (NV). Children of participants in both groups showed significant improvement in behavior as measured by the ECBI ($p < .01$), with the effect</p>

	sizes being medium for the IM condition (Cohen's $d = 0.78$) and large for the NV condition (Cohen's $d = 0.83$). Significant improvement on the Parent Daily Report was also seen for both groups ($p < .01$), with the effect sizes being large for the IM condition (Cohen's $d = 1.27$) and medium for the NV condition (Cohen's $d = 0.69$).
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 1, Study 2, Study 3, Study 5, Study 6 <i>(Study numbers correspond to the numbered citations in the Studies and Materials Reviewed section below)</i>
Study Designs	Experimental, Preexperimental
Quality of Research Rating	2.7 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 2: Parental knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors

Description of Measures	<p>Parental knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors were assessed using four measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parenting Knowledge Test, which consists of 34 multiple-choice questions designed to measure parental knowledge of the skills taught in the Parenting Wisely program. • The Parental Attitudes Questionnaire, a 17-item tool designed to assess parental belief in the value of adaptive parenting practices over coercive practices. Responses are given using a 7-point rating scale. • The Parent Behavior Questionnaire, an 8-item measure that assesses how often parents implemented specific parenting skills in the past month. • The Daily Discipline Interview, which examines parents' discipline strategies in response to the 23 negative behaviors listed in the Parent Daily Report. Parents' descriptions of their discipline strategies were rated to be appropriate or inappropriate according to a coding system developed for the study.
Key Findings	<p>In an Australian study, parents were randomly assigned to one of two groups receiving Parenting Wisely, one using a group format and one using an individual format, or to a wait-list control group. Both groups of parents receiving the program showed significant increases in parenting knowledge at posttest ($p < .001$). The effect sizes were large for parents receiving the individual format (eta-squared = 0.34) and group format (eta-squared = 0.30). At the 3-month follow-up, participants in both groups continued to show significant improvement ($p < .001$), with effect sizes again being large for parents receiving the individual format (eta-squared = 0.32) and group format (eta-squared = 0.34).</p> <p>In a study conducted in Appalachia, participants were randomly assigned to an intervention group receiving Parenting Wisely or to a no-treatment control group. At the 1-month follow-up, compared with the control group, intervention participants demonstrated increased knowledge of adaptive parenting practices ($p < .001$), a finding associated with a large effect size (eta-squared = 0.37).</p> <p>In a third study, pregnant and parenting teens were randomly assigned to an intervention group receiving Parenting Wisely or to a no-treatment control group. Parenting Wisely participants showed significant increases in parenting knowledge ($p < .001$) relative to the control group, a finding associated with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.38$). They also showed improvement in their beliefs in the efficacy of adaptive over coercive parenting practices for their toddlers relative to the control group ($p < .01$). This effect size also was large (Cohen's $d = 0.8$).</p> <p>In another study, parents were randomly assigned to receive Parenting Wisely through either an interactive multimedia format (IM) or a noninteractive videotape (NV). Participants in both groups showed significant improvement on the Parent Behavior Questionnaire ($p < .01$) and the Parent Knowledge Test ($p < .01$). Only the NV group showed significant improvement on the Daily Discipline Interview ($p < .01$).</p>
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 2, Study 3, Study 4, Study 6 (Study numbers correspond to the numbered citations in the Studies and Materials Reviewed section below)
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	2.7 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome 3: Parental sense of competence

Description of Measures	This outcome was measured using Parenting Sense of Competence (PSOC), a 16-item self-report measure designed to gauge parental efficacy and satisfaction.
Key Findings	In an Australian study, parents were randomly assigned to one of two groups receiving Parenting Wisely, one using a group format and one using an individual format, or to a wait-list control group. At posttest, parents who received Parenting Wisely in the individual format ($p < .001$) and in the group format ($p = .05$) showed improvement in satisfaction and efficacy. Effect sizes were large (eta-squared = 0.26) and small (eta-squared = 0.05), respectively. At the 3-month follow-up, only the parents who received the intervention in the individual format showed significant improvement ($p < .001$), a finding associated with a large effect size (eta-squared = 0.21).
Studies Measuring Outcome	Study 2 (<i>Study numbers correspond to the numbered citations in the Studies and Materials Reviewed section below</i>)
Study Designs	Experimental
Quality of Research Rating	2.8 (0.0-4.0 scale)

Ratings

Quality of Research Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

Outcome	Reliability	Validity	Fidelity	Missing Data/Attrition	Confounding Variables	Data Analysis	Overall Rating
Outcome 1: Child problem behaviors	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7
Outcome 2: Parental knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors	2.4	2.4	2.8	3.3	2.6	2.6	2.7
Outcome 3: Parental sense of competence	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.8

Study Strengths: Most of the measures used have sufficient psychometric properties. The analyses used are standard in the field.

Study Weaknesses: Most of the studies had small sample sizes. The attrition rates were high in some studies. There were differences between some of the groups at pretest. In some cases, the participants received different types of clinical services. Some of the studies lacked control groups.

Readiness for Dissemination Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

Implementation Materials	Training and Support	Quality Assurance	Overall Rating
3.8	4.0	4.0	3.9

Dissemination Strengths: Implementation materials are comprehensive and user-friendly and utilize multiple formats. While program materials are designed so that minimal additional support is needed, the developer offers on-site training and technical support to implementers upon request. Multiple outcome and process measures, along with the program design, contribute to quality assurance.

Dissemination Weaknesses: Implementation materials can be difficult to access and navigate in CD-ROM format.

Study Populations

The studies reviewed for this intervention included the following populations, as reported by the study authors.

Study	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Study 1	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	56.9% Male 43.1% Female	100% White
Study 2	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	50.9% Male 49.1% Female	100% Non-U.S.-based population
Study 3	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	50% Female 50% Male	100% White
Study 4	13-17 (Adolescent)	88% Female 12% Male	88% White 12% Black or African American
Study 5	0-5 (Early childhood) 6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	70.1% Male 29.9% Female	100% Non-U.S.-based population
Study 6	6-12 (Childhood) 13-17 (Adolescent)	90% Female 10% Male	95% White 5% Black or African American

Studies and Materials Reviewed

The documents below were reviewed for Quality of Research and Readiness for Dissemination. Other materials may be available. For more information, contact the person(s) listed at the end of this summary.

Quality of Research Studies

Study 1

Gordon, D. A., Kacir, C. D., & Pushak, R. E. (1999). Effectiveness of an interactive parent training program for changing adolescent behavior for court-referred parents. Unpublished manuscript.

Study 2

Cefai, J., Smith, D., & Pushak, R. E. (2005). The Parenting Wisely Parent Training Program: An evaluation with an Australian sample. Unpublished manuscript, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Study 3

Kacir, C., & Gordon, D. (1999). Parenting Adolescents Wisely: The effectiveness of an interactive videodisk parent training program in Appalachia. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy*, 21(2), 227-251.

Study 4

Lagges, A., & Gordon, D. (1999). Use of an interactive laserdisc parent training program with teenage parents. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy*, 21(2), 19-37.

Study 5

Pushak, R. E., & Pretty, J. L. (2003). Individual and group use of a CD-ROM for training parents of

children with disruptive disorders. Unpublished manuscript.

Study 6

Segal, D., Chen, P. Y., Gordon, D. A., Kacir, C. D., & Gylys, J. (2003). Development and evaluation of a parenting intervention program: Integration of scientific and practical approaches. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 15, 453-468.

Quality of Research Supplementary Materials

Developer's Comments on Intervention Fidelity

Developer's Comments on Measures

Readiness for Dissemination Materials

Family Works, Inc. (2004). *Parenting Wisely: American Teens*. Athens, OH: Author.

Family Works, Inc. (2004). *Parenting Wisely: Young Children*. Athens, OH: Author.

Gordon, D. (2004). *Parenting Wisely program workbook: Young children's version*. Athens, OH: Family Works.

Gordon, D. (2005). *Parenting Wisely program workbook*. Athens, OH: Family Works.

Gordon, D. (n.d.). *Breaking the boundaries in parenting education: Implications for service delivery*.

Gordon, D. A., & Pushak, R. (n.d.). *Treatment manual for teen version of Parenting Wisely, practitioner-assisted*. Athens, OH: Family Works.

Implementation checklist

Program Web site, <http://www.familyworksinc.com>

Pushak, R. E. (n.d.). *Parenting Wisely teen: Parent group curriculum instructor's guide*. Athens, OH: Family Works.

Sample Training Agenda

Replications

Selected citations are presented below. An asterisk indicates that the document was reviewed for Quality of Research.

O'Neill, H., & Woodward, R. (2002). Evaluation of the Parenting Wisely CD-ROM parent-training programme: An Irish replication. *Irish Journal of Psychology*, 23, 62-72.

Terrisse, B., Larose, F., Bedard, J., Lefebvre, M. L., & Larivee, S. (2006). *Etude des effets d'un programme d'entraînement à la communication parents-enfants sur les attitudes et les pratiques parentales et sur les compétences des enfants à la maison et à l'école*. Final report to the Quebec Ministry of the Family for grant #37276.

Contact Information

Web site(s):

<http://www.familyworksinc.com>

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