PCIT

An evidence-based therapy (with more research behind it than almost any other treatment) that involves the parents/caregivers and the child TOGETHER. Through this interaction new patterns in family interactions are formed. This is accomplished by parents/caregivers being coached in each session by the therapist in PCIT skills. They are never asked to implement skills, which they have not practiced first. They are given immediate feedback.

PCIT is a transparent treatment, telling the parents/caregivers what the goals are for each of the two phases of PCIT as well as information on how close they are to meeting these goals. PCIT is a true partnership between the adults in the child’s life.

Before you decide if PCIT is right for you and your child please give us a call so we can answer any questions you might have about the process. Contact us at:

Family Advocacy Program
MCB Camp Lejeune
Bldg. 798, Brewster Blvd
910-449-9563

MCAS New River
AS-90, Curtis Rd.
910-449-6110

THE TWO PHASES OF PCIT

CDI-Child Directed Interaction
The first phase creates or strengthens a positive and mutually rewarding relationship between the parent and the child. The parent learns to praise positive behaviors and interact positively with the child while starting to decrease the child’s non-compliant behavior.

PDI-Parent Directed Interaction
The second phase teaches specific and effective parenting skills for parents to use in managing their child’s behavior. Parents learn to use clear, positively stated, direct commands and use consistent consequences for compliant or non-compliant behavior.

PCIT Commitment
PCIT requires a 12-15 week commitment by the caregiver and the child with one session per week.

Caregivers include parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, legal guardians and residential caregiver staff.

Children in PCIT with their parents/caregivers increase their ability to reach their full potential.
PCIT is fun for both the parent and the child. Caregivers generally see marked improvement in 3-4 sessions.

Overall Effectiveness

PCIT has been well-established through scientific research.

Significant improvement has been seen in maternal depression, parent-child relationships and child behaviors in the home, school and childcare settings. These changes have also been noted in siblings of children participating in PCIT.

PCIT is effective for families coping with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and through the skills learned during therapy, parents develop enriched relationships with their children. Additionally, PCIT can be used as a complement to the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by reducing disruptions in the home environment. However, PCIT does not treat PTSD but significantly improves the behavior problems in young children that may exacerbate an individual's PTSD.

Skills are learned quickly because the parents are learning by doing.

Parents quickly become confident and proficient in the use of the skills with their child.

Parents receive immediate feedback from the therapist.

Who benefits from PCIT?

PCIT is an appropriate intervention anytime the parent-child relationship is a primary focus for concern. PCIT is for children who have experienced stress or trauma. PCIT is backed by over 30 years of research. PCIT is designed for young children between the ages of 2-7.

PCIT has been successful with children that:

- Refuse/defy adult requests
- Lose temper, frustrate easily, whine
- Annoy others on purpose
- Steal things
- Destroy things
- Start fights/hurt others
- Have difficulty staying seated, playing quietly or taking turns
- Are disruptive in day care, school or home settings
- Are verbally aggressive towards others

Goals of PCIT

- Improve the parent/caregiver-child relationship
- Improve children's minding and listening skills
- Increase children's ability to manage frustration and anger
- Increase children's social skills
- Improve children's attention skills
- Build children's self-esteem
- Improve parents' use of appropriate discipline strategies
- Help parents set developmentally-appropriate expectations for their child

Benefits of PCIT

Children with challenging behaviors often have difficulty in home, childcare and school settings. Parents/caregivers report problems going out in public such as to stores and to restaurants. Stress levels are high for the parents/caregivers and also between them and their children. Unfortunately, children rarely outgrow many of the difficult behaviors. Should their behaviors continue or increase, they are likely to interfere with the children's school progress and social development.

What is Parent-Child Interaction Therapy?

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is a short-term, specialized behavior management program designed for young children experiencing behavioral and/or emotional difficulties with their families.