

Child-Parent Psychotherapy

Intervention for Young Children Exposed to Trauma

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For More information on CPP Go To

- <https://childparentpsychotherapy.com>

Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) is an attachment and trauma-focused treatment for children ages 0-5 and their caregiver(s).

- Appropriate for children who have experienced a traumatic event(s) or who are experiencing mental health, attachment, and/or behavioral problems
 - Therapeutic sessions include the child and primary caregiver
- Typical course of treatment: weekly, 1-hour sessions over the course of one year
 - Average number of sessions: 32
 - Strengthens child-caregiver relationship to help restore the child's cognitive, behavioral, and social functioning



Service Delivery

- CPP has been successfully delivered in diverse settings, provided that the child is living with a primary caregiver (biological, adoptive, or foster):
 - Outpatient
 - In-home
 - Residential treatment
- CPP treatment can be billed to medicaid or private insurance for children 0-5 years old.

Does CPP Work & For Whom?

- 5 Randomized Controlled Trials
 1. Preschoolers exposed to domestic violence
 2. Maltreated preschoolers
 3. Infants from families with a history of maltreatment
 4. Anxiously attached infants of Latina immigrant mothers
 5. Toddlers with depressed mothers
- 1.
 - N = 500 children and mothers
 - Range of SES, multicultural samples

Does CPP Work & What Changed?*

- Improved relationship quality of anxiously attached toddler-mother dyads Lieberman et al., 1991
- Improved attachment security, cognitive development, and parental relationship satisfaction in toddlers and their mothers with depression Toth et al., 2006; Cicchetti et al., 2000; Peltz, Rogge, Rogosch, Cicchetti, & Toth, 2015
- Decreasing maladaptive maternal representation and negative self-representations in maltreated preschoolers Toth et al., 2002
- Improved child behavior problems and trauma-related symptoms and maternal symptoms in preschooler-mother dyads exposed to domestic violence Lieberman et al., 2005; Lieberman et al., 2006; Ghosh Ippen et al., 2011
- Improved attachment security and physiological regulation in maltreated infants Cicchetti, Rogosch, & Toth, 2006; Cicchetti et al., 2011; Stronach, Toth, Rogosch, & Cicchetti, 2013; Cicchetti, Rogosch, & Toth, 2011

* Select findings; See <http://tinyurl.com/CPPresearchsummary> for a summary of the research

New CPP Study Released August 2024

Most recently, the results of a study showing that CPP reduces the impact of trauma on cellular aging was published August 14, 2024.

Study: Intervening After Trauma: Child–Parent Psychotherapy Treatment Is Associated with Lower Pediatric Epigenetic Age Acceleration

NEW FINDING: Child-Parent Psychotherapy reduces the impact of trauma on cellular aging



A new study examined **cellular aging** in two groups of children, aged 2 to 6 years, who all experienced trauma.



Why study trauma and cellular aging?

Trauma exposure accelerates the normal process of cellular aging.

Epigenetic Age Acceleration (EAA) is associated with greater health problems, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, and stroke.



One group received **Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)**.

The comparison group did not.

What is CPP?

CPP is an attachment-based trauma treatment for children under age 6 that promotes physical and emotional safety between child and caregiver. Extensive research shows that CPP results in improvements in child and caregiver mental health.



Children who received CPP had **lower Epigenetic Age Acceleration** after treatment compared to the no-treatment group.



What does this finding mean?

The children who received **CPP** may be at lower risk for health problems later in life.

TAKEAWAY

Invest early for better health. Treating early childhood trauma heals now and has the potential to improve physical health later.



Outcomes

- Reduced foster care placement disruptions among children with moderate to severe traumatic experiences
- Improved cognitive ability, on par with nontraumatized children
- Improved attachment security and organization
- Decreased parental and child PTSD symptoms
- Decreased parental and child depression

Return on Investment

- In the United States, 61% of children are affected by violence, abuse, or crime,* putting them at increased risk for:
 - Depression
 - Delinquency
 - Academic problems
 - Teen pregnancy
 - Violent behavior
 - Other emotional/behavioral challenges
 - Substance use.

Lifetime costs of childhood maltreatment are estimated at \$210,012 per case.* CPP uses the child-parent relationship to get the child back on a healthy developmental trajectory following trauma or early adversity.

¹ Finkelhor, D., Turner, H. A., Ormrod, R., & Hamby, S. L. (2010). Trends in childhood violence and abuse exposure: Evidence from 2 national surveys.

* Fang, X., Brown, D. S., Florence, C. S., & Mercy, J. A. (2012). The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention.

Why CPP?



Working with Abused/Neglected Infants and Toddlers via CPP

- Safety first
- Dyadic/Family vs. Individual child treatment (“There is no such thing as a baby.”)
- Individual work with parent in addition to crucial dyadic work
- Systemic issues (how is new caregiver coping; environmental stability; financial stressors, etc.)
- Understanding that distress is expressed behaviorally in infants and toddlers
- The importance of understanding the caregiver’s and the child’s trauma histories and processing these in treatment

(Slide info and set up credit to Amy Dickson, PsyD, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center)

Advantages of CPP

-The relational nature of CPP enables the clinician to hold the parents as they work through their own trauma and their child's

-CPP helps parents truly understand and empathize with their children so they can meet their physical and emotional needs

-CPP clinicians also support the foster parents which reduces changes in placements

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Advantages of CPP

-By the end of treatment, it is clear if the parents can or cannot meet their children's needs

-The intensity of CPP helps parents come to their own conclusions at times about their ability to manage their children

-CPP helps break the cycle of intergenerational abusive parenting

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Is CPP Parenting?

- ▶ Parenting programs typically offer:
 - ▶ Behavior Management
 - ▶ Giving simple direct commands
 - ▶ How to reinforce compliance
 - ▶ Time-outs
 - ▶ Developmental knowledge
 - ▶ First Aid

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Is CPP Parenting Cont.

- ▶ Safe Proofing the home
- ▶ Relationship building skills
 - ▶ Praise
 - ▶ Following the Child's Lead
- ▶ Usually for a set number of weeks in a group setting with parents whose children are a wide variety of ages.

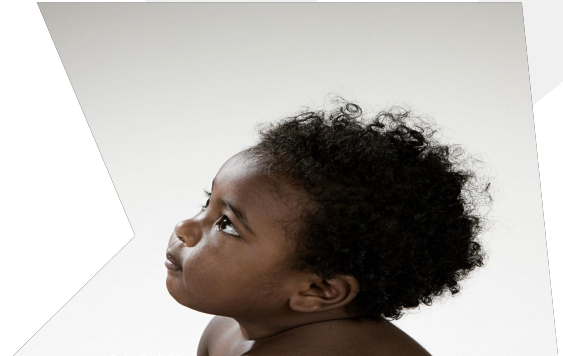
▶ (Slide info and set up credit to Amy Dickson, PsyD, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center)



Typical Parenting Programs

- ▶ Are not attachment based
- ▶ Are not individualized to each family or caregiver/child dyad
- ▶ Are not trauma informed
- ▶ Do not take into account the caregiver's trauma history or the caregiver's experience of being parented
- ▶ Do not address other basic needs
 - ▶ Housing, Food insecurity, need for safety
- ▶ Are not focused on a specific age of the child

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CPP vs. Parenting

- ▶ While it can be very helpful for parents to learn concrete parenting skills, often the problem is not solely that a parent has a skills deficit but rather that they are triggered by the child's behavior.
- ▶ For example, when a toddler hits, a parent who has been the victim of domestic violence may respond by becoming dysregulated and then may become aggressive (fight), feel helpless and withdraw (flight), disassociate and be unable to respond (freeze).
- ▶ Most typical parenting programs would not address the role that emotion regulation and trauma triggers play in the way the parent responds to the child.

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Parenting programs typically focus on the parent.
CPP focuses on the parent, the child, and the relationship

In court cases, the child has experienced separations and often trauma. CPP is built on the understanding that the child needs to process (talk/play about) their experiences in order to feel

safe.
Young children need their caregivers help to understand and make meaning of their experiences. Even when parents have made changes (e.g. completed a substance abuse program or a parenting program), the child has memories that may interfere with his or her capacity to trust the caregiver

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CPP vs. Parenting



The Road toward Reunification: Preventing Recidivism in Child



Parent's ability to assume responsibility in the abuse and their role as the child's protector

Parent's ability to put the child's needs before their own

Parent's awareness and ability to change their behaviors

Parent's ability to empathize with the child and not blaming the child for the abuse

Parent's ability to seek support (professionals, family, friends, etc.)



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Let's Recap

- ▶ CPP is a parents, treatment that has been proven effective in addressing the caregiver's trauma to enable them to become emotionally available to their child and to help them understand and be able to meet their child's needs
- ▶ Although it addresses many issues in a traditional parenting program- it is so much more by attending to the parent's emotional needs that interfere with their ability to parent
- ▶ CPP also supports the foster parents, so children are not moving placements, causing the children more emotional distress/trauma
- ▶ CPP helps children get back on track developmentally and teaches children and parents coping skills not just for the current problematic behaviors but for future challenges

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Let's Recap

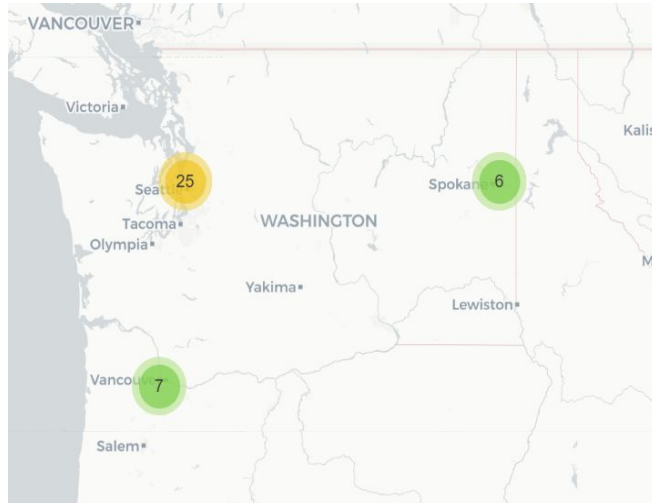
- ▶ CPP also addresses other needs to help the parent find stability- working closely with social supports and child protection caseworkers to address all the issues impacting the family
- ▶ CPP is culturally sensitive and supportive of meeting families in their social location
- ▶ CPP clinicians can provide fact-based information to the court to help the judge make a decision about a child's safety in the home and what is needed to help
- ▶ CPP is a strengths-based treatment that supports parents versus condemning them while also protecting the child.

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How Do You Access CPP?

<https://childparentpsychotherapy.com/resources/roster/>



Agencies and/or Providers In Washington State

- Akin (Spokane, Vancouver, Wenatchee formerly known as Children's Home Society of WA
- Akin (Formerly known as Childhaven)
- Brigid Collins
- Center for Human Services
- Family Solutions (Vancouver)
- Hope Sparks
- Kindering (ESIT and Cherish)
- Kitsap Mental Health
- Navos
- Ryther

Questions?
