



## **Raising a Thinking Child Research Summary**

Initial research, funded by the National Institute for Mental Health in Washington, DC, was conducted with low-income urban African-American youngsters. Subsequent research studies and service evaluations have been conducted nationally and internationally in diverse ethnic and income groups.

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## Raising a Thinking Child: Research Summary

1. Shure and Spivack (1979) reported impact of ICPS training with mothers or mother surrogates of urban, inner-city African American four-year-olds.
  - Children trained at home increased solution and consequential thinking skills significantly more than did non-trained controls, regardless of IQ level.
  - Children exposed to ICPS training at home improved their behavior as observed by teachers in school, suggesting the generalizability of ICPS skills as used in interpersonal problem situations. They became less physically and verbally aggressive, better able to wait for what they wanted, better able to share and take turns, and less easily upset in the face of frustration. Inhibited children became more socially outgoing, better able to stand up to attack, less fearful of entering into social situations, and better able to express appropriate emotions.
  - Mothers learned how to talk to their children by using a problem-solving style of communication when real problems arose and also improved in means-ends thinking skills relevant to handling problems with their children, when compared to controls.
  - Mothers who best learned how to employ ICPS dialoguing with their children—that is, used the problem-solving approach to handling real-life problems—and those who learned to think through hypothetical problems that came up with their children were best able to guide their children to think for themselves when real problems arose.
2. In a five-year longitudinal study of urban, low-income African American youngsters first trained in kindergarten by their teachers and again in first grade by their mothers or mother surrogates, Shure (1993) found:
  - Immediate impact was shown after exposure in first grade; impact at the end of Grade 4 indicated that mother-trained children were superior to controls in alternative solution and consequential thinking skills.
  - In all grades studied, mothers who best learned to apply the problem-solving approach to discipline (ICPS dialoguing) had children who improved most in impulsive and inhibited behaviors. These children maintained their significant behavior gains at the end of Grade 4 (the duration youngsters were observed).
3. In a study of Caucasian parent-trained six- to eight-year-olds with ADHD and Asperger's syndrome, Aberson (1996) and Aberson and Ardila (2000) found:
  - Significant improvement in ICPS skills of alternative solution and consequential thinking at home and at school.
  - Significant improvement in conduct disorders and oppositional defiant behaviors.
  - Lasting ICPS skills and behavioral gains when measured four years later.

4. The results of pilot studies with parents of preschool children conducted at the Institute for Parenting, Adelphi University, are as follows:
- Parent-trained children showed an increase in prosocial behaviors, and parents showed a significant decrease in negative family emotional expressiveness (Alcaarez, 2012).
  - Mothers who perceived their parents in a more negative light and reported higher levels of depression before exposure to the *Raising a Thinking Child* program improved in depressive symptoms following exposure to the program (Geller, 2012).

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