

# Parenting Interventions to Help Maltreated Children Succeed

Adapted from Cicchetti et al., 2006 and Cicchetti et al., 2011<sup>1</sup>

The science shows that youth who are maltreated are more likely to have poor relationships with their caregivers as well as poor physical outcomes. [Learn more here.](#)

Scientifically-backed interventions can help maltreated youth succeed. Two of these interventions include **Child Parent Psychotherapy** and **Psychoeducational Parenting Intervention**. These interventions can help improve children's relationships with their caregivers as well as their physical outcomes.

## SECURE ATTACHMENT

Children with secure attachment trust their parent to meet their emotional and physical needs.



*This fact sheet reviews some of the scientific evidence supporting these interventions.*



### CHILD PARENT PSYCHOTHERAPY

This form of therapy focuses on the relationship between mother and baby. It works to help mothers be more sensitive and responsive to their babies. It also helps mothers deal with their own histories of trauma that may influence how they parent their babies.

### PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL PARENTING INTERVENTION

This form of therapy provides mothers with specific information and knowledge regarding child development. Therapists provide training in parenting techniques, problem solving, and relaxation.



## PARENTING INTERVENTION EFFECTS ON SECURE ATTACHMENT

Researchers Cicchetti, Rogosch, & Toth (2006) tested whether mental health treatment for maltreated children can lead to a secure attachment relationship between mothers and young children.

A [secure attachment relationship](#) is important for healthy development both physically and mentally.

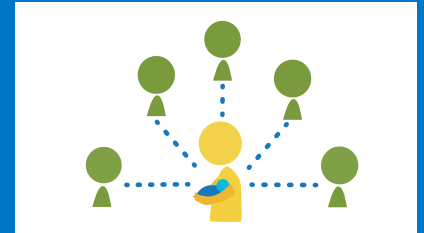
In this study, one-year old babies and their mothers from maltreating families were assigned, by the flip of a coin, to one of three possible treatment options:



CHILD PARENT  
PSYCHOTHERAPY



PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL  
PARENTING  
INTERVENTION

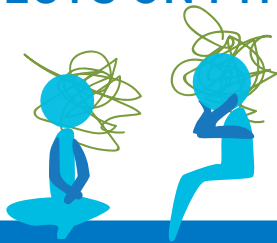


COMMUNITY STANDARD  
OF CARE

Services typically available to maltreating families in the community where the study took place

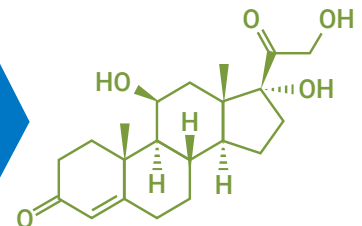
At the end of the study, when children were about 2 years old, the families who participated in Child Parent Psychotherapy and Psychoeducational Parenting Intervention showed dramatic improvements in secure attachment. This was not the case for the families who only received the community standard of care. However, when researchers followed up with these families one year later, only children who received Child Parent Psychotherapy had sustained improvements in their attachment relationship<sup>2</sup>.

## PARENTING INTERVENTION EFFECTS ON PHYSICAL HEALTH



Cortisol is a key hormone involved in the body's response to stress. Research shows that child maltreatment can impact the healthy function of cortisol. [Read More.](#)

Researchers Cicchetti, Rogosch, Toth & Sturge-Apple (2011) found that both Child Parent Psychotherapy and Psychoeducational Parenting Intervention interventions were able to normalize cortisol functioning for maltreated children. This suggests that mental health treatments can improve not only relationships, but also physical health.



<sup>1</sup> Cicchetti, D., Rogosch, F. A., & Toth, S. L. (2006). [Fostering secure attachment in infants in maltreating families through preventive interventions.](#) *Development and Psychopathology*, 18(3), 623-649.

Cicchetti, D., Rogosch, F. A., Toth, S. L., & Sturge-Apple, M. L. (2011). [Normalizing the development of cortisol regulation in maltreated infants through preventive interventions.](#) *Development and Psychopathology*, 23(3), 789-800.

<sup>2</sup> Stronach, E., Toth, S., Rogosch, F., & Cicchetti, D. (2013). [Preventive interventions and sustained attachment security in maltreated children.](#) *Development and Psychopathology*, 25(4pt1), 919-930. doi:10.1017/S0954579413000278