EFFECTS OF GROUP PARENT-TRAINING WITH ONLINE PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION ON THE HOMEWORK PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Homework Improvement Program, a 5-week group-formatted parent training program, in enhancing the homework performance of children experiencing homework difficulties. The study was conducted in an elementary school with a sample consisting of the parents of seven students (N=7) in grades 5 and 6 who were experiencing significant homework difficulties. In accordance with the Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) model which emphasizes the importance of home-school communication, online Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) software was developed as a component of the program through which parents were provided a direct avenue of communication with their child's teacher. The EDRC attempted to address limitations of previously developed home-school communication methods, while maximizing efficiency, and minimizing teacher obligation. It was also designed to be user-friendly for parents. The EDRC informed parents of their child's homework assignments, instructions, and teacher expectations on a daily basis. It also served as a data collection tool through which parents could be provided with regular feedback regarding their child's progress through the program.

Results indicated that the intervention was effective in improving homework completion rates for 100% of study participants. A PND analysis revealed the intervention to be Highly Effective in improving rates of homework completion for 57.14% of the participants (4), and

Moderately Effective for the remaining 42.86% of participants (3). All students showed improvements in rates of homework completion, with gains maintained at a four-week follow-up. A PAND analysis of homework completion data revealed a large effect size (Phi=.90, 95%CI), with 95.08% of data non-overlapping with baseline rates. Parent ratings of problematic homework behaviors as reported on the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC) reflected a decrease in problematic homework behaviors from baseline to intervention completion, with improvements maintained at follow-up. Responses to treatment satisfaction questionnaires indicated that participants reported a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the program. These results suggest that by offering an interactive and collaborative school-based intervention that directly involves parents, positive behavior change can be accomplished that extends into both the home and school settings.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1-Introduction

Research examining the effectiveness of homework indicates that homework has a positive effect on academic grades and test scores, as students who are assigned homework perform at a higher academic level than those who are not (Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivett., & Singh, 1993). Homework has consistently been shown to be an effective method for reinforcing educational learning goals by giving students the opportunity to practice material presented in class and to prepare for new material (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). Perhaps of even greater importance, homework during the elementary school years provides frequent opportunities for home-school collaboration and parental involvement in school, which has been shown to be strongly related to student outcomes (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992; Fantuzzo, Davis, & Ginsburg, 1995; Olympia et al., 1994; Power et al., 2001).

While there are many benefits associated with homework, it has been postulated that no school-related issue is more ongoing and intense for both children and parents than the attempt to ensure the completion of homework assignments (Harniss, Epstein, Bursuck, Nelson,& Jayanthi, 2001). Given that homework is such a common practice that spans the entire educational spectrum, it is not surprising that homework can become problematic for many students. This is especially true for struggling learners, as homework can wreak havoc in the lives of many children and families who fail to master behavioral and environmental routines that create conditions and patterns conducive to optimal performance (Sheridan, 2009). Although there is a clear need for effective, practical interventions aimed at addressing homework problems, the quantity of empirical research on the effectiveness of homework interventions is surprisingly limited, with mixed results (Buell, 2004; Cooper, 2001; Trautwein & Koller, 2003; Trautwein et al,, 2009).

Research indicates that meaningful parent–child interaction during the completion of homework is a significant variable for improving learning for low-performing students (Bailey, 2006; Bailey, 2004; Bailey, Silvern, Brabham, & Ross, 2004; Campbell & Ramey, 1995). There is a growing body of literature supporting the usefulness of multisystemic interventions involving the use of parent-training procedures and enhanced home-school communication methods through which families and schools work together and communicate to address homework problems and enhance overall academic performance (Power, 2009, Power et al., 2006). While the effectiveness of many parent-training interventions designed to empower parents of at-risk students to better help their children succeed academically has been established, the excessive amount of time and resources needed to implement such interventions often makes their application impractical in the majority of school settings (Power et al., 2001, Rhoades & Kratochwill,1998; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1998).

Therefore, a parent-training program that can be delivered in a group format may prove to be advantageous for a variety of reasons. Group parent-training programs are more time and cost effective than individual training programs and also provide opportunities for parents to support one another. Because parents who are stressed often have significant problems using behavioral strategies effectively, creating a context within which they can derive emotional support from other parents may help them to become more effective in using behavioral techniques (Whaler & Dumas, 1989). Group parent-training also provides a forum for problem solving through which parents can derive useful, practical suggestions from their peers for addressing homework problems at home (Power et al., 2001). However, there appears to be a paucity of contemporary empirical research examining the effectiveness of group parent-training on enhancing the homework performance of struggling students within the general education

setting. This is unfortunate, as current trends in education strive to encourage the implementation of research based practices to educate and assess the needs and progress of children within the general education setting (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

In light of these concerns, a homework intervention designed to be more practically applied in school settings to improve children's homework performance was developed. Specifically, empirically supported multisystemic Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) intervention procedures were adopted into the development of a group formatted parent-training program through which parents are provided with information and techniques designed to facilitate improved homework performance. Drawing upon research supporting the importance of parent-teacher communication, newly established methods of home-school collaboration were also included in the program, as an online Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) was developed creating an avenue through which parents could receive nightly homework assignments and instructions directly from their child's teachers. The EDRC provides daily opportunities for unobstructed parent-teacher communication, as parents could link directly with their child's teacher via the online venue. The EDRC was also formatted to offer daily reminders of techniques reviewed during parent training sessions, to encourage greater adherence to program strategies, and to provide daily progress monitoring to be shared with parents during parent-training sessions to inspire continued program compliance.

The purpose of the present research study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the newly developed group-formatted parent training program for the parents of children having homework difficulties. It was hypothesized that rates of homework completion would increase, that parents would report a decrease in the intensity and frequency of problematic homework behavior, and that parents would find the program to be beneficial to their child's academic development.

Participants included the parents and teachers of 7 elementary school children in grades 5 and 6 who were identified by their teachers as having significant homework difficulties. Parents attended five group parent-training sessions held once per week, for five weeks, with each meeting lasting approximately 60 minutes. Parents also completed the online Electronic Daily Report Card through which they were in engaged online communication with their child's teacher on a daily basis. Five teachers participated in this study. Teachers were required to email nightly homework assignments to the primary investigator to be posted on the Electronic Daily Report Card, and to respond to parent email inquiries.

The program's overall effectiveness was examined by measuring changes in the rates of student homework completion from baseline through intervention completion, and then again at a four-week follow-up. Homework completion data were collected daily through the EDRC software and were analyzed using both the Percentage of Nonoverlapping Data (PND) and the Percentage of All Nonoverlapping Data (PAND) techniques. Changes in children's problematic homework behaviors were assessed through analysis of parental reports from pre-treatment to post-treatment of problem type and severity using the Homework Problem Checklist (HPC; Anesko, Schoiock, Ramirez, & Levine, 1987). Data reflecting the level of parent involvement, and the amount of time devoted to homework were also collected through nightly parent completion of the Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC). Participant's level of satisfaction with the services they received were assessed through parent responses to treatment satisfaction surveys completed upon completion of the program. Follow-up data were collected 4 weeks following intervention completion to assess the maintenance of gains and continued application of strategies learned through participation in the parent-training intervention.

Results indicated that the intervention was effective in improving overall homework completion rates for 100% of study participants. A PND analysis revealed the intervention to be Highly Effective in improving rates of homework completion for 57.14% of the participants (4), and Moderately Effective for the remaining 42.86% of participants (3). All students showed improvements in rates of homework completion, with gains maintained at a four-week follow-up. A PAND analysis of homework completion data revealed a large effect size (Phi=.90, 95%CI), with 95.08% of data non-overlapping with baseline rates. A visual analysis of HPC data reflected an overall decrease in problematic homework behaviors as indicated by changes in HPC scores from baseline to intervention completion, with improvements in homework behaviors observed for all participants from baseline through follow-up. Further, data regarding treatment satisfaction obtained through parent completion of a treatment satisfaction questionnaire yielded consistently high rates of treatment satisfaction reported by all participants.

Since parent training has received consistent support in the literature (Chronis, Chacko, Fabiano, Wymbs, & Pelham, 2004; Corkum, McKinnon, & Mullane, 2005) and has been deemed to meet the American Psychological Association's criteria for a well-established, evidence-based treatment (Corkum et al., 2005; Lonigan, Elbert, & Johnson, 1998), the question is not whether parent training is effective, but rather how can parent-training programs be refined and improved to enhance practicality and increase generalization of skills, particularly with regard to homework performance and academic functioning in the school setting (Brestan & Eyberg, 1998; Corkum et al., 2005). With most struggling learners being educated in general education classes in which they are assigned significant and increasing amounts of homework (Allington & Cunningham, 2002; Bryan et al., 2001; Cooper & Valentine, 2001; Smith, Polloway, Patten, & Dowdy, 1998; Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Smith, 2004), perhaps addressing such academic

concerns may ultimately prevent the need for some of the referrals to special education. Further, developing empirically supported, scientifically based general education interventions is consistent with the Response To Intervention (RTI) model currently proposed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004). Therefore, it was anticipated that through this study, the homework intervention package that has been developed would prove to be a practical and effective method that could provide help and strategies to overcome the ongoing academic challenges faced by many struggling learners and their families.

In the chapter to follow a review of literature on homework and homework interventions is presented. Research investigating the theoretical foundations and effectiveness of applied parent-training interventions and their various components is examined. Findings from these studies and their contributions to the development of the proposed group-parent training intervention and accompanying software applications are discussed. The methodology of the study proposed is then outlined in Chapter 3. Study results and a discussion of research findings, study limitation, and directions for future research are outlined in chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 2-Literature Review

Many educators and policy makers see benefits of homework beyond improved test scores and advocate its assignment to students in all grades (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). While there is a renewed controversy regarding the positive and negative effects of homework (Bennett & Kalish, 2006; Buell, 2004), the majority of teachers, parents, and students find homework to be a valuable educational tool, with several empirical studies supporting this view (Cooper, 1989; Cooper, Lindsay, Nye, & Greathouse, 1998; Trautwein, Niggli, Schnyder, & Ludtke, 2009). Given that homework is such a common practice that spans the entire educational spectrum, it is not surprising that homework can become problematic for many students, especially struggling learners. Although there is a clear need for effective, practical interventions aimed at addressing homework problems, the quantity of empirical research on the effectiveness of homework interventions is surprisingly limited and mixed (Buell, 2004; Cooper, 2001; Trautwein & Koller, 2003; Trautwein et al, 2009). There is a growing body of literature supporting the usefulness of multisystemic interventions that involve the child, family, and school working together and communicating to address homework problems and enhance overall academic performance. While these interventions are effective, they are often highly labor intensive or better suited to meet the needs of clinical populations in clinical settings.

The goal of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a homework intervention that can be practically applied in school settings to improve children's homework performance. Specifically, empirically supported Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) intervention procedures (Bergan & Kratochwill, 1990; Sheridan, Kratochwill, & Bergan, 1996; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1998) were adopted into the development of a group formatted parent-training program through which parents were provided with information and a variety of

techniques designed to facilitate improved homework performance. Drawing upon research supporting the importance of parent-teacher communication, newly developed online methods of home-school collaboration were also included in the program, as survey software was formatted for use as an educational intervention, as well as a progress monitoring and data collecting instrument.

In the sections to follow, an overview of homework, homework issues, and the role of parents and teachers in addressing homework problems are discussed. A review of literature on homework interventions and parent-training programs is provided.

The Role of Homework

Homework has been a mainstay teacher strategy for decades and is considered a standard practice in education (Pendergast & Watkins, 2009; Simplicio, 2007). When used properly, homework has consistently been shown to be an effective method for reinforcing educational learning goals from the elementary through the university level. Traditionally, homework has been defined as assignments given by teachers that are to be performed by students outside of school or during non-instructional classroom time (Cooper, 1989; Keith & DeGraff, 1997). There are several components to effective homework. First, there should be a specific purpose for homework, with clear instructions that result in a specific product. Second, homework should be assigned in a way that it can be completed in a reasonable amount of time with at least 80 percent accuracy. Third, a variety of types of homework should be utilized. Fourth, it should be assigned regularly. Finally, there should be regular feedback and follow-up on all homework assignments (Olympia, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1994).

Literature has shown that homework provides many benefits for student achievement. Research examining the effectiveness of homework generally indicates that homework has a

positive effect on academic grades and test scores, as students who are assigned homework perform at a higher academic level than those who are not (Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivett., & Singh, 1993). Homework may be used to reinforce learning by giving students the opportunity to practice material presented in class, or to prepare for new material (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). During the elementary grades, homework is typically designed to practice skills or to prepare for future lessons (Power, Karustis, & Habboushe, 2001). It can also be used for non-instructional purposes to promote parent-child interactions or to facilitate parent-teacher communication. These different functions for homework vary depending upon the characteristics and needs of the students, teachers, and schools.

While the direct effects of homework on academic performance appear to be modest during the elementary and middle school years when compared to upper secondary school, it is posited that homework during the elementary grades aids in the development of study skills and work habits which fosters stronger classroom performance and greater academic independence in future grades (Keith & DeGraff, 1997). Perhaps of even greater importance, homework during the elementary school years provides frequent opportunities for home-school collaboration and parental involvement in school, which has been shown to be strongly related to student outcomes (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992; Fantuzzo, Davis, & Ginsburg, 1995; Olympia et al., 1994; Power et al., 2001).

While there are many benefits associated with homework, it has been speculated that no school-related issue is more ongoing and intense for both children and parents than the attempt to ensure the completion of homework (Harniss, Epstein, Bursuck, Nelson,& Jayanthi, 2001). This is especially true for struggling learners, as homework can wreak havoc in the lives of many children and families who fail to master behavioral and environmental routines that create

conditions and patterns conducive to optimal performance (Sheridan, 2009). For parents, homework can mean remembering each school night to check in with their children about whether homework has been assigned, and for children, it can mean remembering necessary materials, instructions, and guidelines. Teachers must try to communicate their expectations clearly and accurately. All of this must occur before a child sits down to complete an academic task that takes place outside of the typical school day and without teacher supervision (Harniss et al., 2001)

As Coutts (2004) points out, from a parent's point of view, the costs of homework are most explicitly stated in terms of time taken to supervise children and the conflict or disputes within the family over homework and its completion. However, children often feel negatively about homework and the interactions surrounding it, and describe homework as boring and lacking intrinsic interest (Coutts, 2004). Chen and Stevenson (1989) found that more than 60% of fifth grade students in their sample felt negatively about homework. Such distaste for homework may hold particularly true for students who are already struggling, as students who feel academically incompetent, frustrated, demoralized and incapable of completing assigned work likely perceive doing homework as an intolerable task (Margolis, 2005). Such students are even found to lack the incentive to record their homework assignments diligently due to beliefs that they will receive poor grades on their homework regardless of the level of effort they put forth (Greene, 2002). Overall, research suggests that the level of dissatisfaction with homework appears higher for those most closely involved, namely the students, than for either parents or teachers (Cooper et al., 1998).

Parent Involvement in Homework

Margolis (2005) acknowledges that while teachers can do a great deal in class to minimize homework difficulty, they can only succeed partially in increasing the success of struggling learners, as greater achievement often requires ongoing parental support. The effectiveness of involving parents in education is well substantiated, as parent–child interactions during homework serve to promote educational interest for both the parent and student and positively influence academic outcomes (Cooper, Jackson, Nye, & Lindsay, 2001; Epstein, 1994). Of all the types of school involvement, parents report that helping with homework is particularly effective for enhancing achievement (Epstein, 1986; Patall Cooper, & Robinson, 2008; Sanders, Epstein, & Conners-Tadros, 1999). Further, Balli, Demo, and Wedman (1998) found that 95% of students reported that they did better in school at least some of the time when they received help with homework from parents. Parent involvement may lead to enhanced achievement by facilitating the communication of expectations to children and providing opportunities for reinforcement of desired homework behaviors (Patall et al., 2008), as well as facilitating communication between parents and teachers (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001).

Research indicates that meaningful parent–child interaction during the completion of homework is a significant variable for improving learning for low-performing students (Bailey, 2006; Bailey, 2004; Bailey, Silvern, Brabham, & Ross, 2004; Campbell & Ramey, 1995). Further, homework interventions generally need to be multisystemic; involving family and school, relational; addressing teacher-student, parent-teacher, and parent-child relationships, and multicomponent; including components that address antecedents and consequences (Power, 2009, Power et al., 2006). Parents, however, have identified several problems with home–school communication, including teachers not initiating communication, not communicating enough,

and waiting to communicate until problems worsen (Jayanthi, Bursuck, Epstein, & Cumblad, 1992; Polloway, Epstein, Bursuck, Jayanthi, & Cumblad, 1994). Research shows that parents may feel ill-prepared to help their children (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995) and may not understand teacher expectations (Kay, Fitzgerald, Paradee, & Mellencamp,1994). Further, even when agreed-upon channels of communication are put into place, parents can feel that teachers do not follow through with agreements, or that some forms of communication (e.g., report cards, notes, forms) are not clear enough or frequent enough to be helpful (Harniss et al., 2001). Nonetheless, parent involvement is believed to be key in improving academic performance and achieving homework success for struggling learners, as parents are the only avenue through which many students can be provided with the quiet, distraction-free environment, materials and structure, and the immediate reinforcement struggling learners need to succeed with homework (Baker, 2003; Bryan, Burstein, & Bryan, 2001; Christenson, 2002; Margolis, 2005).

Several reviews of empirical studies have documented research supporting a variety of benefits to parent involvement, including improvements in academic achievement, attitude toward school, aspirations for the future, attendance, maturation, self-concept, and behavior (Christenson et al., 1992; Epstein, 1987; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jesnson, 1998). After reviewing 59 studies related to parent involvement, Hoover-Dempsey, Battiato, Walker, Reed, DeJong, & Jones (2001) found parent involvement in homework to be related to improved achievement, student attention to homework, homework completion, homework performance, attitudes toward homework and school, perception of competence, and self-regulatory skills. Callahan, Rademacher, & Hildreth (1998) found that teaching parents of at-risk students to facilitate a home-based self-management program significantly enhanced rates of both homework

completion and homework quality. Of the 26 students and families involved in their study, the percentage of homework assignments completed increased almost 110% over baseline levels (33.2% during base-line to 69.4% during intervention). Homework quality also improved, with the mean scores for the 26 participants increasing over baseline levels. Overall, the students scored an average of 25.9% correct on the math homework assigned during baseline and a mean of 62.0% correct during intervention (a statistically significant average increase of about 140%).

Patall et al. (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of research on the effects of parent involvement in homework. After conducting a synthesis of 14 experimental studies that manipulated parent training for homework involvement these authors concluded that training parents to be involved in homework resulted in (a) higher rates of homework completion (b) fewer homework problems, and (c) improved academic performance among elementary school children. The average student who had a parent trained to be involved with homework had a higher homework completion rate than 61% of students without a parent trained. Students of trained parents also had fewer homework problems, such as refusing to do homework, being frustrated by homework, complaining about homework, or being sent to the office for poor homework behavior. Even more striking than the effect of training for involvement on completion, the average student whose parents were trained to be involved with homework had fewer homework problems than did about 80% of students whose parents were not trained. Further, studies using multivariate techniques to control for confounded variables provided additional support for the positive impact of parent involvement on homework completion rates (Patall et al., 2008).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) proposed that parent involvement in children's education is a multi-tiered process influenced by both personal and environmental factors.

Parental role construction, parent's sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school, and parent's perceptions of the general invitations, demands, and opportunities for involvement presented by children and their schools are all factors believed to influence parental involvement. According to their model, parents become involved in their children's education because they have developed a perceived role that includes involvement, because they have a positive sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school, and because they perceive general opportunities and invitations for involvement from their children and their children's schools. Once parents, have made the basic decision to become involved, they then choose specific involvement activities. These specific choices are shaped by parent's perceptions of their own skills, interests, and abilities; demands on time and energy; and specific invitations to become more involved from children, teachers, and schools (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

This model posits that parent's involvement then influences children's educational outcomes through the mechanisms of modeling, reinforcement, and instruction, as mediated by the developmental appropriateness of parents' strategies and the fit between parent's actions and the school's expectations. Ultimately, parent involvement has a direct influence on children's educational outcomes, including their knowledge, skills, and personal sense of efficacy for succeeding in school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995).

While some forms of parent involvement in homework such as those offered in structured parent-training interventions may be adaptive in that homework completion and learning are facilitated, and the development of positive attitudes and self-regulatory study skills associated with academic achievement are enhanced (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Zimmerman, 2000), other methods of involvement have proven to be less helpful and possibly detrimental. In a study on parent involvement in homework, Cooper, Nye, & Lindsay (2000) found that two-

thirds of parents reported engaging in some inappropriate form of involvement not expected to have a positive effect on academic outcomes, including simply giving children correct answers or completing homework assignments themselves. Parents engaging in such inappropriate involvement behaviors can impede learning during the homework process and hinder the development of self-regulatory skills as students come to rely on their parents for correct answers or external regulation and motivation (Patall et al., 2008).

Despite the willingness of most parents to participate in school-related activities to increase the academic performance of their children, some parents may simply be unable or unwilling to carry out homework program activities as desired. Kay, Fitzgerald, Paradee, and Mellencamp (1994) reported that parents often feel unprepared to help their children with homework and want more information about their own roles in helping with homework as well as teachers' homework expectations for their children. Research on parent involvement has also shown that some parents may require academic instruction themselves to fully carry out the homework activities with their children (Callahan et al., 1998). When children lack the skills or knowledge needed to complete their homework assignments, parental tutoring may ultimately confuse children if materials or concepts are presented differently than taught in class. Further, tutoring and doing homework with children can sometimes cause family stress and parent-child conflict, resulting in negativity, anxiety, and anger, which can diminish motivation for schoolwork (Bryan et al., 2001). Nonetheless, parents are still in a unique position to be able to provide a set time and quiet place to do homework, provide help when requested, and offer encouraging statements and praise to their children (Margolis, 2005).

Most empirically supported parent-based interventions are aimed at modifying disruptive behaviors and are designed to be applied in clinical settings with clinical populations. A few

empirically supported parent-training programs and other home-school collaborative interventions aimed at enhancing children's homework performance have been developed for use with specialized populations including students with Learning Disabilities, ADHD and Emotional Disturbance (Cancio, West, & Young, 2004; Power et al., 2001). While the effectiveness of some interventions designed to empower parents of at-risk students to better help their children succeed academically has been established, the excessive amount of time and resources needed to implement such interventions often makes their application impractical in the majority of school settings (Power et al., 2001, Rhoades & Kratochwill,1998; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1998).

The body of research examining practically applied parent-based interventions for general education students who exhibit homework refusal or poor homework performance appears limited (Bryan et al., 2001). Nonetheless, most struggling learners are educated in general education classes in which they are assigned significant and increasing amounts of homework (Allington & Cunningham, 2002; Bryan et al., 2001; Cooper & Valentine, 2001; Smith, Polloway, Patten, & Dowdy, 1998; Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Smith, 2004). If homework performance is related to enhanced school functioning and overall academic achievement, perhaps addressing such academic concerns for students within the general education population may ultimately prevent the need for some of the referrals to special education. Further, developing evidenced-based general education interventions is consistent with the Response To Intervention (RTI) model currently proposed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004).

In the following sections, the ecological perspective commonly applied to the development of interventions involving home-school collaboration is reviewed. A review of

evidence-based parent-training programs designed to address homework problems across a variety of grades and student populations is also provided.

An Ecological Approach: Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC)

Research on homework interventions consistently supports the use of an ecological perspective that involves the child, family, and school working together and communicating to collaboratively address targeted areas of concern (Powers et al., 2001). An ecological perspective recognizes the reciprocal nature of the relationships between children and their social environments and among the social environments themselves, as children are embedded within multiple systems, including their families, schools, and communities (Eamon, 2001; Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Allen-Meares, 2002). From this perspective, development is affected not only by the child's characteristics, but also by the available resources and quality of interactions among the ecological environmental systems in which the child is embedded.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) referred to the structure of the ecological environment in terms of microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems, each subsumed within the next level of system. According to Bronfenbrenner, developmental outcomes are determined primarily by the immediate settings and interactions in and among settings. Microsystems include the home or family, school, or peer group. Mesosystems encompass the interrelationships among microsystems, such as the reciprocal relationship among schools and families. Exosystems include community environments and social networks; macrosystems include opportunity structures, culture, material resources, and so forth; and chronosystems include consistency of change over the life course. This transactional view of human development denotes that individual characteristics and environmental conditions alone do not account for developmental success or failure; rather, transactions between children and their

environments and between broader social contexts (e.g., the family and school) influence developmental and behavioral outcomes and can be the focus of interventions in their own right (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Allen-Meares, 2002). As Fish and Dane (2000) have proposed, by using a systems perspective, the interventions that result can differ from those using more traditional approaches. For example, instead of focusing on changing an individual child's behavior, the focus shifts toward changing interactional patterns and environmental context.

Literature on intervention development indicates that reducing risk and increasing the capacity of individual microsystems such as the family and school to nurture and promote academic success requires strategies that will enhance the availability, access, and coordination of services; link resources in an organized fashion; and directly and indirectly change behavior in dynamic ways (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Allen-Meares, 2002). This has involved the development of interventions that go beyond simple parent remediation at a microsystem level for example, and instead address the establishment of parent-school partnerships to improve service delivery at the mesosystem level.

The Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) model applies such an ecological framework to intervention development at the mesosystem level. This conceptual framework recognizes the importance of the interrelations and linkages among a child's primary environments and the reciprocal influences of the home-school mesosystem on a child's behavior and learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Sheridan, 1997). Behavior is considered a function of the interaction of the system components in a child's life; hence problems do not reside exclusively within the child, or solely within his or her environments.

Conjoint Behavioral Consultation is a model based on an integration of ecological-systems theory and behavior theory which assumes that behaviors are learned as a function of

their interaction with the environment (Sheridan et al., 1996). The CBC theoretical perspective assumes that (a) change agents focus on observable behavior and not the underlying causes of behavior, (b) intervention strategies are based on learning principles, (c) interconnections between systems (home and school) in a child's life have a significant impact on behavior, and (d) problem resolution is shared between these systems (Sheridan, 1997; Sheridan et al., 1996). The goals of CBC are threefold: to address students' needs through evidence-based intervention procedures, to promote parent engagement and involvement in learning, and to build relationships and facilitate partnerships across families and schools (Sheridan, Clarke, & Burt, 2008**;** Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2008).

Interventions that apply the CBC model engage parents and teachers in a collaborative problem-solving process with the assistance of a consultant, wherein the interconnections between home and school systems are considered critically important. This process assumes that collaborative problem solving among all parties will afford the greatest benefits. Parents and teachers share information, value each another's input and incorporate their insights into intervention plans. Pooling resources, developing a clearer conceptualization of problems, and increasing the range of possible solutions are among the primary objectives of the CBC problem-solving process (Sheridan et al., 1996). Consequently, the relationship between the home and the school must be collaborative and supportive, to provide maximum benefit to the child.

There are four stages of CBC that structure the problem-solving process: problem identification, problem analysis, treatment implementation, and treatment evaluation (Bergan & Kratochwill, 1990; Sheridan et al., 1996). The problem-solving processes involved in CBC models are guided by an examination of antecedent, situation, and consequent conditions in an effort to generate evidence-based interventions. Thus, CBC combines the conceptual advantages

of ecological-systems theory and the empirically validated structured approach of behavioral consultation to provide a potent model for intervention (Wilkinson, 2006).

Research investigating student outcomes has identified CBC to be an evidence-based consultation model that is effective in addressing students' academic, behavioral, and social needs (Guli, 2005; Sheridan et al., 2001). The positive effects of CBC have been documented in regard to several student needs including homework completion and accuracy (Galloway & Sheridan, 1994; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1998), externalizing and internalizing behavior problems (Illsley & Sladeczek, 2001; Kratochwill, Elliott, Loitz, Sladeczek, & Carlson, 2003), social skill development (Colton & Sheridan, 1998; Sheridan, Kratochwill, & Elliott, 1990), compliance (Ray, Skinner, & Watson, 1999), anxiety (Sheridan & Colton, 1994), and behavioral control (Wilkinson, 2005). CBC has also been reported to be an acceptable model of service delivery by school psychologists, parents, and teachers (Sheridan & Steck, 1995; Sladeczek, Madden, Illsley, Finn, & August, 2006).

The CBC model is considered a powerful tool in remediating children's learning and behavioral problems, and for delivering preventive interventions in general education settings (Wilkinson, 2006). When applied to homework interventions, the consultant can assist the parent and teacher in identifying the nature of homework problems. This information guides them in designing an effective plan across settings aimed at increasing time spent on homework and improving the accuracy and completion rates of homework. This approach also ensures systematic monitoring and data collection of the homework program’s effect on completion and accuracy, which allows for necessary modifications to improve the homework program, and assesses whether treatment goals have been achieved (Olympia, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1994; Sheridan & Kratochwill, 1992). Weiner et al. (1998) emphasize that this approach provides for

comprehensive and systematic data collection at different times and in different settings. Therefore, consistent use of the intervention is expected to enhance both maintenance and generalization of gains, as multiple treatment agents monitor the intervention effects. Research on the application of the CBC model to homework interventions indicates that CBC is an acceptable and effective methods for addressing the issues and concerns of both parents and teachers, as it establishes critical links between the home and school experiences, and that it shows promise as an aid to parents interested in maximizing out-of-school time, and structuring the home environment to support learning (Weiner et al., 1998).

The following section reviews a variety of empirically supported multisystemic homework interventions. Eight studies involving both individual and group parent-training homework interventions conducted between 1998 and 2007 are summarized. While they do not all claim to employ the CBC theoretical model, they have all adopted an ecological approach which stresses the importance of home school collaboration. All of the interventions are presented chronologically and are summarized in Appendix A.

Parent-Training Homework Interventions: Individual

Study 1-individual. Weiner, Sheridan, and Jenson (1998) conducted a study examining the effectiveness of a structured behavioral consultation program on improving the completion and accuracy rates of student's math homework. In their study, the authors employed a conjoint behavioral consultation program (CBC) with the parents and teachers of middle school students deemed to be at risk for academic failure.

Participants and setting. Participants included five middle school students selected because they demonstrated noncompliant behavior in regard to math homework, defined as: (a) returning less than 60% of homework assignments within the previous two weeks prior to

selection, (b) spending less than 15 minutes per night on math homework as measured by self-report, (c) completing an average of 60% or less of assigned homework for the month prior to selection as reported by the math teacher, and (d) receiving an average accuracy rate of 60% or less on assigned homework for the month prior to selection as reported by the math teacher. While none of the students were learning disabled, all were failing their math course at the time the study began. Consultees included the parents and math teachers of the student participants. Parent consultees were four mothers and a stepfather. Two math teachers were involved as teacher consultees (Weiner et al., 1998).

The study took place in a suburban public middle school serving primarily lower and middle class families and data were recorded using a multiple baseline across participants design. The consultant contacted each consultee weekly either by phone or in person. Consultation sessions were conducted in participant pairs, where the consultant alternated questions between pairs of consultees. Since homework assignments and expectations were identical across students within classrooms, it was believed that the time and costs associated with holding separate interviews per student would have far outweighed the benefits obtained by such an approach (Weiner et al., 1998).

Baseline. Parents and teachers were asked during baseline to attend to behaviors, individuals, and other environmental conditions that may have been interfering with math homework compliance. Parents were also asked to complete a Homework Situations Questionnaire (Olympia et al., 1996) with their child to identify primary areas of homework difficulty and provide a more complete functional analysis of each student's homework behaviors. Baseline data included time spend on homework each night. A homework tracking sheet was provided to write down the time math homework was begun and completed, as well as

other pertinent environmental information. Teachers were asked to calculate the completion and accuracy of math homework assignments.

The inconsistency with which students recorded their own homework assignments and the lack of a structured time and location for completing homework were common problems identified across student participants. Specific strategies for improving students' math homework compliance were reviewed, and information revealed during baseline was highlighted and individualized reinforcement preferences were discussed. Parents were given a homework manual ("Sanity Savers"; Olympia et al., 1996) and a treatment plan worksheet that reviewed consultation goals, outlined the intervention steps, and provided a matrix on which parents could self-record adherence to each intervention step. Two weeks after the intervention was introduced a final interview was conducted to assess the effects of the treatment on math homework compliance, and to discuss modifications and maintenance. \

Intervention. The intervention used in this study was a structured homework compliance and behavioral reinforcement program (Olympia et al., 1996) implemented across classroom and home settings. General strategies were presented (e.g., positive reinforcement), but specific plan tactics were determined conjointly, based on individual consultee preferences (e.g., specific homework environments or mode of reinforcer delivery). The primary components of the intervention included a school component with self-recording, a home program with homework structure and supervision, and positive reinforcement provided across settings.

The first intervention step required students to record their math assignments in a day planner. Before leaving the classroom, the teacher initialed student planners, indicating to students and parents that the recorded assignment was correct. Upon return, teachers corrected the assignments and computed and recorded completion and accuracy percentages. Another

common factor contributing to homework problems across students was the lack of a structured time and location for completing homework. Therefore, the consultant and consultees agreed upon five rules that parents should follow to increase homework compliance including 1) "homework should be done in only one place, and preferably not the student's bedroom," 2) "make sure the workspace is equipped with appropriate materials for completing homework," 3) "limit access to the study area during homework time." 4) "keep noise to a minimum during homework time" and 5) "start homework at the same time every day." (Weiner et al., 1998). Parents and students determined the most appropriate homework time and location, and parents checked day planners at the predetermined homework times and confirmed that students had begun working on their assignments. Parents also recorded the amount of time their child spent on math homework each night, the location in which the homework was completed, and the number of items completed on the Homework Tracking Sheet. At the end of each night, parents recorded those steps of the intervention that they performed.

Data Analysis. Homework completion and accuracy percentages were calculated each night by the classroom teacher. Calculations were collected for baseline, treatment, and follow-up. Reinforcers were determined individually by each student and the consultee, with tangible reinforcers provided both at home and school. Nightly reinforcement was contingent upon meeting the criteria of 20 or more minutes spent on the daily assignment and 100% completion of the assignment. Weekly reinforcers for work completion were provided by the consultant and delivered by classroom teachers via a lottery system and long-term reinforcers were delivered by parents and contingent upon overall accuracy percentages. Each student selected a long-term reinforcer at the beginning of the intervention and parents agreed to provide the reinforcer if their child's accuracy averaged 70% or greater at the end of the intervention.

Results. Results of this study indicated that improvements in homework completion and accuracy were evident among the majority of students. Data collection for a follow-up condition was reported, although the duration of time between intervention completion of and follow-up was unspecified. Overall rates at follow-up reflected improvements over baseline levels for some of the participants. Specifically, three of the five participants either maintained or increased their homework completion means during follow-up, and two maintained improved accuracy means. Three of the five students increased from failing to passing grades, and the remaining two students increased their completion and accuracy percentages by the end of the study.

Implications. Results of this study indicated that all consultees reported that consultation goals were at least partially met, and consultees found both CBC and the intervention used in the study to be acceptable and effective methods for addressing the issues and concerns of both parents and teachers. Despite promise for the CBC intervention, the authors acknowledged limitations of the study including a lack of stability and a large range of data points at baseline. They also cited the lack of standardized homework assignments as a potential limitation (Weiner et al., 1998). Their sample size was small, which impedes the generalizability of their results. Further, the authors also noted scheduling difficulties to be problematic and stated that they modified their model of consultation delivery because the participating teachers were hesitant to engage in a large number of separate interviews. Last, while a behavioral homework intervention was implemented that required parents to apply contingent reinforcement procedures, parent's level of comprehension of behavioral modification principles and their ability to accurately and effectively administer a structured contingency regimen was not discussed.

Study 2-Individual. In a second study Rhoades and Kratochwill (1998) examined the home-school collaboration paradigm. This research involved the development of a parent training program designed specifically to enhance the accuracy and completion rates of homework for students deemed to have severe homework completion problems. These researchers developed a 5 week parent training program based heavily upon the work of Sonna (1990) in which five face-to-face parent training sessions were conducted individually with the parents of four elementary school students (grades 4 through 6). Similar to Weiner et al., this study also utilized a consultation model in which parents met individually with a consultant to address the specific homework needs of struggling students. Unlike the Weiner et al. study, however, these researchers implemented a structured parent training program designed to teach parents the use of pre-specified homework interventions, including a structured home study time.

Participants. Four upper elementary students nominated by their teachers as experiencing significant homework difficulties due to poor work completion rather than lack of skill were selected for the participation. "Significant difficulties" were defined as failing to complete two or more assignments on time per week in a given subject area for a period of at least 4 weeks. To meet criteria for nomination it was also required that students achieve accuracy rates of at least 85% on completed work (Rhoades & Kratochwill, 1998). All nominated students were Caucasian and from low to moderate income families. One of the students met the criteria for Math and Spelling, while the other participants met the criteria for Science and Health and to a lesser degree English, Reading and Spelling.

Measures. The researchers implemented a multiple baseline design across participants (Kazdin, 1982) to measure the effectiveness of their parent training intervention. The intervention included five face-to-face parent training meetings completed over a 6 to 8 week

period. Pre- and post-treatment measures included rating scales completed by parents and teachers at the beginning and end of a four-week follow-up period. Further, student data continued to be collected throughout the duration of the school year. The parent rating scales assessed perceptions of homework problems, perceptions of their children's behavioral presentation, perceptions of their confidence as effective tutors, and satisfaction with the consultation process. Parents also completed weekly parent ratings in which they recorded their child's compliance and responsiveness to the training program. Weekly goal ratings were also completed to monitor their child's progress towards meeting established goals of the parent training program. Teacher outcome measures included accuracy and completion rates for work assigned in classes where significant and chronic work completion problems were observed. Similar data were also collected for 10 typical peers deemed representative of typical student performance (Rhoades & Kratochwill, 1998). Social validation questionnaires were completed by parents and students. The primary indicators of treatment effectiveness included improved student work completion, as reported by teachers, and increased child compliance with home study requirements, as reported by parents.

Intervention. The homework intervention program included an initial problem identification interview, followed by four weekly one-hour meetings between individual parents and consultants scheduled at the parent's convenience at the student's school. Training sessions focused on the use of regular study times, positive reinforcement, and home-school communication. Using their pre-determined criteria for significant difficulties, two classes were selected as target interventions for each participant. Parents were given a homework manual at the first training session which included instructions and materials for the 5 weeks of training. The essential components for the 5 week training session are described in Appendix B.

Results. Results of the study revealed that student's quarterly grades improved slightly, work completion rates increased to a normal range, acceptable work accuracy rates were maintained, and parents reported increased levels of child compliance in weekly log ratings and on measures of their perceptions of the intensity and frequency of their child's homework problems. Child outcome data showed improvements in work completion rates that directly coincided with the initiation of the intervention. Data regarding treatment satisfaction indicated that parents were very satisfied with the treatment and found the assignments useful in dealing with the difficulties their children experienced.

Implications. This research further documented the effectiveness of an instructional support and consultation based intervention in addressing work-completion problems that were considered to be severe. The authors of this study maintain that their results offer added support for parent training and consultation as an effective means for improving child compliance with homework requirements, and that their results suggest that interventions with severe work completion problems may be effective if embedded within a consultation relationship. The authors speculated that future research should investigate the differential effectiveness and parent satisfaction of small group rather than individual interventions (Rhoades & Kratochwill, 1998).

Study 3-Individual. In a third study Toney, Kelly, and Lanklos (2003) argued that as students get older, parents and teachers often expect students to take more responsibility for the organization and completion of homework assignments. As a result of frustration, parents sometimes experience the homework completion process as aversive and refuse to be involved altogether, believing that the students must take responsibility for and experience the consequences of uncompleted or poorly completed homework (Toney et al., 2003).

Hypothesizing that teaching self-monitoring skills may be as effective as parent-based interventions, Toney et al. (2003) conducted a study comparing the effectiveness of two interventions for middle school students with homework problems: (1) parental monitoring and structuring of homework, and (2) adolescent self-monitoring and structuring of homework. The parent treatment condition consisted of a homework enhancement package combined with parental monitoring of homework completion activities. The student treatment condition involved homework structuring combined with adolescent self-monitoring of homework completion activities. By comparing treatments with different levels of parental participation in homework, these researchers hoped to determine the extent of parental involvement necessary to optimize homework completion in adolescents. They postulated that, while both treatments would reduce homework problems, the teaching of self-monitoring skills would be a more socially valid intervention.

Participants & Setting. Their study included 37 middle school students and their parents (24 boys, 13 girls: mean age: 12.06). Participants were mostly white (89%), middle class (100%) children from intact families (77%). Analysis of demographic data revealed no significant differences between groups with regard to child gender, age, race, parent marital status or socioeconomic index.

To qualify for participation, participants had to be in grades 6 through 8, receive homework in most classes at least four evenings per week, and receive a parent-reported total score on the Homework Problem Checklist (HPC: Anesko et al., 1987) of 19 or greater, indicating significant homework problems. The eligible participants were randomly assigned to either the parental monitoring treatment group (n = 13), the self-monitoring treatment group (n =

12), or a wait-list control group who were given treatment at the conclusion of the six week intervention (n = 12).

Participants in the parental monitoring condition received training on structuring homework routines and on monitoring and assisting their children with homework completion. Training sessions were conducted by a therapist who met with individual parent-child dyads at a university clinic. The first parent-child training session lasted 90-minutes, during which time participants were given handouts describing the treatment, and a rationale for parental monitoring of homework was described. Recommendations involving scheduling a time, and location for homework were made.

Intervention. Parents were instructed to complete a 10-item daily monitoring checklist that they were to review with the children before and after homework each night. Parents were to provide rewards for the completion of 80% of checklist items immediately following completion of homework time, and to praise their children's effort. Parents were also asked to record the amount of time spent supervising homework and to estimate how many minutes they were involved in homework activities.

Students in the parent monitoring condition were instructed to complete homework independently, review class notes for at least 15-30 minutes daily, and to organize their book bag after homework was completed. They were also trained to record all assignments in an assignment notebook and to obtain their teacher's initials to ensure accurate assignment recording

In the self-monitoring condition parent-child dyads also met individually with a therapist for 90 minute training sessions. Sessions were conducted in an identical manner to the parent monitoring condition except that they were directed at the students, with parents primarily

listening. The benefits of student independence during homework were explained. Self-monitoring was defined as the act of observing and recording one's own behavior and described as a technique for increasing adolescents' independent homework performance. Adolescents were instructed on how to use a 14-item checklist to monitor their homework behaviors to ensure that they've performed all the tasks necessary for successful homework completion.
Items were identical to the parent-monitoring checklist, except that they were worded in the first person. While parents were permitted to prompt a child if he/she forgot to begin homework on time, complete the checklist, or to organize his/her book bag, they were discouraged from spending time directly monitoring homework completion. Similar to the parent monitoring condition, parents were instructed to give rewards for students' filling out the self-monitoring form and to record the total amount of time (in minutes) spent monitoring homework. Where the parent was responsible for structuring the homework routine and for completing the monitoring checklists in the parent monitoring condition, the adolescent was responsible for these activities in the self-monitoring condition. Where rewards were earned for good scores (80% of checklist items) in the parent-monitoring condition, rewards were provided if the adolescent filled out the checklist, irrespective of checklist scores in the self-monitoring condition.

Results. Results indicated that both treatments significantly reduced parent-reported homework problems on the HPC, suggesting that both parent and self-monitoring of homework are effective in reducing homework problems in adolescents. Pretest and posttest scores on the HPC decreased significantly for both treatment groups, as compared to the wait list control group, with improvements in HPC scores maintained at two-week follow-up. As expected, a t-test revealed that the mean amount of parental time per day required to complete the treatment

was significantly higher for the parent-monitoring group (34 minutes) than for the self-monitoring group (8 minutes).

Measures of treatment integrity (Consumer Satisfaction Questionnaire; CSQ) revealed that parents in both treatment groups rated the treatments positively and did not differ significantly. Interestingly, adolescents in the parent-monitoring group responded more positively to CSQ items than did those in the self-monitoring group. One-hundred percent of parents in the parent-monitoring group reported that the treatment was helpful, would recommend it to a friend, and use it in the future, while in the self-monitoring group 91% of parents reported that the treatment helped; 100% said that they would recommend it to a friend and 72% said that they would use it in the future.

Results indicated that adolescents in the parent-monitoring group also reported that the treatment helped (82%), would recommend it to a friend (82%), and that their grades improved (91%). Of the adolescents in the self-monitoring group 71% said the treatment helped, 57% said that they would recommend it to a friend, and 57% said that grades were improved. Thus, adolescents in the parent-monitoring group rated their treatment higher than did adolescents in the self-monitoring group. The authors also noted that many parents commented that each treatment improved homework behavior. However, some parents in the self-monitoring condition reported that their students were not honest on the Student's Homework Monitoring Checklist. Nonetheless, the majority of parents in both conditions were pleased with the results of the study.

Implications. The study was the first to compare the same treatment with different levels of parent involvement and the first to examine the effects of adolescent self-monitoring on parent reported homework problems. They concluded that the effectiveness of adolescent self-

monitoring in reducing HPC scores has implications for the degree of parent involvement necessary to facilitate homework completion in middle-school students. They stated that their findings suggest that if adolescents are given the tools to monitor their homework completion, as well as rewards for doing so, they are capable of improving their homework behavior (Toney et al., 2003).

These researchers also attempted to evaluate treatment effects on teacher-reported homework grades. However, teacher-reported homework grades for the group at baseline were adequate (84%). Hence, the data were not included due to ceiling effects. Parents and students volunteered to participate in the study even though their homework grades were not poor. This was interpreted to be an indication that the process of completing homework and associated parent-child interactions are an important outcome in and of themselves, separate from homework accuracy (Toney et al., 2003). While indications of relatively high homework grades in a sample deemed as having homework difficulties seems contradictory, it appears to be common in many intervention studies, especially those relying on parent ratings of homework problems (Power et al., 2001; Toney et al., 2003). Literature suggests that it is likely that significant difficulties completing homework independently are actually occurring, however, parents and teachers are either modifying expectations and assignments or offering excessive assistance to enhance academic grades (Patall et al., 2008).

The authors also stated that while there was no statistical difference in the effectiveness of the two treatment groups in reducing homework behavior problems, it's possible that parent monitoring was somewhat more effective overall, as participants in the parent-monitoring group demonstrated better treatment adherence and rated their treatment more positively than did parents and children in the self-monitoring group. Thus, it appears that the participants adhered

to the parent-monitoring treatment more, and liked it better than did participants in the self-monitoring treatment group. As a result, Toney et al. (2003) recommended that in future interventions it may be beneficial to begin with a parent-monitoring intervention, and gradually fade to focusing on the development of self-monitoring techniques.

Although the results of this study indicate that the self-monitoring condition was effective in enhancing parent ratings of homework problems, it was clear that both parents and students preferred the parent-monitoring condition over the self-monitoring treatment. This suggests that parents and students are more likely to adhere to parent-based intervention conditions. Furthermore, while the self-monitoring condition was designed to place a greater emphasis on student autonomy and self-responsibility, it still appeared as if a great deal of parent involvement was required in the self-monitoring condition. Perhaps one interpretation of these results indicates varying levels of daily parent involvement to be effective in improving homework behaviors, but that the greater the level of parent involvement, the greater the levels of perceived satisfaction by parents and students.

These researchers examined the effectiveness of a homework intervention that they believe is more desirable and offers greater social validity than parent-based interventions. Although it appears that both children and parents prefer parent-based interventions, the amount of time and effort required to conduct these interventions should also be considered. While parents and students were only required to meet with a clinical therapist for two sessions, the therapists were required to hold a considerable number of sessions to complete this study. While such time requirements may be possible in clinical and research settings, it might prove to be difficult to implement such an intervention within schools, where academic interventions designed for non-clinical populations are likely to be needed most. Therefore, despite the fact

the results of this study offer further support for the usefulness of parent-based homework interventions, the need for effective and practically applied interventions for non-clinical populations continues to be evident.

Study 4-Individual. Cancio et al. (2004) investigated the feasibility of a parent training program aimed at enhancing the math homework performance of children with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Specifically, the effects of self-management and parent participation on homework completion, homework accuracy, academic achievement, and teacher/parent ratings of perceived homework problems in mathematics were examined.

Participants. Participants included six students classified as EBD, ages 11 to 15 years (grades 6 through 8) and their parents. Students were selected based upon the following criteria: (a) homework completion averages below 60%; (b) homework accuracy averages below 60%; (c) poor organizational skills; and (d) poor time management skills; and (e) parent consent to participate. The information pertaining to these criteria was obtained through teacher data, teacher observation, and the results of the Homework Problem Checklist (HPC; Anesko & O'Leary, 1982).

Measures. A multiple baseline design across participants was used to investigate the overall impact of a parent-assisted self-management program for homework completion. The experimental conditions consisted of baseline and parent participation self-management conditions. Prior to beginning the baseline condition, each family committed to providing an appropriate and consistent setting at home for the child to complete his/her work. The setting needed to have adequate lighting and be free from distractions. Parents were trained in their homes to implement the homework program, as the majority of the program's homework

activities also took place in the student's homes. The intervention phase lasted approximately 4 months.

Interventions. Independent variables included parent training, student training, and performance rewards. During parent training, the principal investigator conducted one parent training session lasting approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. The objectives of the parent training were to familiarize parents with the procedures of the homework program and the research on self-management, parent participation, and parent training. Parents completed a demographic survey and the HPC, and were provided with a Parent Homework Notebook. Role-play demonstrations of the procedures were conducted, and parents participated in role-plays of homework situations, playing the roles of both parent and child. Following parent training, the students received training on how to conduct self-management procedures and were asked to demonstrate and explain how they would carry them out (Cancio et al., 2004).

The homework program was designed to ensure that students received positive reinforcement in the home and school settings. During parent training, all parents were instructed to involve their children in the process of setting appropriate reinforcers and to develop a reinforcement menu. At the conclusion of parent training, and for each month following the intervention, the parents received a $20 check to purchase reinforcers from the reinforcement menu. Further, in addition to the reinforcers supplied by parents, students received points in their classrooms for completing math assignments and submitting homework checklists completed by their parents. Teachers were given money each month to purchase reinforcers to be given to students in class based upon a classroom point system.

Results. Results indicated that all students demonstrated improvement in homework accuracy and completion immediately after the self-management and parent training intervention

was introduced as measured by change in percentage of teacher grading. The overall average baseline level for homework completion was 2%. High averages of homework completion were noted during the intervention condition, as individualized assignment completion ranged from 81% to 100% during this condition. With regard to homework accuracy, the average baseline level for accuracy for all students was also found to be 2%. During the intervention condition, the overall accuracy level rose to 89%. Measures of academic achievement indicated that student achievement increased approximately one full grade level following the intervention phase from 5.3 at baseline, to 6.3 upon completion of the intervention 4 months later as measured on the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA; Kaufman & Kaufman, 1985),. Significant improvements were also reported on both teacher and parent forms of the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC), indicating a significant reduction in problematic homework behaviors.

Implications. The authors concluded that the study showed positive and consistent effects of an instructional package that included math instruction, self-management, and parent training, and that the development of an appropriately designed homework program can strengthen math instruction and achievement (Cancio et al., 2004). They acknowledged that it was impossible to determine the effects of the homework program by itself on math achievement. They also acknowledged that the study was limited in that it was conducted in a self-contained special education setting. The authors suggested that future research should look at utilizing similar procedures in a more integrative setting in order to better examine the generalizabilty of their results.

Study 5-Individual. In a fifth study, Meyer and Kelly (2007) essentially replicated the Toney et al. study with middle school students diagnosed with ADHD to determine whether self-

monitoring techniques were as effective as parent-based interventions in addressing homework problems with clinical populations. Working with a sample of 42 students (36 boys, 6 girls: mean age was 12.9) and their parents in grades 6 through 8, these researchers examined the effectiveness of a parent-monitoring group and a self-monitoring group compared to a community control group.

Interventions. Procedures very similar to that of the Toney et al. (2003) study were employed, as a clinician held training session with parent-child dyads for participants in both experimental groups. Initial training sessions for both parent-monitoring groups and self-monitoring groups lasted approximately 90 minutes, with follow-up phone calls made to all participants on a weekly basis. Treatment lasted for four weeks following the initial training session. Similar to the Toney et al. study, parents also attended the self-monitoring group with their child and were instructed to give prompts to begin homework, complete daily checklists, and to reward their child on a nightly basis for completing self-monitoring checklists.

Results. Results of the Meyer and Kelly (2007) study also found that both treatment conditions were equally effective in reducing homework related problems as measured by the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC) for children classified with ADHD. Parents in both groups reported significant reductions in homework problems with both treatments, offering further support for the effectiveness of parent focused and parent supported self-monitoring conditions.

Measures of consumer satisfaction revealed that 100% of parents in both treatment groups reported the treatment as helpful. Eighty-five percent of the students in the self-monitoring group reported that they thought the treatment was helpful; would recommend it to a friend, would use it in the future, and that their grades improved as a result of participation.

Ninety-three percent of the students in the parent-monitoring group reported that the treatment helped, that they would recommend it to a friend, would use it in the future, and that their grades were improved. This finding supports the results of previous studies which indicate that, even though both treatment modalities are effective, participants prefer interventions with greater parental involvement.

Meyer and Kelly (2007) also assessed teacher ratings of behavior and classroom preparedness on the Classroom Performance Scale (CPS; CH.A.D.D., 1996). Results of teacher ratings revealed that both treatments improved classroom behavior, a finding that was maintained at follow-up. Both the self- and parent-monitoring groups also obtained significantly decreased levels of teacher reported classroom difficulties from pre- to post treatment and follow-up. The wait-list control group remained unchanged.

Implications. The authors concluded that their study demonstrated the effectiveness of both parent-monitoring and self-monitoring for reducing homework problems and improving homework completion and test preparation in middle school students with ADHD. They also posited that a key component of both treatments was the use of rewards. In both treatment groups, students earned nightly rewards for completing homework related tasks (Dunlap & Dunlap, 1989; Meyer & Kelley, 2007; Prater, Joy, Chilman, Temple, & Miller, 1991; Toney et al., 2004). The authors suggested that future investigations of these treatments should examine their impact on accuracy of homework assignments in addition to rates of homework completion. They also recommend that future research should include investigating the efficacy of these treatments in a more diverse sample of participants (Meyer & Kelley, 2007).

The results of the Meyer and Kelley (2007) study offer further empirical evidence for the effectiveness of homework interventions involving a parent component. Their study also

supports the finding that the greater the level of parent involvement, the greater the level of perceived satisfaction by both parents and students. Much like the Toney et al. (2003) study, when considering the length and number of individual training sessions, as well as telephone conferences, the Meyer and Kelley (2007) interventions appear to be highly labor intensive, demanding a significant amount of time and effort on the part of the clinician. Again, since these interventions focused on a clinical population of students with ADHD, the structure of this intervention may be better applied to a clinical setting, where such time requirements are likely more acceptable as compared to the school setting.

It is also significant that the similar treatment conditions implemented in the Toney et al. (2003) study and the Meyer and Kelly (2007) study were equally as successful in addressing student homework problems for both clinical and non-clinical populations. This may be an indication of the power of parent-based interventions. It may also suggest that research supporting parent-based interventions might be applicable to a wide variety of student populations, potentially minimizing the specific characteristics of sampled populations while enhancing the generalizability of results.

Summary of Individual Studies. All of the aforementioned studies benefited from and contributed to the body of research supporting the effectiveness of parent involvement in education, and offered promise for the effectiveness of homework interventions involving parents. While various applications of consultation models were employed to establish and maintain home-school collaboration focused on enhancing student homework performance, differences in intervention type, length, level of involvement on behalf of both parents and clinicians, differences in sample make-up (e.g., age, grade, clinical and non-clinical populations, etc.), and limitations in methodology including a lack of follow-up data to establish maintenance

of results are also evident. Therefore, while interventions involving home-school collaboration methods are effective, more efficient applications of these models and applied techniques are likely waiting to be developed and studied. It is anticipated that finding which components have repeatedly worked well in past studies and applying their concepts with consideration for both practical use and changes in educational practices and technology will permit for the advancement of such an intervention.

One consistent theme throughout all of the studies was the use of daily parent-teacher communication methods. While these tools such as daily homework logs and homework tracking sheets differed slightly in their format and application, they all served to facilitate steady home-school communication and to track regular homework performance. This component is of particular importance in ecological interventions which employ a Conjoint Behavioral Consultation model, as ongoing communication and performance feedback serves to guide the pace and focus of interventions.

In regards to practical application, perhaps parent-based interventions developed for specific clinical populations may be equally as effective in addressing the homework concerns of a much broader range of students. This could be important for practitioners seeking to implement empirically based interventions with general student populations. Although several books and commercial programs that generally apply sound, research-based behavior modification principals are available to parents and practitioners looking to become more skilled at helping their children with homework problems, including Winning the Homework War (Anesko & Levine, 1987), Homework without Tears (Canter & Hausner, 1987), Homework Helpers (Kuepper, 1987), and Mindmovers: Creative Homework Assignments Grades 3–12 (Hart & Rechif, 1986), little information is offered on their effectiveness (Olympia, Sheridan, &

Andrews, 1994, Power et al., 2001). While research has repeatedly shown that comprehensive programs that consider an ecological perspective can be highly effective, as the involvement of children and teachers in the planning and implementation of interventions can augment the benefits of parent-training programs (Power et al., 2001), most commercially available programs focus solely on educating and training parents and do not incorporate children, teachers, and the school into the treatment in a meaningful way.

Parent Training Homework Interventions: Group

While the application of consultation-based parent training models has been shown to aid parents in establishing collaborative relationships with their child's school and in better helping children to meet homework demands, such interventions are labor intensive, requiring a great deal of individualized professional supports. Therefore, as suggested by Rhoades & Kratochwill (1998), group parent-training programs may prove to be advantageous for a variety of reasons. Group parent-training programs are more time and cost effective than individual training programs and also provide opportunities for parents to support one another. Because parents who are stressed often have significant problems using behavioral strategies effectively, creating a context within which they can derive emotional support from other parents may help them to become more effective in using behavioral techniques (Whaler & Dumas, 1989). Group parent training also provides a forum for problem solving through which parents can derive useful, practical suggestions from their peers for addressing homework problems at home (Power et al., 2001). However, there appears to be a paucity of contemporary empirical research examining the effectiveness of group parent training on enhancing the homework performance of struggling students within the general education setting. This is unfortunate, as current trends in education strive to encourage the implementation of research based practices to educate and assess the

needs and progress of children within the general education setting (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). Such endeavors may even avert unnecessary referrals to special education. While little empirical research has been conducted examining the effectiveness of group formatted parent-training programs aimed at enhancing homework performance within typical school settings, some work has been done in this area with clinical populations. Power et al. (2001) developed a parent training program aimed at enhancing student homework compliance that can be implemented in a group format. The program, entitled the Homework Success Program, is designed to address homework difficulties experienced by families coping with a child with ADHD in grades 2 through 6. They indicate, however, that with some adjustments, their program could be used with children who experience significant difficulties with homework who do not have ADHD. The Homework Success Program is presented in manual form and offers specific guidelines for implementation that can be conducted in a group, individual, or family format. The authors state that the program is appropriate for use by a wide range of professionals including school-based practitioners, clinicians practicing in mental health care settings, and for university-based trainers (Power et al., 2001).

While the program can be implemented with individual families, the authors cite the advantages of administrating the program in a group format. They state that the group format provides an opportunity for parents to support each other, creating a context within which they can derive emotional support from other parents which may help them to be more effective in applying behavioral techniques (Barkley, 1998; Powers et al., 2001). The cost-effectiveness of a group administration is also considered to be advantageous (Power et al., 2001).

The Homework Success Program is formatted into 7 sessions throughout which parents are introduced to behavioral techniques and strategies that ultimately result in the development

and implementation of a structured behavior management plan within the home setting. Time management and goal setting strategies are also introduced. All behavioral techniques are based on the Conjoint Behavioral Consultation model (CBC), which is grounded in a multisystemic, ecological approach that recognizes the importance of the interconnectedness among systems in a child's life (Power et al., 2001; Sheridan, Kratochwill, & Bergan, 1996). Research and insight into ADHD symptoms and how they can be addressed through the behavioral strategies offered are incorporated into each session. The manual also includes hand-outs and letters for parents, as well as screening instruments and outcome measures assessing both homework problems and behavioral problems associated with ADHD. Integrity checklists are provided for practitioners to help ensure that the program's format is being properly followed and materials for conducting a child group are offered. Case studies of children who would likely benefit from the program are provided and an extensive literature review is also included in the manual.

Prior to publication of the manual, the Homework Success Program was introduced by its authors during a professional conference for School Psychologists (Karustis, Habboushe, Leff, Eiraldi, & Power, 1999). This publication offered an overview of the program including the primary goals of increasing rates of homework completion and accuracy, promoting home-school collaboration, and reducing parent-child conflict during homework time. The importance of using the CBC approach to include parents, teachers, and students in the program was emphasized. Educating parents and teachers about ADHD was also stressed, and it was recommended that in-service trainings on ADHD accompany the programs implementation. The authors discussed expanding the application of the clinically-based intervention into school settings to be a logical development of the program and consistent with emerging trends for the

future of School Psychology at that time (Karustis et al., 1999; Reeder, Maccow, Shaw, Swerdlik, Horton, & Foster, 1997).

Following its formal publication in book form the Homework Success Program (HSP) received accolades from peer-reviewers as being a theoretically sound group parent-training academic intervention for children with ADHD (Theodore, Kehle, & Bray, 2004). However, empirical research supporting its effectiveness appears to be very limited. Power et al. (2001) acknowledged that more rigorous evaluations of the program using carefully designed experimental group methods and single-subject designs are needed to validate the program.

Study 1-Group. The empirical case study conducted by Power et al. (2001) in support of the program involved single group administrations of the HSP to two small groups of parents of children diagnosed with ADHD who were also coping with significant homework problems as indicated by the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC: Anesko et al., 1987). The study was conducted in a clinical setting and included both a parent and child group. One week prior to the first session, parents completed the HPC, daily logs of homework behavior, and the Conflict Behavior Questionnaire (CBQ)-Parent Form and the Parenting Stress Index (PSI)-Short Form, both developed by Power et al. (2001). In addition, teachers completed the Academic Productivity subscale of the Academic Performance Rating Scale (APRS; DuPaul, Rapport, & Perriello, 1991). The questionnaires were completed again during session 6 of the program. Treatment acceptability was evaluated using the Treatment Evaluation Inventory (TEI; Kelly, Heffer, Gresham, & Elliot, 1989)-Short Form which was completed by parents during session 3 of the program, and then again in session 6.

The first parent group consisted of 5 families of children in grades 2 through 6 (mean age of 10 years) with ADHD who demonstrated substantial homework difficulties. Four of the

families were Caucasian and one was African American, all of whom were of middle to upper-middle socioeconomic status. Results indicated marked reductions in homework problems from pretreatment to posttreatment, with mean HPC scores of 31.2 at pretreatment being reduced to a mean HPC score of 15.6 at posttreatment (standardized HPC scores range from 0 to 60, with a mean of 10.5 and a standard deviation of 8.0). This reflected a reduction in parent-reported homework difficulties of about 2 standard deviations. Homework completion rates as indicated by daily logs showed very little improvement (an increase from 94% to 99%) due to very high pretreatment levels. The mean percentage of homework accuracy increased from 72% at pretreatment to 83% at posttreatment. Finally, the group demonstrated essentially no change on the Academic Productivity subscale of the APRS (Power et al., 2001). In regards to impact on family functioning, a moderate reduction in parent-child conflict was reported on the CBQ and no change was reported on levels of family stress on the PSI. The acceptability of the program was found to be high at both midtreatment and posttreatment on the TEI, with midtreatment group mean scores of 34.6 and posttreatment scores of 33.4 (scores range from 0 to 45, with high scores indicating greater acceptability).

The second parent group participating in the empirical study consisted of 4 families of children in grades 2 through 6 (mean age of 10 years) with ADHD who demonstrated substantial homework difficulties. Three of the families were Caucasian and one was African American, all of whom were also of middle to upper-middle socioeconomic status. Results indicated that the second group also demonstrated marked reductions in parent-reported homework problems from pretreatment to posttreatment, with a mean HPC score of 27.0 at pretreatment being reduced to a mean HPC score of 13.0 at posttreatment. Similar to the first group, improvements in homework completion rates were again found to be negligible due to a ceiling effect. The mean percentage

of homework accuracy for the second group increased from a pretreatment level of 91% to a posttreatment level of 97%, again demonstrating a ceiling effect. No changes in academic performance were indicated on the APRS from pretreatment to posttreatment (Power et al., 2001).

While the results of these small studies yielded promising results in regards to reducing parent-reported homework problems as indicated by the HPC, pretreatment rates of homework completion and homework accuracy were so high that any potential for improvement would be slight and in most cases not significant due to ceiling effects. However, since the HSP was designed for children with ADHD, the focus of the intervention appears to be more concerned with addressing ADHD related symptoms that interfere with homework behaviors rather than actual academic performance. Further, the authors acknowledged that more rigorous empirical studies should be conducted to validate program effectiveness.

Shortly after publication of the Homework Success Program (HSP: Power et al., 2001), Power, Russell, Soffer, Blom-Hoffman, & Grim (2002) then introduced the Family School Success program (FSS), a 13-session group parent-training program designed for children with ADHD in grades 1 through 6, which was an extension of the 7-session HSP. The FSS addresses problems that span the home and school environments and that are related to academic performance. The goals of the FSS program are to build collaborative family-school relationships, reduce homework problems and improve rates of homework completion, accuracy, and efficiency, improve academic skills and academic performance, increase the proportion of time that children are engaged in educational and interactive activities in the home, and reduce parent-child conflict (Power et al., 2002). Family-school partnerships are established and guidance to parents and teachers are offered through the steps of CBC (i.e., problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation, and plan evaluation). Parents and teachers

also work collaboratively to design a daily report card and to identify target homework interventions (Power, Soffer, Mautone, Costigan, Jones, Clark, & Marshall, 2009). The essential components of the 13-week FSS program are outlined in Appendix C.

The authors of the Family-School Success program (FSS) described a number of program features as being evidence based approaches to group parent-training. First, to prevent premature termination from treatment, families are screened carefully prior to intervention to determine their readiness for change. Second, the program is designed to build family-school partnerships through guided family-school collaboration. Third, children are included in treatment through participation in a concurrent child group that introduces children to the intervention strategies presented in the parent group through developmentally appropriate and recreational experiences Power et al. (2002) also stated that the FSS utilizes a number of empirically supported intervention strategies that have been used with children with ADHD to improve family relationships, reduce conflict, improve learning, improve family-school relationships, and improve homework accuracy and completion. Last, similar to the HSP, assessment tools are recommended to evaluate program effectiveness across the domains of homework performance, academic skills, parent-child interaction, and family involvement in education using multiple informants and methods (i.e. parent, teacher, and child rating scales; curriculum-based assessment of reading, math, and spelling skills; timed homework samples scored for work efficiency, and school grades).

Study 2-Group. While clinical trials directly examining the effectiveness of the FSS are reported to be underway, they have not yet been published (Powers, personal communication, 2011). However, Power et al. (2009) did implement the FSS program as one of two treatments for children with ADHD being compared to assess levels of teacher investment in collaborative

home-school interventions. In this study, seven FSS group cohorts were conducted. The number of families per group ranged from 3 to 9, with a mean of 6.4 families. Forty-four teachers also participated in the intervention. The FSS intervention included three formats: (a) parent group meetings (6 sessions) held simultaneously with separate child group sessions; (b) individualized family therapy (4 sessions) including the parents and child; and (c) family-school consultations (2 sessions) held at the school, including parents and teachers. Sessions were held on a weekly basis. Initial sessions lasted 3 hours, with subsequent group sessions lasting about 90 minutes. Individualized family sessions lasted 60 minutes and each school session was 45 minutes in duration. Two phone conferences between the clinician and the teacher (10 minutes each) were also conducted to monitor the child's progress and to modify interventions as needed.

Children were actively involved in the intervention and attended all sessions, except for two meetings that were held in the school. While the parents were attending group sessions, their children attended a group that was designed to introduce them to the strategies being taught to their parents. Clinicians conducted group sessions and were responsibile for working with families in individualized family sessions and school-based sessions. In addition, three clinical assistants were assigned to work with the child groups.

Results of this study of teacher investment as they pertained to the FSS program indicated that the level of teacher involvement was inversely related to student grade level for teachers participating in the FSS treatment condition. The findings suggested that involving teachers in interventions that entail a substantial amount of family-school collaboration such as FSS can become increasingly challenging as students advance in their schooling (Power et al., 2009). Therefore, practitioners may need to invest more effort in engaging teachers in the upper elementary and middle school grade levels than in the lower grades when implementing

collaborative home-school interventions involving group parent training with a daily report card component. The results of this study also confirmed that level of teacher involvement in intervention is associated with the degree of family-school collaboration, as longitudinal relationship variables indicated that the level of family-school collaboration prior to intervention may be predictive of the degree of teacher investment in intervention (Power et al., 2009). Therefore, obtaining information about the degree of family-school collaboration prior to intervention was suggested as being highly useful in determining whether it will be challenging to engage teachers in intervention, which would then merit additional consultation and support throughout the intervention period.

Both the Homework Success Program (HSP; Power, 2001) and the Family-School Success program (FSS; Power, 2002) are promising CBC-based group parent-training interventions for children with ADHD struggling with homework problems. Although these interventions have been firmly grounded in theoretical rationale, empirical evidence supporting these programs appears to be very limited. Therefore, more research examining the effectiveness of these programs should be conducted to establish the value of their application.

Study 3-Group. Beck and Fish (2012) recently conducted a study investigating the effectiveness of a 5-week group-formatted parent training program aimed at enhancing the homework performance of children experiencing homework difficulties. The program, entitled the Homework Improvement Program (HIP), was designed to be a homework intervention for general education students struggling with homework problems that could be practically applied within school settings. To accomplish this, the program was developed to be administered in a group format to maximize time, space, and effort. In accordance with the empirically supported conjoint behavioral consultation (CBC) model for homework interventions, emphasis was placed

on the importance of home-school communication. Accordingly, an online Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) was developed as a component of the program through which parents were provided a direct avenue of communication with their child's teacher to augment intervention efficiency. The EDRC also informed parents of their child's homework assignments, instructions, and teacher expectations on a daily basis, and served as a data collection tool through which parents could be provided with regular program feedback. The EDRC attempted to address limitations of previous home-school communication methods while maximizing efficiency and minimizing teacher obligation.

The study was conducted in a public elementary school with the parents and teachers of 7 students (N=7, 3 girls, 4 boys, ages 9.4 - 10.7 years) in grades 4 and 5 who were nominated by their teachers as having significant homework difficulties. Results of a comparison of pre and post-intervention scores on the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC; Anesko et al., 1987) indicated a decrease in overall homework problems. Improvements were noted for all participants, with 71% reported to be at or below the national average of homework problems for gender and grade level upon completion of the program on the HPC. Standard scores on the HPC for the remaining participants all dropped more than one full standard deviation, indicating a substantial decrease in the frequency and intensity of parent reported homework problems. This supported the overall effectiveness of the program as a viable homework intervention.

Rates of homework completion were collected on a daily basis over the course of the 5 week intervention through use of the EDRC software program. Results revealed that homework was consistently completed throughout the intervention for all participants with 4th graders reported having fully completed their homework assignments 85.5% of the time, and with most of the assignments (at least 75%) being completed the remaining 14.5% of the time. Completion

rates were even higher for 5th grade students with entire assignments completed 96% of the time and most of the assignments (at least 75%) being completed the remaining 4% of the time. This indicated that students consistently completed their homework every night during the intervention, and completed most, but usually all, of the homework assigned them throughout the duration of the study.

Measures of homework accuracy revealed mixed results. In Reading, accuracy rates improved, although homework grades prior to the intervention were particularly poor due to low rates of completion. Math grades appeared to be a better measure of accuracy in this particular setting. Results yielded slight improvements in homework assignment grades for 4th graders, as indicated by average scores on assignments from pre and post intervention (72.5% to 77.7%), and a slight decrease in assignment grades from pre to post intervention for 5th graders (92% to 88%). Nonetheless, the accuracy rates attained upon completion of the study were considered acceptable for the participants who were typically experiencing academic failure prior to the intervention which, when combined with the high rates of homework completion, were likely to result in passing and even above average term grades for homework.

Measures of time spent on homework revealed that 5th graders completed the majority of their homework assignments within 30 minutes (70% of the time), and spent more than 45 minutes on assignments only 16% of the time. When considering the very high rates of homework completion and accuracy of 5th graders, it appeared that 5th graders made efficient use of the time they devoted to homework. Students in 4th grade spent more than 30 minutes on assignments 60.7% of the time, and they spent more than 45 minutes on assignments 27.3% of the time. This suggested that 4th graders made less efficient use of time devoted to homework than their 5th grade counterparts. These differences did not appear to be due to levels of parent

involvement, as parents of both 4th and 5th grade students reported helping their children with homework slightly less than half of the time (47.5% of the time, and 40% of the time, respectively). The finding that children who spent less time on homework performed better on measures of homework completion and accuracy is consistent with literature on homework which indicates that students who make more efficient use of homework time achieve higher overall academic outcomes (Cooper et al., 1998; Cooper et al., 2006; Keith & DeGraff, 1997). This is important because one of the aims of the of the Homework Improvement Program was to maximize the use of time devoted to homework, not to increase the time spent attempting to do it.

Measures of social validity indicated that participants reported a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the program, as all parents reported that they enjoyed the program and benefited from participating in it, and that they would recommend the program to a friend. All parents also reported an improved relationship with their child, and reported having made positive changes to their parenting practices. All parents reported that they would continue to implement strategies taught during parent training following program completion. Further, all parents reported the EDRC to be a helpful educational tool.

Recommendations for future research included staggering the use of the EDRC intermittently following completion of the intervention, whereby students would be unaware of when their parents had full knowledge of their homework assignments. This might motivate students to accurately record assignments, which could be a viable approach to aid in the development of self-monitoring skills, another long term goal of the program. It was also recommended that future studies include follow-up data to determine if the techniques offered in the program

continued to be implemented, and to see if the gains made by participants lasted beyond intervention completion.

With improvements reported for all participants as measured by the HPC and high rates of homework completion and treatment satisfaction, it was concluded that the CBC based group-formatted Homework Improvement Program and the EDRC are potentially viable homework interventions that could be administered within school settings with general student populations in need of academic support. The 5 session Homework Improvement Program is outlined in Appendix D.

Study Goals and Expectations

The literature reviewed has consistently shown that the assignment of homework is a very common practice which is directly related to academic success. Homework is also one of the most problematic components of schooling and a source of great difficulty and frustration for students, parents, and teachers. Research on homework interventions strongly supports the effectiveness of parent involvement in education, as establishing home-school collaboration and enhancing the role of parents in the homework process directly improves both homework performance and overall academic achievement. Fittingly, parent-training has received consistent empirical support, as students whose parents participate in parent training interventions demonstrate considerably higher rates of homework completion and exhibit significantly fewer homework problems (Chronis, Chacko, Fabiano, Wymbs, & Pelham, 2004; Corkum, McKinnon, & Mullane, 2005; Patall et al., 2008). Studies involving interventions applying both individual and group parent-training formats that apply a multisystemic model to intervention development have yielded promising results and suggest that research supporting parent-training interventions is applicable to a wide range of student populations. Further, parent-training has

been deemed to meet the American Psychological Association's Division 53 criteria for a well-established, evidence-based treatment (Corkum et al., 2005; Lonigan, Elbert, & Johnson, 1998). Therefore, the question now is not whether parent training is effective, but rather how can parent-training programs be refined and improved to enhance practicality and increase generalization of skills, particularly with regard to homework performance and academic functioning in the school setting (Brestan & Eyberg, 1998; Corkum et al., 2005).

Accordingly, based upon CBC principles and recommendations for group-formatted administration proposed in the Power et al. (2001) training manual, and supported by primary pilot trials (Beck & Fish, 2011), a group-formatted parent training program has been developed to address the needs of general education students struggling with homework problems. The program, entitled the Homework Improvement Program (HIP: Beck & Fish, 2011), is designed to be implemented within a school setting with the parents and teachers of upper elementary school students. This also included devising an enhanced method of home-school communication, which is an essential component of ecologically based interventions and is typically included in parent based programs.

Home-school communication methods are not without problems, as parents can feel that many forms of parent-teacher communication are not clear enough or frequent enough to be helpful (Harniss et al., 2001). Even structured methods of daily parent-teacher assignment monitoring, such as having children bring a daily planner, daily monitoring sheet (Sirvani,2007), homework log (Rhoades & Kratochwill, 1998) or homework assignment book (Power et al., 2001) to and from school, to be signed by the teacher and parent, are problematic. Such approaches place a great deal of responsibility on the student to remember to have all parties check and sign the monitoring tool and not to misplace it or leave it at school, either accidentally

or intentionally. These problems can be compounded for older students who have multiple teachers, multiple subjects, and multiple homework assignments each day. Further, if an assignment book is lost or forgotten at school, the structure of the homework intervention is directly interrupted.

To address these issues, an online Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) has been developed to create an avenue through which parents receive nightly homework assignments and instructions directly from their child's teachers. The EDRC also provides daily opportunities for unobstructed parent-teacher communication, as parents can link directly with teachers via the online venue. Further, when using the EDRC, parents respond to brief rubric-based inquiries regarding their interactions with their children during homework assignments. This offers daily reminders of techniques reviewed during parent training sessions, encourages greater adherence to program strategies, and allows for daily progress monitoring that will be shared with parents during sessions to show improvements and to inspire continued program compliance.

The purpose of this study was to implement and evaluate the 5 week group-formatted parent training HIP program for parents of children having homework difficulties using a pre-post treatment research design. The program's overall effectiveness was be examined by measuring three outcome variables: homework completion, homework behavior, and treatment satisfaction.

Data on changes in rates of homework completion were collected, as this variable has repeatedly been shown to be critical component related to overall academic outcomes (Callahan et al., 1998; Cooper et al., 1998; Cooper et al., 2006; Keith & DeGraff, 1997). Rates of homework completion and use of time devoted to homework practices was measured through

nightly parent completion of the online Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC), which was completed by participants for 20 consecutive school days in which homework was assigned. Change in problematic homework behavior was assessed through parental reports of problem type and severity from pre-treatment to post-treatment and at follow-up. To accomplish this, parents completed the Homework Problem Checklist (HPC; Anesko et al., 1987), which measures parent perceptions of the intensity and frequency of children's homework problems and is sensitive to changes in behavior. The HPC has been selected as it is the most widely used empirically supported parent report measure of homework problems and has been considered one of the only available objective measures of its kind (Pendergast, & Watkins, 2009).

Data regarding participant's level of satisfaction with the services they received were collected upon completion of the program through parent questionnaires. Participant satisfaction is also an important aspect of intervention effectiveness, as treatment satisfaction has been shown to be related to parent adherence to intervention techniques as well as to overall program effectiveness beyond that which can be demonstrated through statistical significance (Kelly et al., 2007; Toney et al., 2003).

It was hypothesized that rates of homework completion would increase through participation in the intervention. It was also hypothesized that parents would report a decrease in the intensity and frequency of problematic homework behavior at home from pre to post measures. Finally, it was anticipated that study participants would express satisfaction with the services provided. Specifically, it was expected that participants would report the intervention to be a positive and beneficial experience, and that teachers would report the time and effort they devoted to the intervention to be feasible and practical.

Purpose of Current Research Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if a parent-training program that employs a group-training format could be implemented to effectively enhance the homework completion rates for general education elementary students exhibiting poor homework performance. The program incorporated the use of behavioral parent training models that have been shown to effectively enhance homework performance in students deemed at-risk for failure, while also offering the therapeutic benefits and practicality of a group format. This program also included the use of online daily report card procedures, which served to enhance home-school collaboration between teachers and parents via the internet. This program was designed to be implemented over a relatively short period of time, to be cost effective, and to offer parents valuable insight into behavioral intervention techniques aimed at improving parent-child relations, augmenting parent-teacher rapport, building self-esteem, and enhancing student's scholastic performance throughout their academic careers. Specifically, the research questions regarding intervention effectiveness were:

Research Questions

1. What effect will parent participation in a structured group parent-training program have on the homework completion rates of students deemed as having significant homework difficulties due to poor work completion?
2. What effect will parent participation in a structured group parent-training program have on parent reports of the intensity and frequency of homework problems occurring within the home setting?
3. Will parents report participation in a structured group parent-training program to be beneficial to their child's academic development?

Hypotheses

1. Parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program will increase the rates of homework completion of elementary school students deemed as having significant homework difficulties.
2. Parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program will decrease the reported intensity and frequency of homework problems as measured by a standardized parent rating scale.
3. Parents will be satisfied with their participation in the group parent-training program and report program participation to be beneficial to their child's academic development as indicated by parent reports on social validity questionnaires.

Chapter 3-Methodology

Participants

Study participants consisted of the parents and teachers of seven elementary school students (N=7) in grades 5 and 6 who were nominated by their teachers as having significant homework difficulties. Children ranged in age from 10 years, 5 month to 12 years, 3 months old, with a mean age of 11 years, 3 months (SD-.785). Of the students in the study, 5 were boys and 2 were girls. Homework was defined as assignments given by teachers for completion outside of the typical class period (Keith & DeGraff, 1997). "Significant difficulties" was defined as: Returning less than 60% of homework assignments for a period of at least 4 weeks prior to selection as reported by the student's teacher (Rhoades & Kratochwill, 1998). Homework for all academic subject areas was included in the study.

Students were not included in the study if they had a documented history of an identified learning disability or otherwise disabling condition reflected in their educational records. Due to the technical nature of the intervention, all participants were required to have regular access to the internet.

All of the students participating in the study were represented by one biological parent who attended group parent training meetings. Parent group participants consisted of 5 females (mothers) and 2 males (fathers). A total of 5 teachers participated in the study and represented all of the student's academic subject areas, including 3 fifth grade teachers and 2 sixth grade teachers.

The intervention studied was conducted in a public elementary school in an urban school district in New Jersey. The school district serves 4435 students, providing both general education and special education services in grades preK-12. Demographic data indicate that the school district consists primarily of "Latino" students, with 2, 301 students, or 51.89% of the student

population identified as being “Latino” in origin. There are 1, 196 students, or 26.96% of the student population who identify as “White.” A total of 379 students, or 8.54% of the student population are identified as “African American”, while 554 students, or 12.48% of the population identify themselves as “Asian.” There are also 6 students, or 0.12% of the student population identified as being of “Native American” descent.

Measures

The Homework Problems Checklist. The Homework Problems Checklist **(**HPC; Anesko et al., 1987) lists 20 statements about problems that may arise when a student completes homework. Examples of the items include "denies having homework assignment," "procrastinates, puts off doing homework," and "fails to complete homework." For each statement, the respondent is asked to judge the frequency of occurrence using a 4-point scale ranging from never (0), at times (1), often (2), and very often (3). Total checklist scores can range from zero to a maximum of 60 points (i.e., a rating of very often on each of the 20 items). The HPC was completed by parents for each student. A sample of the HPC is included in the Homework Improvement Program manual and is represented in Appendix E 16.

The HPC was initially developed from a review of the literature on parenting as well as from interviews with parents, teachers, and mental health personnel who work with children. The validity, internal consistency, and norms of the checklist were evaluated and found to meet appropriate psychometric standards in a previous study with non-handicapped elementary-school students (Anesko et al., 1987). Specifically, the authors found that the parent ratings of students differentiated between students labeled as below average, average, and above average in homework performance. Also a Cronbach alpha score of .91 was reported for the entire scale, indicating a high degree of internal consistency (Epstein, 1995). Standard scores reported on the HPC by parents during the pretest phase will be used to assess the student’s homework

performance prior to the implementation of any experimental conditions. Standard scores provided by parents on the HPC during the posttest phase will serve to measure the dependent variable of homework improvement measured by change from pre to post test.

Homework Completion. Rates of homework completion were reported on a four-point rubric with 4= The Whole Assignment was Completed (100%), 3= Most of the Assignment was Completed (75%-99%), 2= Some of the Assignment was Completed (25%-74%), 1= Little was Complete (0%-24%). Homework completion data was collected from classroom teachers using this format for two weeks prior to beginning the homework intervention and served as a baseline measure of rates of homework completion. Upon initiation of the parent-training intervention, rates of homework completion for each student was then collected through parent completion of the Electronic Daily Report Card (E-DRC) using an identical rubric format. Data following this 4-point rubric was then collected via the EDRC everyday throughout the 5-week study, and then again at a 4-week follow up.

Time Spent on Homework. Parents rated the amount of time their children spent on homework assignments in accordance with a five-point rubric with 5= More than 60 Minutes, 4= 46-60 Minutes, 3= 31-45 Minutes, 2= 16-30 Minutes, and 1= Less than 15 Minutes. Data regarding the amount of time that each student spent on homework for each assignment was collected through nighty parent completion of the EDRC. This measure provided insight into changes in student's academic behaviors throughout participation in the parent-training program and provided consistent performance feedback to participating parents.

Level of Parental Involvement. Parents rated their level of involvement on each of their child's homework assignments on the EDRC throughout the study in accordance with a three-point rubric with 3= I helped my child with more than half of the last assignment, 2= I helped my

child with less than half of the last assignment, and 1= I did not need to help my child with the last assignment. This measure also offered insight into changes in academic behaviors including levels of autonomy throughout participation in the parent-training program. Ongoing assessment of the amount of parental involvement that students require on homework for each student was conducted through parent completion of the Electronic Daily Report Card and provided consistent performance feedback to participating parents.

Consumer Satisfaction/Social Validation. Parents completed a consumer satisfaction questionnaire upon completion of the 5 week group parent-training program. This included rubric-formatted questions regarding overall satisfaction with the program, Use of the Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC), and use of the recommended Homework Routine and Point System. Open ended questions regarding suggestion for program improvement were included. Quantitative results to rubric-formatted questions are reported as percentages, and pertinent open-ended recommendations are directly stated qualitatively. A sample of the consumer satisfaction questionnaire is included in the Homework Improvement Program Manual and is represented in Appendix E 16.

Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC). The Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) was developed as an efficient means through which regular parent-teacher communication could be conducted online, thereby addressing some of the shortcomings associated with similar paper and pencil procedures. The EDRC minimized the burden on participating teachers compared to paper and pencil counterparts. Last, the EDRC was formatted to be a data collection tool, through which nightly data was collected directly from participants. To accomplish this, surveymonkey.com, an online survey software program, was modified to be used as a electronic daily report card.

Each school day, teachers emailed their homework assignments to the program facilitator. This included any necessary homework instructions and the maximum amount of time that should be spent on an assignment. The homework assignment and corresponding information was then entered into the EDRC template, which was formatted by grade. The EDRC template included the homework assignment and instructions (modified daily), followed by 4 brief questions through which parents were able to select only one answer from a rubric. These 4 questions asked parents to provide information regarding rates of homework completion, the amount of parental involvement needed, the amount of time spent on each assignment, and whether or not the parent needed to contact the teacher about the assignment. Email links offering direct online contact with classroom teachers and with the program facilitator were also be included in the EDRC. Parents received the EDRC each day through their email accounts within a half an hour of the end of each school day. Parents received nightly assignments and answered the 4 rubric-based EDRC questions. They then simply click a button labeled "done" and the student homework survey results were submitted to the EDRC software. The EDRC was sent out in a different color each day to enhance interest and to differentiate from the previous night. An example of the EDRC template is included in the Homework Improvement Program manual and is represented in Appendix E 16.

Homework Improvement Program. A five-session parent training program designed to enhance homework accuracy and completion was developed. Sessions were held once per week on 5 consecutive Monday nights and lasted approximately 60 minutes (i.e. 6:30pm to 7:30pm). Many components of the program were adopted from the Homework Success Program for children with ADHD (Kartusis, Habbouse, Leff, Eiraldi, Power, 1999, & Power et al. 2001), and a parent training program developed by Rhoades and Kratochwill (1998). Numerous

modifications to these programs were made to address the needs of the general education population being sampled in this study.

The group parent-training program devised for this study was structured into a manual format. Each of the 5 sessions was outlined with an overview of the session, specific goals to be accomplished, instructional guidelines, theoretical foundations, research findings, and background information supporting each tenet to be presented. Homework for parents was also outlined for each session. Power Point presentations for each session were also included. Parent worksheets through which parents can practice skills offered, and handouts reviewing the major principles of each session were also included in the manual. For a general overview of the 5 session program please see Appendix D. The Homework Improvement Program manual is represented in its entirely in Appendix E.

Each group parent-training session began with a discussion of student progress, continuing problematic homework areas, and a review of between-session assignments. The remainder of each session was then spent addressing specific main topics for the week. This included didactic training of behavioral principles and techniques, and group discussions of experiences. At the end of each session parents were given "Parent Homework" assignments that were related to the particular topic addressed during the session. The following is a brief overview of the six-session group parent training program. Please refer to the training manual for a complete review of the parent training program.

Session 1. Session 1 began with a rapport building exercise. An introduction to program goals and guidelines for the group sessions was then offered. Baseline data was collected and then parents were offered information about the importance of homework, research findings regarding homework completion, and the importance of limiting time spent on homework.

Online daily report card (DRC) procedures and method of recording homework assignments were then introduced. Guidelines for giving effective instructions to children were also be outlined.

Session 2. Session 2 was designed to introduce behavioral modification strategies to parents. Parents were offered guidance in identifying target behaviors and antecedents that may contribute to homework difficulties. Strategies were offered to help them identify specific problematic patterns of behavior including instruction on the A-B-C (i.e., Antecedent, Behavior, Consequences) approach to behavior modification. This involved assisting parents in identifying antecedents and consequences that may be triggering and maintaining target behaviors. The context in which children complete homework was examined including the "when, where, and what of homework" which was referred to as the "homework routine."

Session 3. Session 3 served to bring together all of the elements of behavioral parent training and child self-management of homework in through which parents developed a point system (token economy) for their children. This included the development of individual reward menus to accompany the token economy/point system. Specific types of positive reinforcers including parental attention, praise, privileges and tangible rewards were reviewed.

Session 4. Session 4 offered parents the opportunity to fine tune the point systems and rewards menus developed for their children. The role of positive reinforcement was reviewed. Parents were also assisted in developing time management and goal-setting skills with their children whereby they could better help their children self-evaluate their own homework performance. At the end of this session parents were expected to possess the full repertoire of skills and knowledge needed to implement a complete the point-based behavior modification system. The principles and techniques of positive reinforcement, and the use of consequences

and punishment techniques to increase desired behaviors in accordance with an A-B-C behavioral model were emphasized.

Session 5. Session 5 was the final session. Parents were invited to review the information and materials provided during the parent training program. Assistance developing individualized homework plans was offered to ensure that parents continued to implement homework strategies contoured to their children's needs. Lastly, outcome data will be obtained, as parents completed the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC) and the satisfaction questionnaire. Upon completion of these measures parents were then awarded a certificate of completion.

Procedure

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Graduate Center of the City University of new York. This IRB had previously approved a pilot of this program of similar design to this study. This study did not pose any threats to the research participants involved, as data collection was be done in the participants natural environment. Written consent was obtained from all parents and teachers who participated in the study. The specific hypotheses being tested were be shared. Upon completion of this study, all participants were granted access to the results at no cost.

The study was conducted in a public elementary school in an urban school district in New Jersey consisting primarily of families of lower-middle and working class socioeconomic status. A pilot of this study was conducted in the fall of 2010 and was well received by all stakeholders. As a result, the school district requested that the program be run again during the following school year. Further, teachers had expressed an interest in participating in future administrations of the homework program. Therefore, a request to conduct the proposed study was made to the Superintendent of the school district supported by the requests of a School Principal and voluntary participation by the classroom teachers. The Principal Investigator who conducted this

study was not an employee of the school in which the study was conducted and was not involved with any participants or school faculty outside of the interests of the research study.

Invitations to participate in the study were extended to all classroom teachers from grades 4 through 6 in the public elementary school in which the study was conducted. Interested teachers were then contacted via email. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. Once the five participating teachers were identified and informed about study requirements, they then identified potential students who met study requirements. The parents of the students selected by the participating teachers as potential candidates for the study were then sent a flyer describing the study and indicating that their child's teacher had recommended that they may benefit from participation. The flyer was sent home in a sealed envelope with the students. After having been initially notified through receipt of the flyer, parents were then contacted by telephone and asked if they were interested in participating in the five-session parent-training program. Initial parent contact followed the guidelines of a formal recruitment script. The structure, expectations, and purpose of the study were fully disclosed. Written consent was then obtained from all parents and teachers interested in participating in the study, and the specific hypotheses being tested were openly shared with all participants.

Group training sessions were held on Mondays beginning in the second week in November for 5 weeks from 6:30pm to 7:30pm in the school library of the participating elementary school. School facilities were opened for parents at 6:00pm, at which time they were welcomed to enter the school building with their children and have some refreshments in the school cafeteria. At 6:30pm parents then entered the school library. Seats were arranged in a semi-circle format facing a projection screen where the weekly Power Point presentation was displayed. Parents were free to select any seat from the pre-arranged seats. Upon entering the

group session Parents were given hand-outs for that week to be added to a cumulative binder which, upon completion of the program, included all handouts, worksheets, and copies of all Power Point presentations. Once all hand-outs had been given to parents, the group session commenced.

While parents attended the group parent-training sessions, their children were in a nearby classroom where childcare was provided by 3 Graduate Research Assistants. At the end of each session parents and children met in the school cafeteria where dinner and refreshments were served to all participants. This was financed by the lead researcher.

Data were collected at multiple points throughout the study. Once the study had begun, rates of homework completion were reported on a four-point rubric with 4= The Whole Assignment was Completed (100%), 3= Most of the Assignment was Completed (75%-99%), 2= Some of the Assignment was Completed (25%-74%), 1= Little was Complete (0%-24%). Homework completion data were collected from classroom teachers using this format for two weeks prior to beginning the homework intervention and served as a baseline measure of rates of homework completion. Upon initiation of the parent-training intervention, rates of homework completion for each student were then collected through parent completion of the Electronic Daily Report Card (E-DRC) using an identical rubric format. Data following this 4-point rubric were then collected via the EDRC everyday throughout the 5-week study, and then again at a 4-week follow up.

During the first group parent-training session parents were asked to give informed consent to participate in the study by signing a consent form approved by the IRB. Once informed consent had been obtained, participants were then asked to complete the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC) as a baseline measure. Parents were instructed to complete the

Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) for each night that their child had homework following the first group parent-training session. Data obtained from the EDRC served to inform results. Parents completed an HPC rating scale upon completion of every weekly group parent-training session which served as an indication of treatment effectiveness. After completing the HPC during the final session, parents then completed a treatment satisfaction questionnaire. It was explained to parents during the last group parent-training session that they would be contacted in 4 weeks and asked to complete one more HPC checklist to monitor progress. Four weeks after having completed the group parent-training program, an additional HPC was then sent home to parents to be completed as a follow-up measure. This HPC was placed in a sealed envelope and sent home with the students. Parents were also sent an email reminder to complete the HPC that had been sent home, with instructions on sending it back to school in a sealed envelope that had been provided to them. Included in this email, parents were also asked if they would like to receive study results via email.

For participating families, both parents of a child were invited to attend the group sessions together, or individually. However, it was essential that at least one parent of each participating family was in attendance at each session. In the event that a parent had to miss a training session, they were contacted by the program facilitator, whom they then met with individually to review materials that had been missed. If more than one session was missed, parents were no longer included in the study and no longer received the EDRC.

The lead researched also served as the program facilitator. The program facilitator is a nationally certified school psychologist and doctoral student in school psychology with more than 13 years of experience working in schools. The role of program facilitator involved multiple responsibilities including conducting the group parent-training session in accordance with the

program manual. The program facilitator ensured that all facilities where groups were held were equipped to meet the needs of the program, including provisions for space and staff for childcare. Catering of events, the provision of all materials (handouts, binders, pens, etc.), and ensuring that all electronic equipment (computers, projectors, internet modems) are prepared for group meetings were all the responsibility of the program facilitator.

The program facilitator was also responsible for maintenance of the EDRC. At the end of each school day, participating teachers would email their homework assignments and any pertinent information that needed to be shared with parents regarding homework or upcoming activities or tests to the program facilitator. The program facilitator then input the information provided by the teachers into the appropriate EDRC template, which was distinguished by grade. Once the pertinent information was incorporated into the EDRC template for each day, the program facilitator then electronically sent the EDRC to the appropriate list serve as delineated by grade. Each daily EDRC was also sent to the program facilitator, which required establishing a secondary email address included on each list serve. This allowed the program facilitator to monitor daily delivery of the EDRC both through the EDRC software, as well as through emailed receipt. In the event that a parent's email address rejected the EDRC, the program facilitator would then forward the self-sent ERDC received by the program facilitator's secondary email account directly to any parents who did not receive it. If for any reason a single teacher failed to email a nightly assignment to the program facilitator, the program facilitator contacted them via email or by phone to retrieve the assignment and disseminate the homework information. If a teacher could not be reached, an EDRC was sent to parents informing them that their child's teacher did not send an assignment to the program facilitator on that day. In the event that a teacher was absent, other participating teachers informed the program facilitator of

the teacher's absence and forwarded any pertinent information regarding homework or classroom activities via email. The teacher's absence and any relevant information provided to the program facilitator, including the nightly homework assignment was then shared with parents on the EDRC for that day.

Initial debriefing of results for parents was conducted at the end of the last group parent-training session. After having completed outcome measures during the last group parent-training session (HPC, treatment satisfaction questionnaire), data collected through the EDRC reflecting rates of homework completion, time spent on homework, levels of parent involvement in homework, and percentage of parent-teacher contact were shared with parents. After collecting follow-up data, parents who indicated an interest in receiving study results were offered the results via email. After follow-up data had been obtained and analyzed, the School Principal and the Superintendent of Schools were provided with a written report summarizing the results of the study. Teachers were met with as a group and debriefed of results in person. Small gifts (e.g. thank you cards with gift cards) were then given to them at the time of debriefing to thank them for their participation.

Data Analysis

Percentage of Non-Overlapping Data (PND*)*. The Percent of Non-overlapping Data technique (PND) is a commonly used method for analyzing data in single-subject designs where performance after treatment is compared to baseline performance before treatment (Parker & Hagan-Burke, 2007). For each individual subject, the number of data points in the intervention phase that are lower than the lowest data point in the baseline phase is determined. The number of points lower than the lowest baseline point is then divided by the total number of data points in the intervention phase. This number is then multiplied by 100 to obtain a percentage of non-

overlapping data points for each individual subject. Higher percentage scores reflect more efficacious interventions, with values of 90% or higher reflecting Highly Effective interventions; values of 70% to under 89.9% reflecting Moderately Effective interventions; values from 50% to 69.9% reflecting Questionably Effective interventions; and values below 50% reflecting Ineffective interventions (Ma, 2006).

A PND analysis of rates of homework completion was collected from baseline though intervention completion and follow-up. The number of days in each school week varied depending upon the school calendar, and there were also days where no homework was assigned. Therefore, the mean rates of homework completion for each week were calculated for comparative purposes. Baseline rates were represented by the average completion rates of 2 days of homework performance as reported by classroom teachers for two weeks prior to the intervention. This was done in order to satisfy the requirements of the PND approach which necessitates that a minimum of 3 data points be evident in the baseline condition. Since there data was collected during the baseline condition for an even number of days across the two week period (8), four data points were reflected by the means of each two-day period. During the intervention phase, average weekly completion rates of EDRC parent ratings were calculated. Follow-up completion rates reflect data obtained four weeks following intervention completion.

Homework Completion Rates Percentage of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND). Similar to the Percentage of Non-Overlapping Data (PND) technique, the Percentage of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND) technique is a method for analyzing data in single-subject designs where performance after treatment is compared to performance before treatment. Like the PND approach, PAND reflects non-overlapping data points between phases. It differs, however, in that it uses all data in both baseline and intervention phases, thereby avoiding any overemphasis on

one baseline point. Also, and perhaps more importantly, PAND can be translated into Phi, a Pearson's *r* for a 2x 2 contingency table with a known sampling distribution.

The Percentage of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND) technique was applied to the analysis of homework completion data to determine the effect size of the improvements in overall rates of homework completion as indicated by changes in mean homework completion rates from baseline (teacher data) through follow-up (EDRC data). To complete the PAND analysis of EDRC homework completion data, overlapping data points were calculated (as in PND procedures) from which the percentage of baseline and intervention points was determined. Using this overlap data, a 2 x 2 contingency table was developed in which higher and lower baseline and intervention points and their totals were tabulated to complete the Pearson Phi equation, which yields an effect size in regards to changes in rates of homework completion.

Visual Analyses of Parent Rated Measures. A visual analysis of parent rated data was conducted in order to assess changes in parents ratings of problematic homework behaviors from baseline, thorough intervention completion and follow-up. This included identifying changes in mean, changes in slope, and latency of change (Kazdin, 2003). Changes in mean were evaluated by determining if the mean rate of behavior showed a change from baseline to intervention in the expected direction for each measure. A change in slope refers to the tendency for data to show systematic increases or decreases over time. Changes in the direction of slope from baseline to intervention completion are indicative of a trend. Latency of change refers to the period between the onset or termination of one phase and changes in performance. It can be measured by visual inspection of the amount of time it takes before the intervention produces changes in slope or level (Kazdin, 2003). Finally, to further compare data across phases, the number of data points in

the treatment phase that fall into the range of the lowest (i.e., least severe) baseline data point was assessed (Kazdin, 1977).

Treatment Satisfaction/Social Validity. Parent responses to forced-choice questions (e.g. yes/no) were reported by percentage across all participants. Further, the percentage of time that parents communicated with their child's teacher was also calculated by percentage through EDRC responses, and results were reported. Responses to open-ended questions were reported qualitatively.

Chapter 4-Results

This chapter presents the findings of the study as they relate to the research questions. Descriptive statistics of the sample are provided. The results of all outcome measures are reported and applied data analysis procedures are described. Data regarding the parent-reported frequency and intensity of homework problems and rates of homework completion from baseline though follow-up are analyzed and tabulated using the Percentage of Non-overlapping Data (PND) technique. Effect sizes of these outcome measures are calculated and charted using the Percentage of All Non-overlapping Data (PAND) method. The results of parent responses to treatment satisfaction questionnaires are reported by percentage of responses, and qualitative data regarding participant responses and impressions are included.

Participants

The sample consisted of the parents of seven students (N=7) in grades five and six attending a public elementary school. Five of the students were boys (71.4%) and two were girls (28.6%). Students ranged in age from 10 years old to 12 years old, with a mean age of 11.13 years (SD-.785). Of the participating parents, five were mothers (71.4%) and two were fathers (28.6%). All participants were fluent English speakers. Since the study included an online component, at the start of the study parents were asked to report how frequently they checked email. Three of the parents (43%) reported that they checked email many times per day, three of the parents (43%) reported checking email at least once per day, and one parent (14%) reported checking email once or twice per week. Descriptive statistics of the sample are outlined in Table 1.

While full participation in all group-parent training sessions was strongly encouraged, parents were required to attend a minimum of 4 out of 5, or 80% of the group parent-training sessions in order to remain in the study. If a parent missed a single group-session, he/she was

provided with all session materials the day following the missed session. Then, the group facilitator individually met with the parent to review missed parent-training materials. Throughout the course of the study, 2 parents each missed 1 group session. Specifically, the parents of students D and F both missed the second group parent-training session. They accordingly met with the group facilitator to review the parent-training materials and did not miss any further sessions. Students were not included in the study if they had a documented history of an identified learning disability or otherwise disabling condition reflected in their educational records.

The intervention studied was conducted in a public elementary school in an urban school district in New Jersey. The school district serves 4435 students, providing both general education and special education services in grades preK-12. Demographic data indicates that the school district consists primarily of "Latino" students, with 2, 301 students, or 51.89% of the student population identified as being "Latino" in origin. There are 1, 196 students, or 26.96% of the student population who identify as "White." A total of 379 students, or 8.54% of the student population are identified as "African American", while 554 students, or 12.48% of the population identify themselves as "Asian." There are also 6 students, or 0.12% of the student population identified as being of "Native American" descent.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Sample

Student	Gender	Grade	Age	Parent Gender	Ethnicity	Primary Language
A	Male	5	10.7	Male	White/Caucasian	English
B	Male	5	10.11	Male	White/Caucasian	English
C	Male	5	10.9	Female	Hispanic	English
D	Female	5	10.5	Female	White/Caucasian	English
E	Male	5	12.2	Female	Hispanic	English
F	Female	6	12.3	Female	White/Caucasian	English
G	Male	5	10.9	Female	Hispanic	English

Child's Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	5	71.4
Female	2	28.6
Total	7	100.0

Child's Grade Level

Grade	Frequency	Percent
5th Grade	6	85.7
6th Grade	1	14.3
Total	7	100.0

Mean Child Age and Range

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Child's Age	7	10	12	11.13	.785
Valid N	7				

Parent Gender

Parent Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	2	28.6
Female	5	71.4
Total	7	100.0

Homework Completion

The first research questions asked what effect parent participation in a structured group parent-training program would have on the homework completion rates of students with significant homework difficulties due to poor work completion. Initial baseline rates of homework completion were established through data collected by classroom teachers using the 4 point rubric for a period of two weeks prior to beginning the intervention. During the intervention, ongoing rates of homework completion were determined through data obtained via parent completion of the Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC). Data regarding homework completion were collected for each night that homework was assigned during the five-week intervention, reflecting 18 total assignments. Homework completion data were also collected at follow-up four weeks after the intervention had been completed. Parents rated homework completion on a nightly basis in accordance with the following four-point rubric as outlined on the EDRC:

4- Whole Assignment was Completed (100%)

3- Most of the Assignment was Completed (75%-99%)

2- Some of the Assignment was Completed (25%-74%)

1- Little was Completed (< 25%)

Homework Completion Rates: Baseline/Pre-Intervention. Baseline data revealed that teachers reported that *Whole Assignment was Completed (100%)* on 41% of occasions during the 2 week baseline period, and reported that *Little was Completed (<25%)* the remaining 59% of the time. Four of the students were rated *Whole Assignment was Completed (100%)* half of the time, and were rated as *Little was Completed (<25%)* on the remaining occasions. One student was rated as *Whole Assignment was Completed (100%)* on 37.5% of occasions, and was rated as *Little was Completed (<25%)* the remaining 62.5% of the time. The 2 remaining students were

rated as *Whole Assignment was Completed (100%)* on 25% of occasions during the 2 week baseline period, and were rated as *Little was Completed (<25%)* the remaining 75% of the time. This data is reflected for each individual subject in Figures 1-3.

EDRC Homework Completion Data: Intervention Condition. An increase in rates of homework completion was seen for 6 of the 7 students during the first week of the intervention as compared to baseline. Of the 6 students who reported an increase in homework completion, all of them completed at least 75% of assigned homework every night during the first week, with 3 students completing 100% of their homework assignments.

By the second week of the intervention, all participants had shown improved rates of homework completion compared to baseline, with 5 of the 7 students completing 100% of their assignments, and the remaining 2 students completing at least 75% of the assignments given during the second week of the intervention. Stability in rates of homework completion was seen throughout the remainder of the intervention. Five of the participants consistently reported very high rates of homework completion as compared to baseline, while one student temporarily returned to baseline rates of completion during the fourth week of the intervention.

EDRC Homework Completion Data: Follow-Up. Follow-up data regarding homework completion rates were obtained from 6 of the 7 study participants, with the one participant who failed to provide HPC follow-up data also failing to provide EDRC follow-up data. The follow-up data revealed that rates of homework completion remained well above baseline for all participants, with 100% of assignments completed for 4 participants and at least 75% of homework assignments completed for the remaining 2 participants. It is noteworthy that these data were collected via online completion of the EDRC; the participant who failed to complete

follow-up data collection procedures reported using email less frequently than all other parents participating in the study.

Program Effectiveness: Percentage of Non-Overlapping Data (PND) Homework Completion. Data analysis of rates of homework completion collected from baseline though intervention completion and follow-up was conducted using the Percent of Non-overlapping Data technique (PND), a commonly used method for analyzing data in single-subject designs where performance after treatment is compared to baseline performance before treatment (Parker & Hagan-Burke, 2007). For each individual subject, the number of data points in the intervention phase that are lower than the lowest data point in the baseline phase is determined. The number of points lower than the lowest baseline point is then divided by the total number of data points in the intervention phase. This number is then multiplied by 100 to obtain a percentage of non-overlapping data points for each individual subject. Higher percentage scores reflect more efficacious interventions, with values of 90% or higher reflecting Highly Effective interventions; values of 70% to under 89.9% reflecting Moderately Effective interventions; values from 50% to 69.9% reflecting Questionably Effective interventions; and values below 50% reflecting Ineffective interventions (Ma, 2006).

The number of days in each school week varied depending upon the school calendar, and there were also days where no homework was assigned. Therefore, the mean rates of homework completion for each week were calculated for comparative purposes. Baseline rates are represented by the average completion rates of 2 days of homework performance as reported by classroom teachers for two weeks prior to the intervention. This was done in order to satisfy the requirements of the PND approach which necessitates that a minimum of 3 data points be evident in the baseline condition. Since there data was collected during the baseline condition for

an even number of days across the two week period (8), four data points were reflected by the means of each two-day period. Optimally, it would have been more desirable if three weeks of baseline data had been collected, as this would have provided for the weekly means of 3 weeks of baseline data to be reflected in the baseline condition, which would have offered a more balanced representation of homework completion data when compared to the intervention phase. During the intervention phase, average weekly completion rates of EDRC parent ratings were calculated. Follow-up completion rates reflect data obtained four weeks following intervention completion.

Results of data analysis for figures 1 through 3 conducted using the Percent of Non-overlapping Data technique (PND) indicated that the intervention was effective in improving overall homework completion rates for 100% of study participants. Analysis revealed the intervention to be Highly Effective in improving rates of homework completion for 57.14% of the participants (4), and Moderately Effective for the remaining 42.86% of participants (3). All students showed improvements in rates of homework completion, with gains maintained at a four-week follow-up. This data is represented in Table 2.

Effect Size- Homework Completion Rates Percentage of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND). Similar to the Percentage of Non-Overlapping Data (PND) technique, the Percentage of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND) technique is a method for analyzing data in single-subject designs where performance after treatment is compared to performance before treatment. Like the PND approach, PAND reflects non-overlapping data points between phases. It differs, however, in that it uses all data in both baseline and intervention phases, thereby avoiding any overemphasis on one baseline point. Also, and perhaps more importantly, PAND can be

translated into Phi, a Pearson's *r* for a 2x 2 contingency table with a known sampling distribution.

The Percentage of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND) technique was applied to the analysis of homework completion data to determine the effect size of the improvements in overall rates of homework completion as indicated by changes in mean homework completion rates from baseline (teacher data) through follow-up (EDRC data). To complete the PAND analysis of EDRC homework completion data, overlapping data points were calculated (as in PND procedures) from which the percentage of baseline and intervention points was determined. Using this overlap data, a 2 x 2 contingency table was developed in which higher and lower baseline and intervention points and their totals were tabulated to complete the Pearson Phi equation. The percentage of baseline data points across all participants was then calculated and reflected in the PAND 2 x 2 contingency table as the Baseline Total (28/61=45.90%). Next, the percentage of intervention data points across all participants was calculated and reflected in the PAND 2 x 2 contingency table as the Intervention Total (33/61=54.10%). The number of overlapping data points between Baseline and Intervention for all participants (BO =4.92%) was then divided by 2 (4.92%/2=2.46%). The 2.46% was then entered into cells b and c of the 2 x 2 contingency table. Cells a and d were then completed by subtracting cells b and c from the Baseline and Intervention Totals, where a= 43.44% (45.90%-2.46%) and d= 51.64% (54.10%-2.46%). A Pearson Phi was then be calculated by completing the equation a/(a+c)-b/(b+d): 43.44%/(43.44%+2.46%)-2.46%/2.46+51.64=0.90, with Phi= 0.90. The percentage of all non-overlapping data (PAND) was calculated by adding cells a and d from the 2 x 2 contingency table (43.44%+51.64%), whereby PAND= 95.08. Results of this Percentage of All Non-

overlapping Data (PAND) analysis revealed a large effect size (Phi=.90, 95%CI), with 95.08% of data non-overlapping with baseline rates. This data is reflected in Table 3.

Table 2. Percent of Non-Overlapping Data (PND) for Mean Homework Completion Rates

Student	Baseline Points	Total Intervention Points	Points Higher than Baseline	PND
A	4	5	5	100.00%
B	4	5	5	100.00%
C	4	3	3	100.00%
D	4	5	4	80.00%
E	4	5	4	80.00%
F	4	5	5	100.00%
G	4	5	4	80.00%
Totals	28	33	30	
Baseline overlap	3		90.91%	
Total Points	61	These values used for PAND below		

Category	n	%
Highly Effective	4	57.14%
Moderately Effective	3	42.86%
Mildly Effective	0	0.00%
Ineffective	0	0.00%
Total	7	100.00%

Figure 1. EDRC mean weekly homework completion rates-students A & B

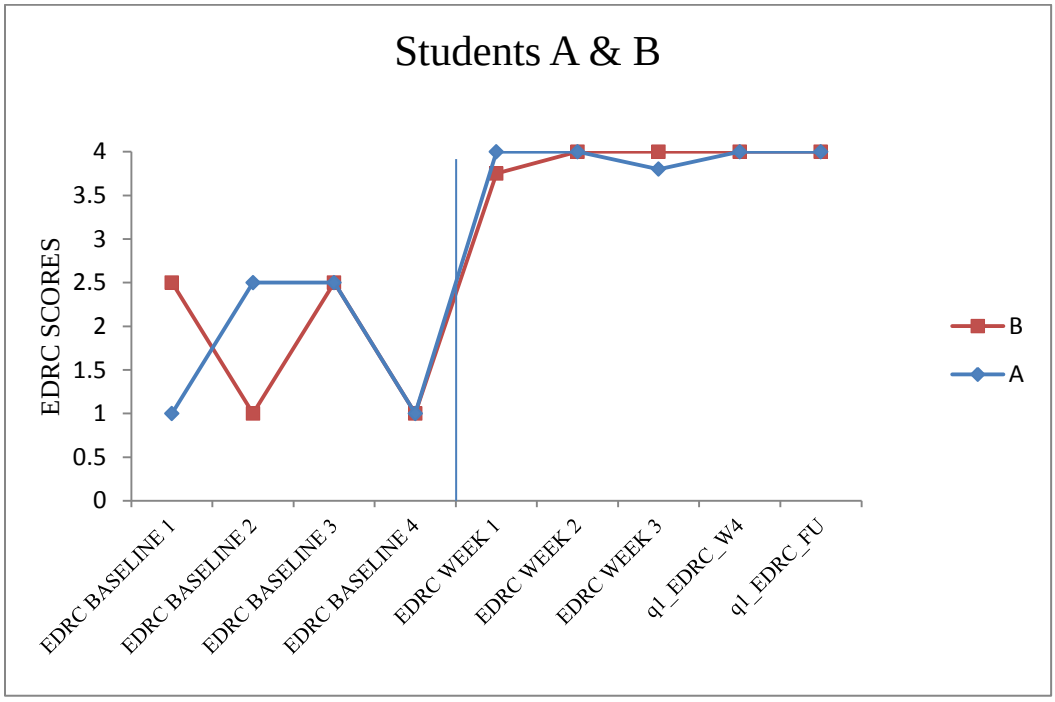


Figure 2. EDRC mean weekly homework completion rates-students C & D

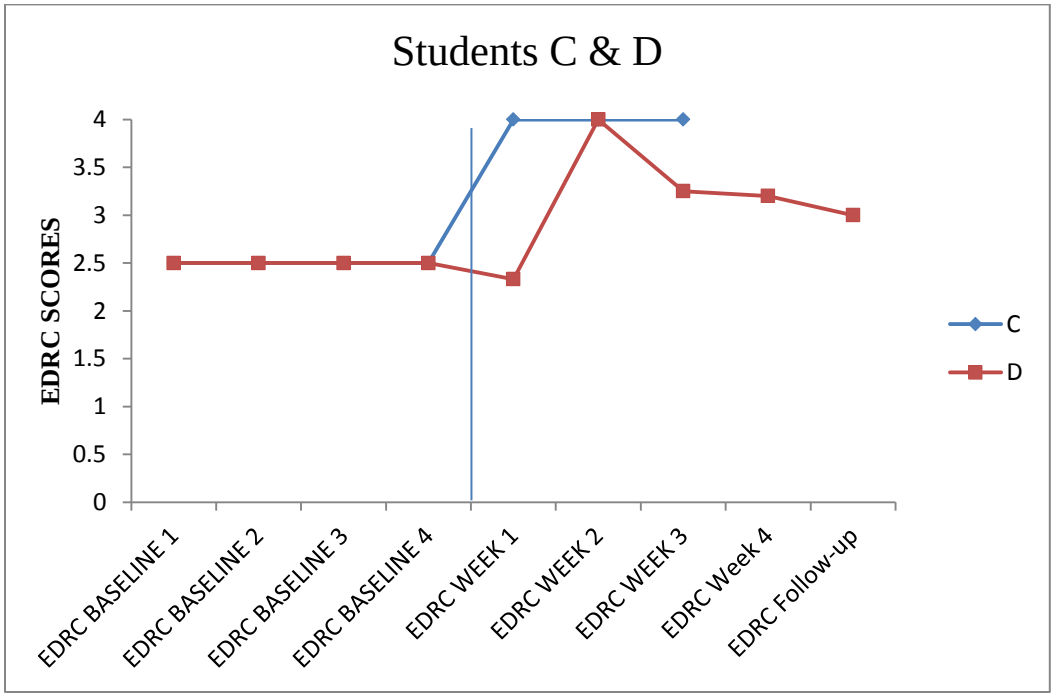
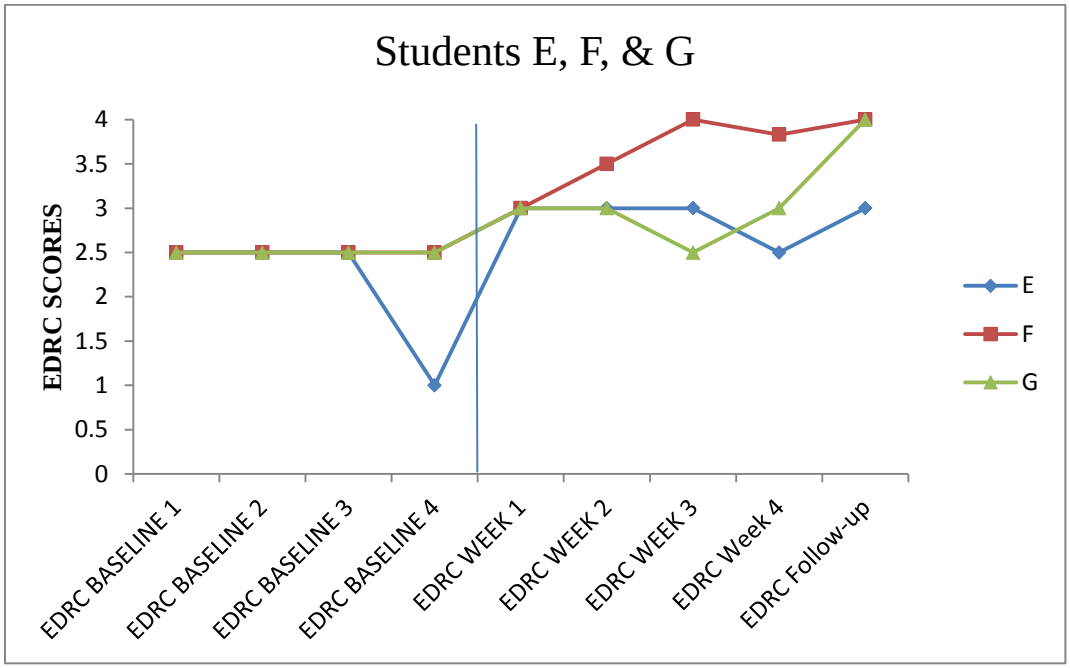


Figure 3. EDRC mean weekly homework completion rates-students E, F, & G.



Note: Figures 1 through 3 represent these mean homework completion rates obtained throughout the study. For ease of interpretation, each graph contains the performance of two students. The first four data points for each student represents the baseline homework completion rates obtained through teacher records prior to beginning the intervention. The vertical line demarks the boundary between baseline data and intervention data. Points 5 through 8 to the right of the vertical line reflect EDRC mean homework completion rates as reported by parents upon completion of each week of the intervention. Point 9 reflects EDRC homework completion rates obtained 4 weeks following intervention completion, and reflects the follow-up condition. The x-axis represents the time of the data collection. The y-axis reflects mean rates of homework completion.

Table 3. Percent of All Non-Overlapping Data (PAND) for Mean Homework Completion Rates

Student	Baseline Points	Total Intervention Points	
A	4	5	
B	4	5	
C	4	3	
D	4	5	
E	4	5	
F	4	5	
G	4	5	
	Baseline Points	Intervention Points	Total Points
Totals	28	33	61
Percent	45.90%	54.10%	100.00%
Baseline Overlap (BO)	4.92%		

	Baseline	Intervention	Totals
Higher	43.44%	2.46%	45.90%
Lower	2.46%	51.64%	54.10%
Totals	45.90%	54.10%	100.00%

PAND (sum a & d)	95.08%
Phi (a/(a+c)-b/(b+d))	0.90

Thus, Hypothesis 1 which stated that parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program would increase the rates of homework completion of elementary school students deemed as having significant homework difficulties was supported. This was demonstrated by a large effect size (Phi= .90, 95%CI) seen through a PAND analysis of the EDRC homework completion data which revealed an increase in rates of homework completion from baseline through intervention completion.

Homework Problems Checklist (HPC)

The second research question asked what effect participation in a structured group parent-training program would have on parent reports of the intensity and frequency of homework

problems occurring within the home setting. To measure changes in parent reported homework problems, the Homework Problems Checklist (HPC; Anesko et al., 1987), a 20-question standardized rating scale which assesses the frequency and intensity of parent-reported homework problems, was administered. The HPC yields a total score which can range from 0 to a maximum of 60 points, with higher scores indicating more problematic homework behavior. Changes in homework problems are reflected by directional changes in HPC total scores across administrations. Further, HPC total scores are also delineated into ranges of homework problems based upon gender, with the *Average Range* reflected by mean total scores for girls and boys of 10 and 12, respectively. For girls, total scores from 18-25 are considered to be within the *Some Problems Range*, with scores of 26 and higher reflecting the *Many Problems Range*. For boys, scores ranging from 21-29 reflect the *Some Problems Range*, with scores of 30 and higher reflecting the *Many Problems Range* (Anesko & Levine, 1987). These ranges and their corresponding total scores for upper-elementary school children are reflected in Table 4. HPC total scores were examined across 6 data points throughout the study, including 1 at baseline, 4 during the intervention, and then 1 at follow-up.

Table 4. HPC interpretive scoring ranges (Anesko & Levine, 1987).

Interpretive Range	Girl's Scores	Boy's Scores
Average	10-17	12-20
Some Problems	18-25	21-29
Many Problems	>26	>30

Parents completed the HPC prior to beginning the intervention. Standard scores reported on the HPC during this pre-intervention phase served as a baseline measure of homework problems. Parents then completed the HPC on a weekly basis in order to track ongoing changes in overall problematic homework behavior throughout the study. Parents also completed the

HPC four weeks after completing the intervention during a follow-up phase to assess maintenance of gains in homework behaviors.

HPC 1: Baseline/Pre-Intervention. Parent reports of homework problems as indicated by HPC standard scores at baseline (HPC 1) were above average for grade level and gender for all but one of the 7 students participating in the study. Of the 6 students who were reported by their parents to have more homework problems than the average student, 4 (66.6%) were reported to be in the *Some Problems Range*, and 2 (33.3%) were reported to be in the *Many Problems Range* for grade level and gender on the HPC 1.

HPC 2: Intervention-week 1. Data were obtained from the parents of 5 students following completion of the first week of the intervention. Parent ratings of homework problems at this phase in the intervention generally remained stable and continued to be within the *Some Problems Range* for 3 students and the *Many Problems Range* for 1 student. Change in parent reports of problematic homework behavior was only seen for 1 student, with homework behaviors reported to have improved from the *Many Problems Range* to the *Some Problems Range*.

HPC 3: Intervention-week 2. After completing the second week of the intervention, a decline in problematic homework behaviors was reported by 5 of the 7 parents, with 2 parents reporting slight increases in HPC total scores from baseline. Of the 5 parents who reported a decrease in HPC scores, all reported the level of problematic homework behaviors to be within the *Average Range* for grade level and gender.

HPC 4: Intervention-week 3. Following completion of the third week of the intervention, the 5 students previously reported by their parents to be performing within the *Average Range* on measures of homework problems continued to be within *Average Range*. Two

students continued to experience persistent homework problems, as indicated by parent reports of homework behaviors within the *Some Problems Range* for 1 student and the *Many Problems Range* for 1 student.

HPC 5: Completion of Intervention. Parent reports of homework problems as indicated by HPC scores upon intervention completion showed a decrease in problematic homework behaviors for 5 out of 7 participants when compared to baseline. Specifically, 5 students (71.4%) were reported to be within the *Average Range* of homework problems, 1 student (14.3%) continued to be within the *Some Problems Range*, and 1 student (14.3%) remained within the *Many Problems Range*.

HPC 6: Follow-up. Four weeks following completion of the intervention, HPC parent ratings were obtained from 6 of the 7 participants. Multiple attempts to obtain follow-up data were made; however, one participant did not comply with the request. Results of the follow-up data obtained from the 6 participants indicated that all parents reported a decrease in the frequency and intensity of problematic homework behaviors. All parent ratings obtained at four-week follow-up (HPC 6) revealed improvements in homework behaviors from baseline (HPC 1), as well as from intervention completion (HPC 5). Therefore, parent reports of changes in problematic homework behaviors indicate that gains made at study completion were not only maintained, but that homework behaviors continued to improve for four weeks following intervention completion.

Program Effectiveness. An overall decrease in problematic homework behaviors as indicated by changes in HPC scores was seen from baseline (HPC 1) to intervention completion (HPC 5), with improvements in homework behaviors reported for all participants reporting from

baseline through follow-up (HPC 6). A visual analysis of these results can be seen in figures 4 through 6.

Figure 4. HPC Total Scores-Students A & B

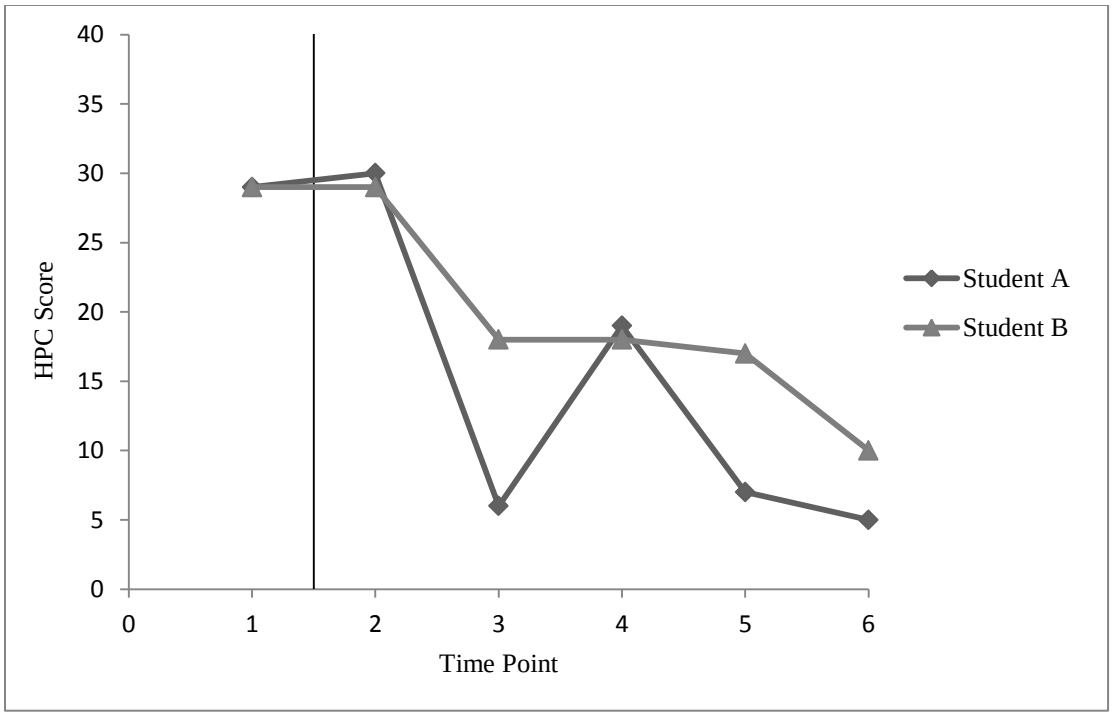


Figure 5. HPC Total Scores-Students C & D

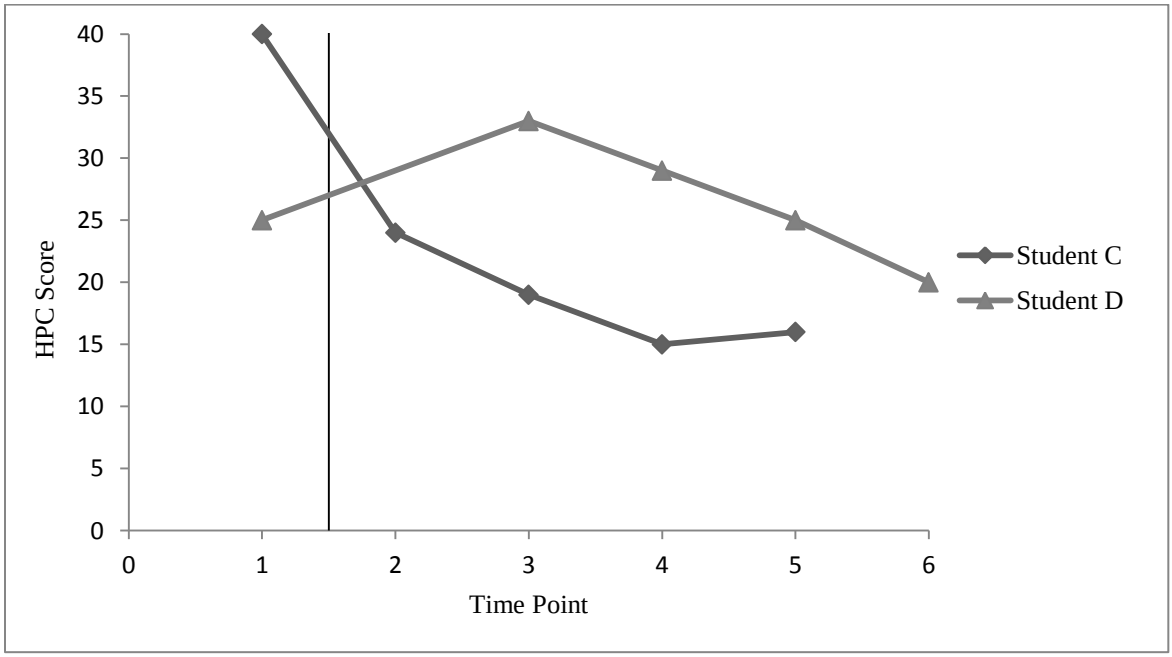
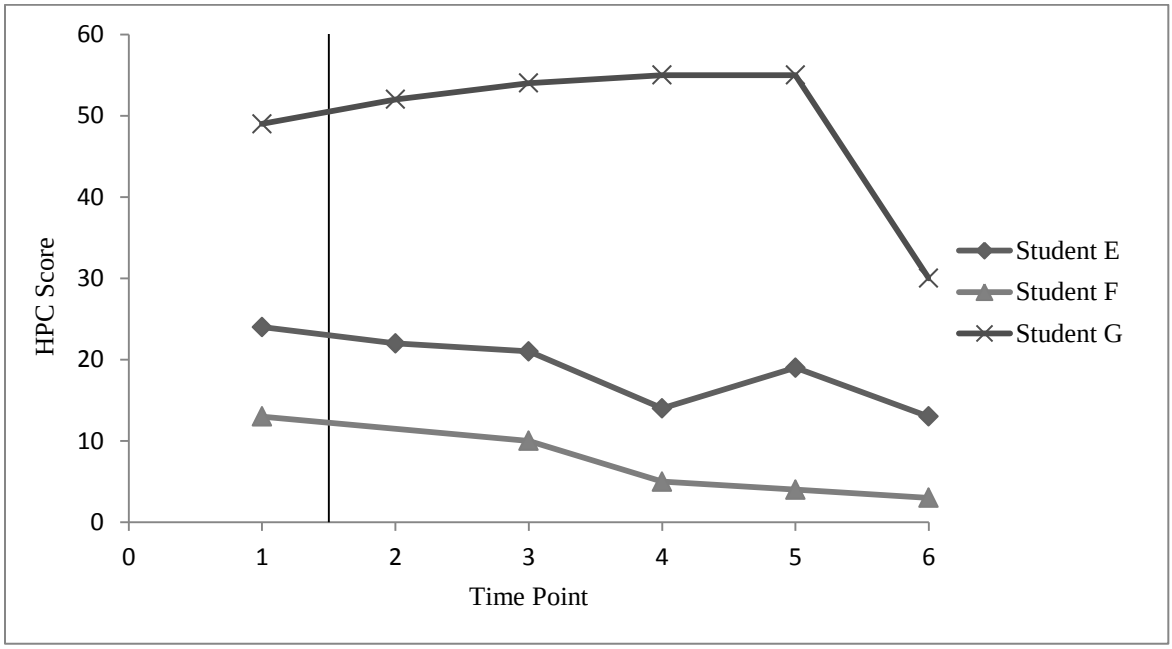


Figure 6. HPC Total Scores-Students E, F, & G



Note. Figures 4 through 6 represent HPC parent rating total scores. For ease of viewing and interpretation, each graph contains the performance of two or three students. The first data point for each student represents the baseline HPC total score obtained prior to beginning the intervention. The vertical line demarks the boundary between baseline data and intervention data. Points 2 through 4 to the left of the vertical line reflect HPC total scores as reported by parents upon completion of each week of the intervention. Point 5 reflects HPC total scores obtained upon completion of the homework intervention. Point 6 reflects HPC total scores obtained 4 weeks following intervention completion, and reflects the follow-up condition. The x-axis represents the HPC administration. The y-axis reflects HPC total scores.

Thus, Hypothesis 2 which stated that parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program would decrease the reported intensity and frequency of homework problems as measured by a standardized parent rating scale appears to be supported. This was reflected though observable changes in HPC scores which indicate a decrease in the intensity and

frequency of homework problems as measured by the standardized parent rating scale from baseline though follow-up.

Social Validity/Treatment Satisfaction

The third research question involved treatment satisfaction and asked if parents report that participation in a structured group parent-training program is beneficial to their child's academic development. Accordingly, qualitative data regarding treatment satisfaction was assessed through parent completion of an anonymous consumer satisfaction questionnaire at the final group parent-training session. All 7 participating parents completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was subdivided into 4 sections including: EDRC, Homework Routine, Point System, and Overview of the program. A sample of this questionnaire is represented in Figure 7. Results of parent responses to the Homework Improvement Program are as follows:

Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC). Parents were asked "Are you continuing to use the Electronic Daily Report Card?" and were asked if they used it "every night" or "only sometimes." Five respondents (71.4%) reported using and completing the EDRC every night while 2 respondents (28.6%) reported using and completing the EDRC only sometimes. In response to an open-ended question asking "What parts of the program were most appealing to you?" all parents consistently reported one of the most appealing aspect of the program to be the EDRC.

Homework Routine. During the second parent-training session, parents were introduced to the importance of developing a structured homework routine with their children within their homes. As the parent-training program progressed, recommendations and strategies on how to enhance the homework routine were offered. Parents were asked "Is your child continuing to follow the Homework Routine." They were then asked if they were following the Homework

Routine “every night” or “only sometimes.” All parents (100%) reported that their children were complying with the homework routine outlined in the program. Five parents (71.4%) reported that the homework routine was followed every night, while 2 (28.6%) respondents reported that the homework routine was followed only sometimes. Parents were then asked “Have you encountered any obstacles following the homework routine?” and were given space to elaborate on their concerns. Four parents (57%) reported having some difficulties implementing a Homework Routine with their children in their home. Behavioral difficulties, children forgetting necessary materials in school, and inconsistent supervision were identified as obstacles to establishing a consistent homework routine.

Point System. Parents were asked for feedback about the development and application of the point system, which was introduced during the parent-training sessions, with enhancements discussed each week. They were asked “Are you continuing to use the point system with your child?” and if they were doing so “every night” or “only sometimes.” All parents (100%) reported continued use of the point system. Five parents (71.4%) reported that they were using the point system in their homes every night with their child, while 2 parents (28.6%) reported that they were not consistently implementing the point system.

Overview of the Program. After responding to questions regarding specific program components parents were then asked about their overall experience. Directly related to the third research question regarding overall program satisfaction, parents were asked “Do you feel you’ve benefited from participating in the Homework Improvement Program?” Responses revealed that all 7 of the parents (100%) reported that they felt that they benefited from participating in the program. They were asked “Do you think that you will continue to use the homework strategies after this school year?” Six parents (85.7%) reported that they will

continue to use the strategies offered during the group parent-training program. Parents were then asked “Do you feel that your relationship with your child’s teacher has improved since before you participated in the program?” Space for additional comments was also provided. Five parents (71.4%) reported that their relationship with their child’s teacher had improved, while 2 (28.6%) reported that it had remained the same. Of the 2 participants who did not report improved parent-teacher relations, one remarked that they did not need to interact with the teacher because they were receiving the homework assignment and instructions nightly via the EDRC, but that they would feel comfortable contacting the teacher if the need arose.

Parents were then asked “Do you feel that your relationships with your child has improved since before you participated in the program?” with additional space provided for comments. In response, all participating parents (100%) reported that their relationship with their child had improved since beginning the program. On the open ended portions of these responses, parents reflected upon changes in their own behaviors and remarked that they were arguing less with their children, and that they focus more on positive behaviors, including the increased use of verbal praise and decreased use of verbal threats. Parents also consistently reported that their relationship with their children had improved due to changes in their children’s behavior, as they described their children to be less stressed, less frustrated, and more responsive to their help. Two parents also reported that they developed better relationships with their children through working together with them on the goal setting tasks outlined in the homework program.

To examine the generalization of parent-training skills, parents were asked “Do you feel that your participation in the program has changed your approach to parenting in other situations aside from getting your child to do their homework?” and were provided with space to elaborate if they chose to do so. Six of the parents (85.7%) reported that they had changed their approach

to parenting in other situations aside from getting their children to complete homework. Of those that offered elaborate responses to this question, all reported themselves to be more patient and more understanding of their children's behavior, and more likely to talk through problems instead of reacting emotionally.

Parents were asked "Did you enjoy participating in the program?" and were asked "Would you recommend this program to a friend whose child was experiencing homework difficulties?" All parents (100%) reported that they enjoyed participating in the program and all parents reported that they would recommend the program to a friend. Parents were then asked to provide an open-ended response to the question "What parts of the program were most appealing to you?" Responses indicated that the most appealing aspect of the program was having the homework assignments available to them online through the EDRC. One parent also reported enjoying learning about homework strategies because it made homework time fun. Three of the parents reported that the most valuable component of the intervention was finding out that there were other parents who were experiencing similar difficulties with their children, and that they were "not the only one." These parents reported that talking to other parents during the group sessions was among the most valuable components of the program. The majority of the parents reported that they wouldn't change anything about the program. Three of the parents remarked that they would like to receive the EDRC for the entire school year, and two parents would like more teacher involvement in the program. One parent stated that if the program was run year-round, the school would become a "Blue Ribbon School."

Thus, Hypothesis 3 which stated that parents would be satisfied with their participation in the group parent-training program and report program participation to be beneficial to their child's academic development as indicated by parent reports on social validity questionnaires

was supported. This was demonstrated by consistently high rates of treatment satisfaction as reported on by parents on treatment satisfaction questionnaires.

Figure 7. Treatment satisfaction questionnaire completed by parents.

Homework Improvement Program: Follow-Up Questionnaire

Please complete the following questions to assess your child's progress.

Daily Report Card Procedures

1. Are you continuing to use the daily report cards? _____

2. How often are you completing the daily report cards?
Every night_____
Only sometimes (inconsistently) _____

3. Are you still using the daily report card to develop homework accuracy goals with your child?_____

4. Are you still using the daily report card to develop homework completion goals with your child?_____
Comments:

Homework Routine

1. Is your child continuing to follow the homework routine?_____

2. How often are they following the homework routine?
Every night_____
Only sometimes (inconsistently) _____

3. Have you encountered any obstacles in following the Homework Routine? _____
Comments:

Point System

1. Are you continuing to use the point system with your child?_____

2. How often are you using the point system?
Every night_____
Only sometimes (inconsistently) _____

3. Have you encountered any obstacles in following the Homework Routine? _____
Comments:

4. Do you continue to use the rewards menu with your child?_____

5. Do you continue to reward your child for meeting specified homework completion goals?_____

6. Has your child earned any long-term rewards yet?_____
Comments:

Overview of Program

1. Do you feel you've benefited from participating in the Homework Improvement Program?_____

Comments:

2. Do you think that you will continue to use the homework strategies after this school year?_____

3. Do you feel that your relationship with your child's teacher has improved since before you participated in the program?_____
Explain:

4. Do you feel that your relationship with your child has improved since before you participated in the program?_____
Explain:

5. Do you feel that your participation in the program has changed your approach to parenting in other situations aside from getting your child to do their homework?_____
Explain:

6. Would you recommend this program to a friend whose child was experiencing homework difficulties?_____

7. Did you enjoy participating in the program?_____

8. What parts of the program were most appealing to you?_____

9. What do you feel should be changed about the program in the future?_____

Additional Results

Data collected through daily parent feedback on the EDRC were used for a variety of purposes. While rubric-based feedback regarding homework completion rates was used to address research questions examining program effectiveness, some data were obtained throughout the study for other reasons. Data regarding time spent on homework, levels of parent involvement, and parent-teacher communication were obtained through the EDRC. In accordance with a CBC framework, these data were shared with parents throughout the study to provide performance feedback, to maintain program compliance, to offer daily reminders of techniques reviewed during parent training sessions, and to guide group parent-training sessions. For example, having parents respond to rubric-based EDRC questions regarding the amount of time their child spent on homework each night compels adherence to specified nightly homework time limits, which is an essential strategic component of the homework intervention.

Accordingly, responses to rubric-based EDRC questions regarding parent involvement encourages adherence to pre-specified amounts of parent assistance on homework. Consequently, reviewing parent feedback regarding these data and how they relate to intervention strategies highlight subtle but important aspects of program compliance during group parent-training meetings. Therefore, while these data are not related to specific research questions they will be described briefly in the following sections.

Time Spent on Homework. As a component of the EDRC, parents were asked "How long did your child spend working on the last assignment?" They responded by choosing from the following 5-point rubric:

Less than 15 Minutes

16-30 Minutes

31-45 Minutes

46-60 Minutes

More than 60 Minutes

Collection of data began at week 1 of the intervention and was not intended to reveal significant changes in homework performance. Therefore, no baseline data were collected prior to beginning the intervention. Similar trends across subjects are seen in the data throughout the intervention, particularly those with identical homework assignments. Students A and B were both in the same 5th grade homeroom and received identical homework assignments throughout the study. A visual analysis of their weekly averages of time spent on homework revealed that while Student B spent slightly more time on homework during the first week of the intervention, both students spent a very similar amount of time on their assignments throughout the study, until the final week in which they differed slightly, with student B spending more time on

assignments during the last week of the study than student A. Overall, very similar trends were seen throughout the intervention for these students.

Students C and D were in the same 5th grade homeroom and received identical homework assignments throughout the study. A visual analysis of their performance showed a similar trend in time spent on homework, however, student C offered only 3 weeks of data, making more direct comparisons difficult.

Students E and G were in the same 5th grade homeroom and received identical homework assignments throughout the study. A visual analysis of weekly averages of time spent on homework revealed a very similar trend in their performances, as both participants spent increasingly greater amounts of time on homework throughout the first 4 weeks of the study, with a sharp decrease in time spent on homework during the final week of the intervention.

Student F was the only 6th grade student who participated in the study, and therefore had different assignments from all other students. Data regarding time spent on homework revealed that the average amount of time Student F spent on homework varied considerably from week to week, likely indicative of varying homework assignments. It is important to note that the trend in this student's data was dissimilar to all other students who had different homework assignments.

Overall, data on time spent on homework appears to be directly related to the actual length of homework assignments given throughout the study. This is supported by the similar trends in time spent on homework reported by the parents of those students in the same class sections. Further, differing trends reported by students with different homework assignments potentially demonstrates the validity of the nightly data provided by parents during the study on the EDRC. Results of parent reports of time spent on homework in accordance with the 5-point rubric are reflected in Figures 8-11.

Figure 8. EDRC mean weekly rates of time spent on homework-students A & B.

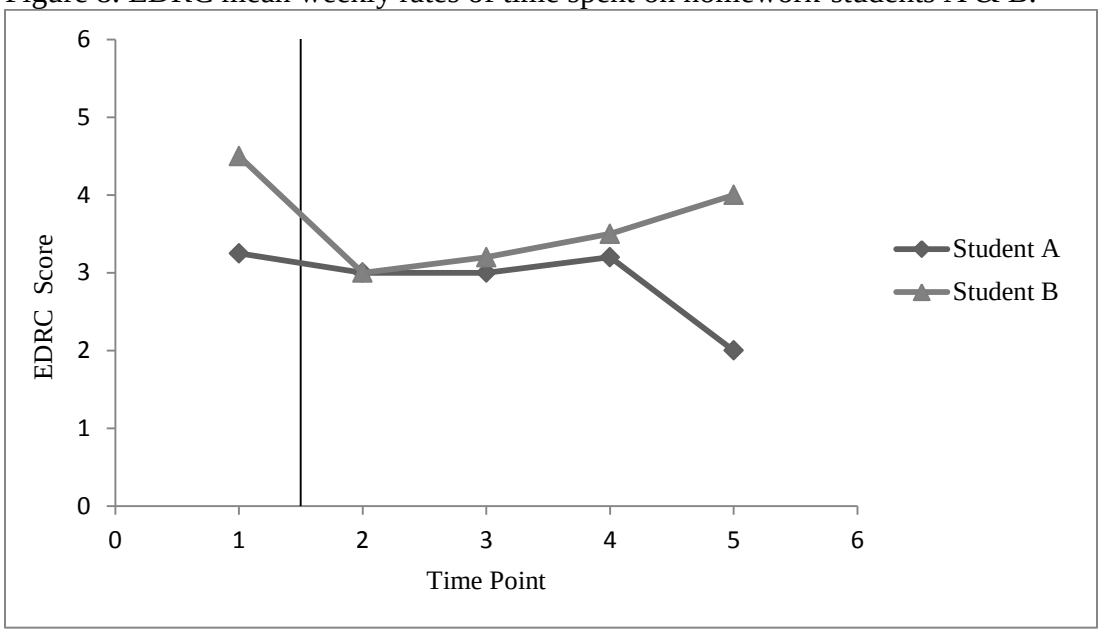


Figure 9. EDRC mean weekly rates of time spent on homework-students C & D.

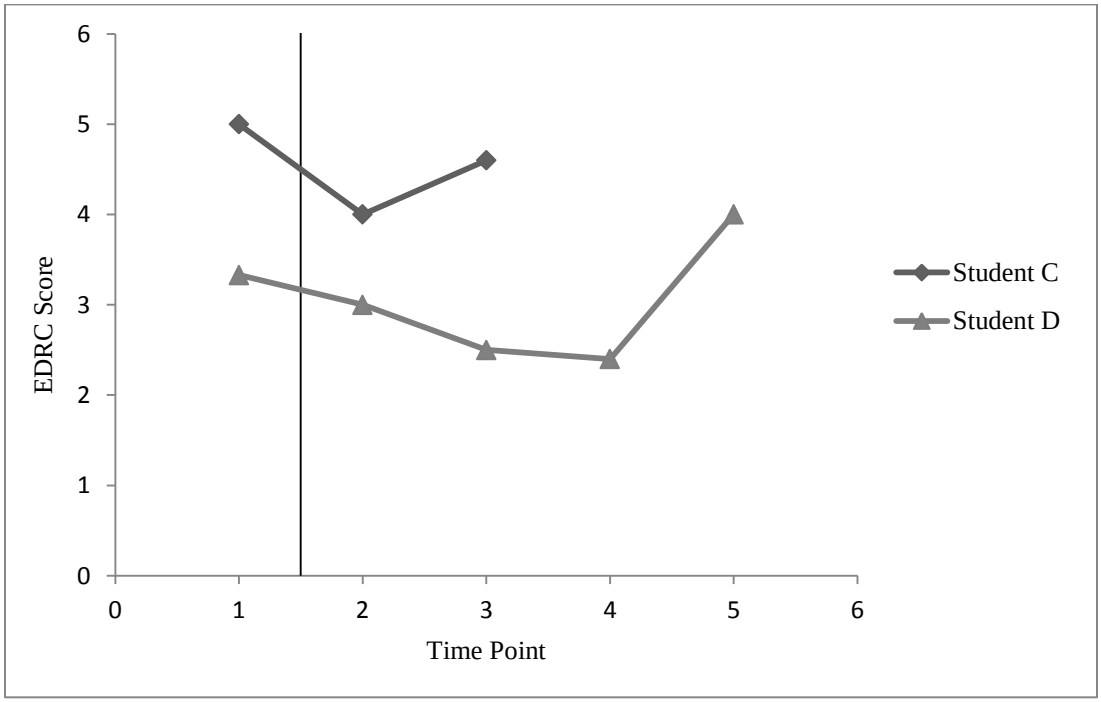


Figure 10. EDRC mean weekly rates of time spent on homework-students E & F.

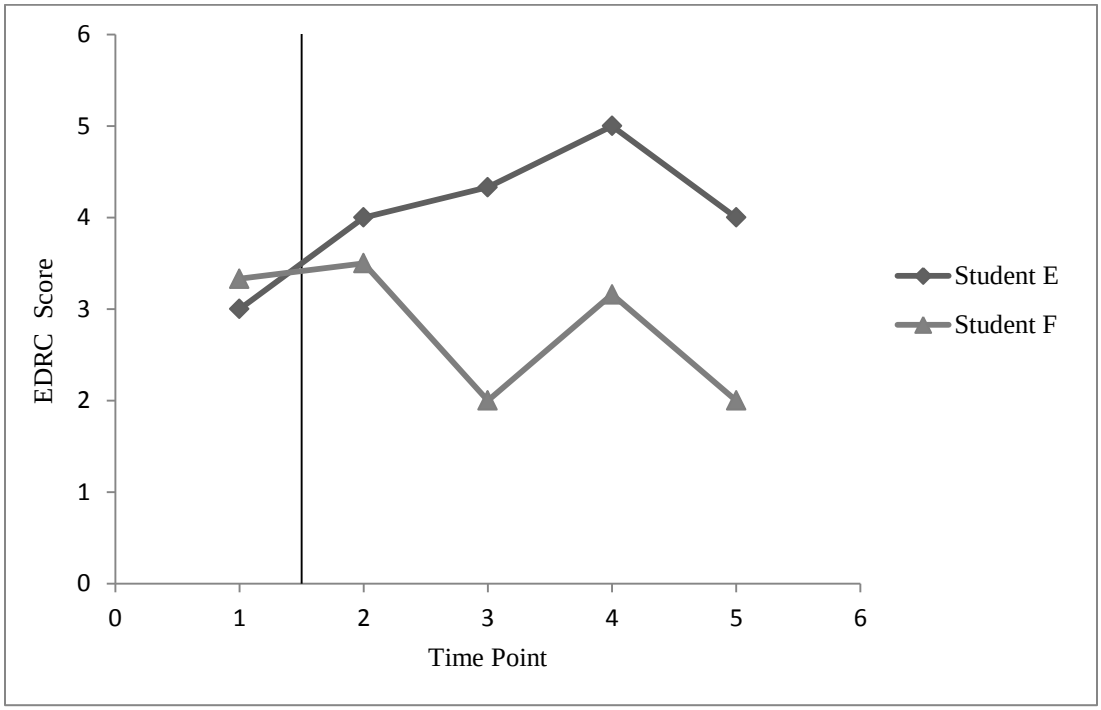
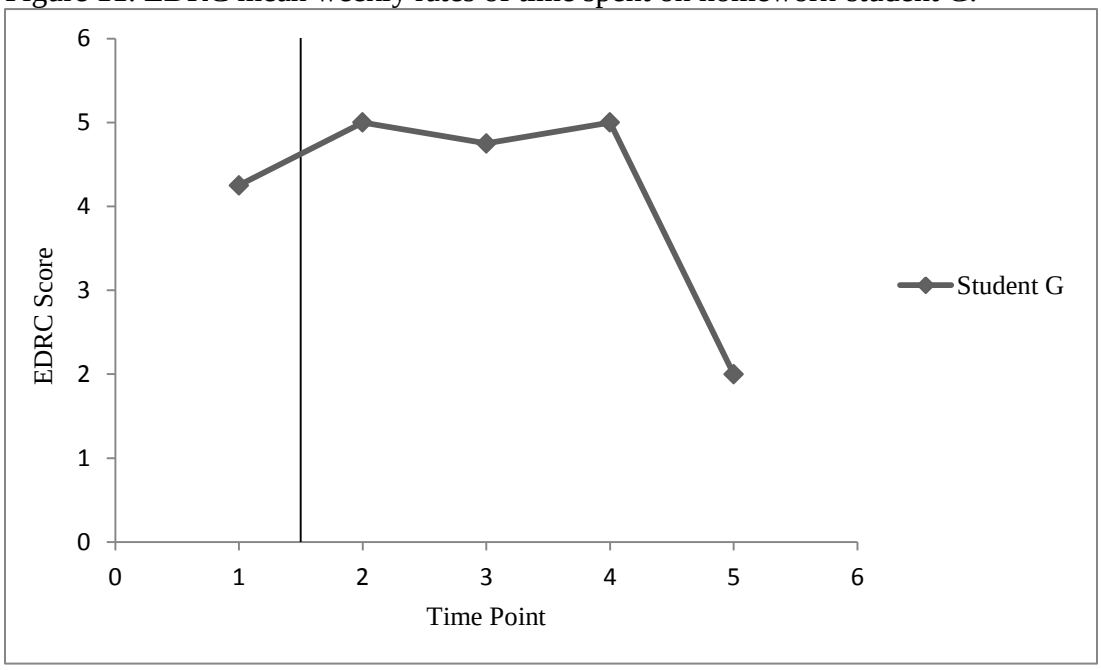


Figure 11. EDRC mean weekly rates of time spent on homework-student G.



Level of Parental Involvement. As a component of the EDRC, parents were asked to "Choose Level of Involvement" They responded in accordance with the following 3-point rubric:

I did not need to help with the last assignment

I helped my child with less than half of the assignment

I helped my child with more than half of the assignment

Collection of this data began after the first group meeting and was not intended to address intervention effectiveness. Therefore, no baseline data were collected prior to beginning the intervention. Overall trends were not as evident in this data, as parent reports of helping their children with homework did not appear to correspond to class homework assignments. When considering that data are reflected by weekly means of rubric scores, it does appear that only minimal variability was seen in the amount of parent involvement throughout the study. Most levels of involvement remained between 2 rubric points for most students during the intervention. With significant improvements reported on rates of homework completion and homework behaviors, stability in levels of parental involvement may indicate that the involvement became increasingly more effective or efficient as parents progressed throughout the parent-training program. This is supported by parent responses to treatment satisfaction questionnaires which indicated positive changes in parenting behaviors and improvements in parent-child relationships. Results of parental involvement in accordance with the 3-point rubric are reflected in Figures 12-15.

Figure 12. EDRC mean weekly rates of parent involvement in homework-students A & B.

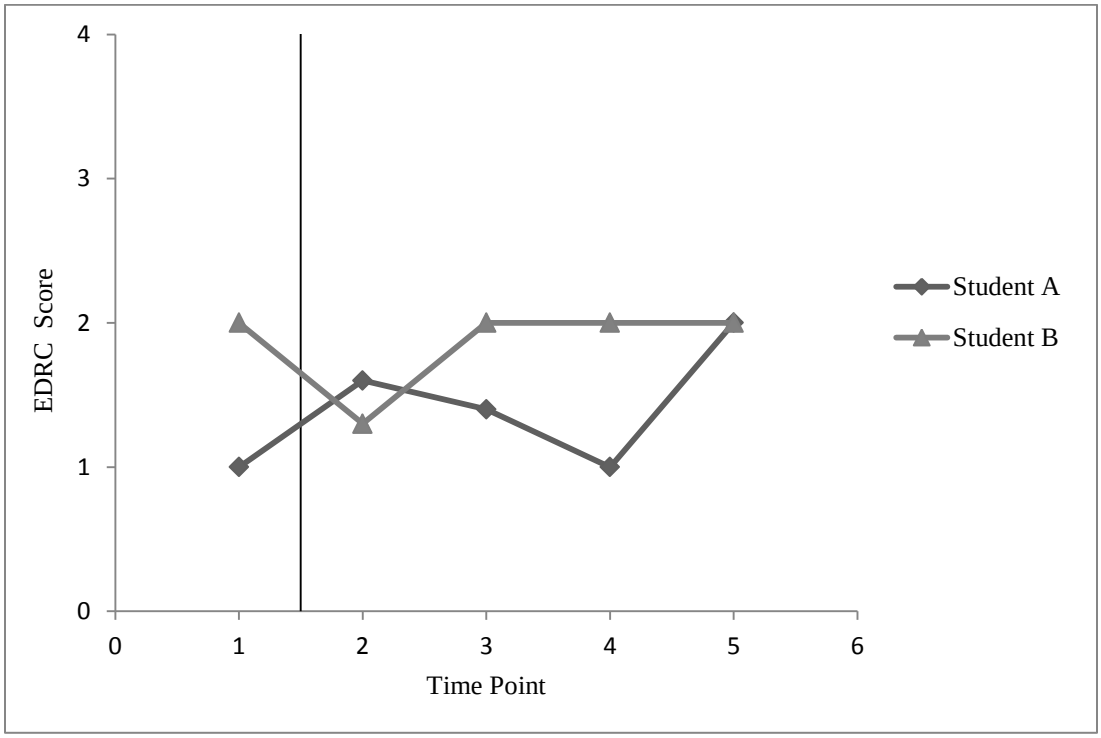


Figure 13. EDRC mean weekly rates of parent involvement in homework-students C & D.

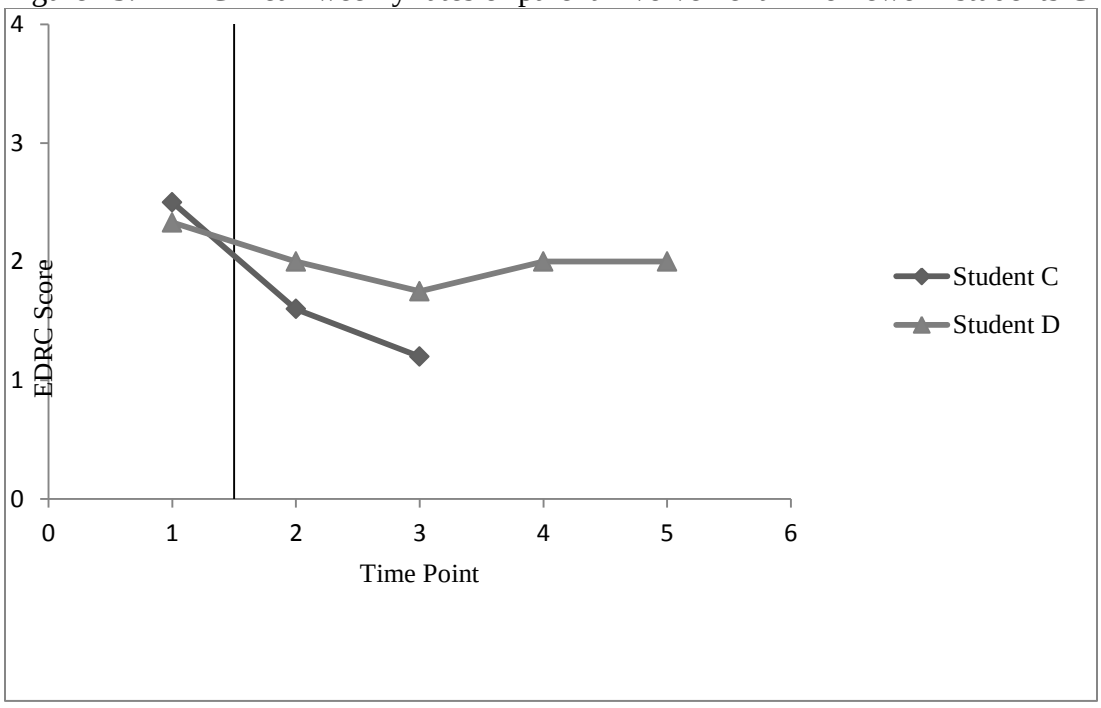


Figure 14. EDRC mean weekly rates of parent involvement in homework-students E & F.

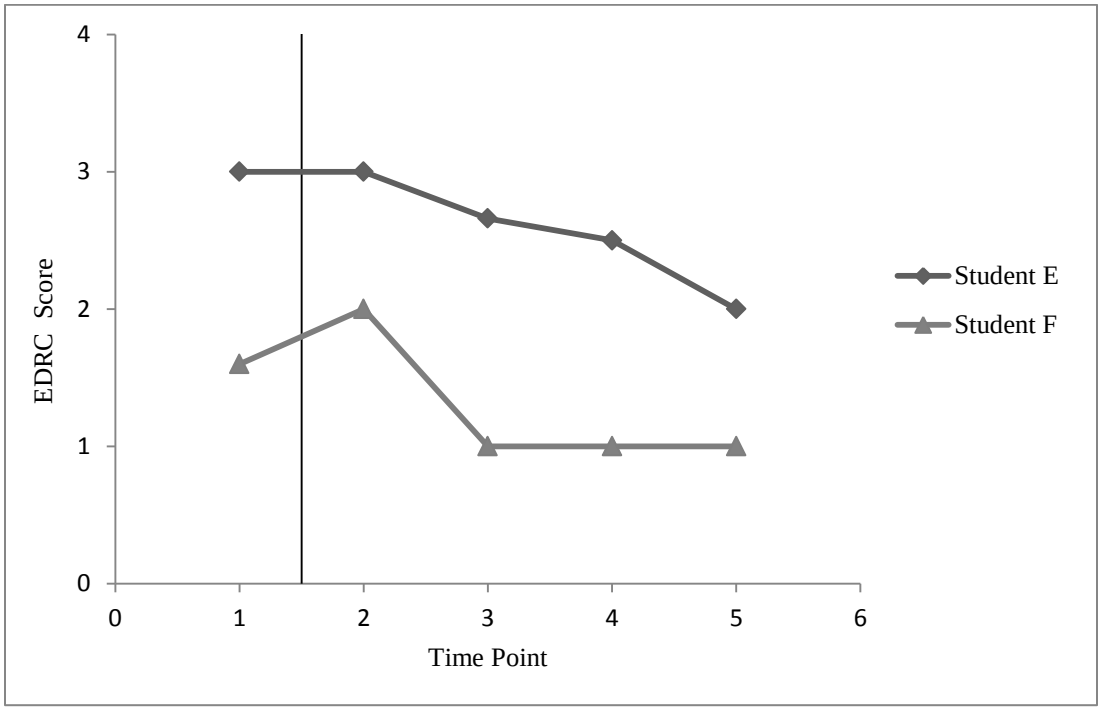
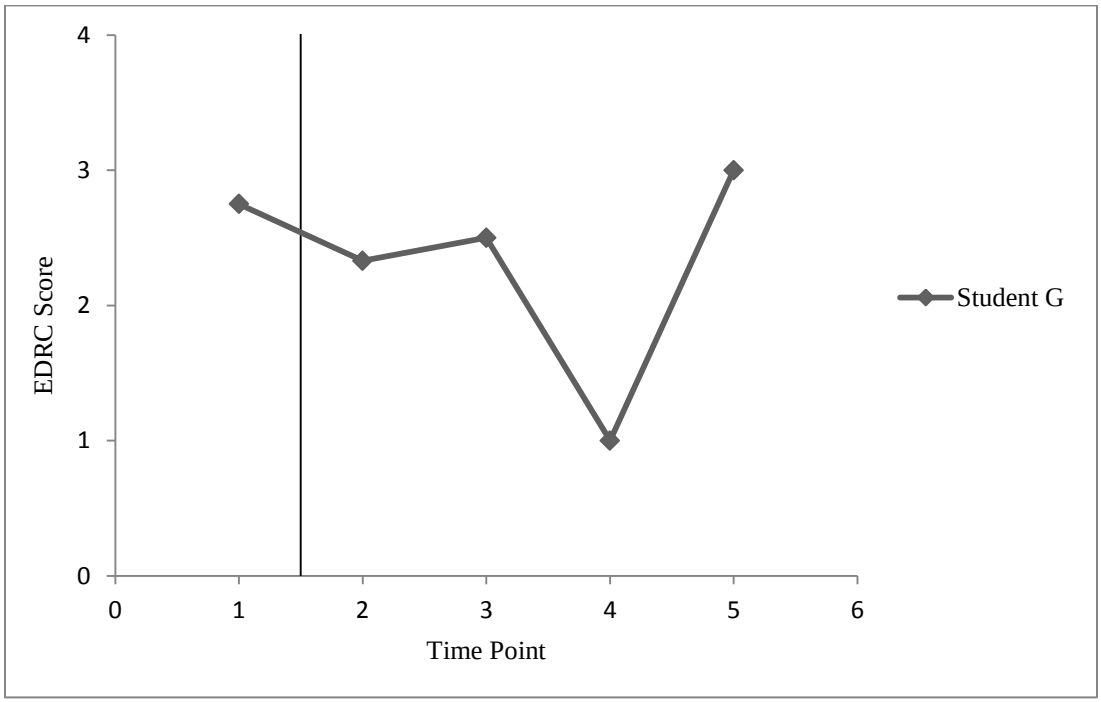


Figure 15. EDRC mean weekly rates of parent involvement in homework-student G.



Parent-Teacher Communication. The EDRC offered parents a direct online link through which they could contact any of their child's teachers. Each night parents reported whether or not they contacted a teacher. Results indicate that parents rarely initiated contact with teachers. Teachers were only contacted a total of 12 times by all parents across 18 weeks of the intervention. This indicates that parent-teacher contact was only initiated 9.5% of the time. Of the 12 instances where direct communication was initiated, 6 instances were initiated by the parent of Student G.

Summary of Results

The first research question asked what effect parent participation in a structured group parent-training program would have on the homework completion rates of students with significant homework difficulties due to poor work completion. It was hypothesized that parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program would increase the rates of homework completion of elementary school students deemed as having significant homework difficulties. A PND analysis of EDRC homework completion rates indicated that the intervention was effective in improving overall homework completion rates for 100% of study participants. Analysis revealed the intervention to be Highly Effective in improving rates of homework completion for 57.14% of the participants (4), and Moderately Effective for the remaining 42.86% of participants (3). All students showed improvements in rates of homework completion, with gains maintained at a four-week follow-up. A PAND analysis of homework completion data revealed a large effect size (Phi=.90, 95%CI), with 95.08% of data non-overlapping with baseline rates.

The second research question asked what effect participation in a structured group parent-training program would have on parent reports of the intensity and frequency of homework problems occurring within the home setting. It was hypothesized that parent involvement in a

structured group parent-training program would decrease the reported intensity and frequency of homework problems as measured by a standardized parent rating scale. A visual analysis of HPC data reflected an overall decrease in problematic homework behaviors as indicated by changes in HPC scores from baseline to intervention completion, with improvements in homework behaviors observed for all participants from baseline through follow-up.

The third research question asked if parents reported participation in the structured group parent-training program to be beneficial to their child's academic development. It was hypothesized that parents would be satisfied with their participation in the group parent-training program and would report program participation to be beneficial to their child's academic development as indicated by parent reports on social validity questionnaires. Accordingly, data regarding treatment satisfaction obtained through parent completion of a treatment satisfaction questionnaire yielded consistently high rates of treatment satisfaction reported by all participants.

The research hypotheses and their corresponding findings and sources of data are reflected in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary of research hypotheses and findings.

Research Hypothesis	Finding	Data Source
Hypothesis 1. Parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program will increase the rates of homework completion of elementary school students deemed as having significant homework difficulties.	Supported	Large effect size supported through PAND analysis of EDRC homework completion data.
Hypothesis 2. Parent involvement in a structured group parent-training program will decrease the reported intensity and frequency of homework problems as measured by a standardized parent rating scale.	Supported	Visual analysis of parent HPC ratings from baseline though follow up reflect overall improvements in problematic homework behaviors.
Hypothesis 3. Parents will be satisfied with their participation in the group parent-training program and report program participation to be beneficial to their child's academic development as indicated by parent reports on social validity questionnaires.	Supported	Consistently high rates of treatment satisfaction reported by all participants on treatment satisfaction questionnaire.

Chapter 5-Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Homework Improvement Program (HIP), a 5-week group-formatted parent training program, in enhancing the homework performance of children experiencing homework difficulties. The study used the Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) model, an empirically supported intervention for homework, in a parent-training format and was facilitated by electronic online technology to deliver the intervention. It was hypothesized that participation in the group parent-training program would result in a decrease in problematic homework behaviors and an increase in rates of homework completion.

The Homework Improvement Program was designed to be a homework intervention for general education students struggling with homework problems that could be practically applied within school settings. To accomplish this, the program was administered in a group format to utilize time, space, and effort most effectively. In accordance with the CBC model which emphasizes the importance of home-school communication, an online Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) was developed as a component of the program through which parents were provided a direct avenue of communication with their child's teacher. The EDRC attempted to address numerous limitations of previously developed methods of regular home-school communication, while maximizing efficiency, and minimizing teacher obligation. It was also designed to be user-friendly for parents. The EDRC informed parents of their child's homework assignments, instructions, and teacher expectations on a daily basis. It also served as a data collection tool through which parents could be provided with regular feedback regarding their child's progress through the program.

Rates of homework completion were examined on a daily basis over the course of the 5 week program through the EDRC, and then again at a four-week follow-up. As hypothesized, study results indicate that the intervention was effective in improving overall homework completion rates for 100% of study participants. A PND analysis determined the intervention to be Highly Effective in improving rates of homework completion for 57.14% of the participants and Moderately Effective for the remaining 42.86% participants. All students showed improvements in rates of homework completion, with gains maintained at a four week follow-up.

A strong effect size supports the research hypothesis that participation in the program would increase rates of homework completion, and offered further support for the effectiveness of the program as a viable homework intervention. These results show that students who were not completing their homework began to complete their homework assignments with much greater consistency during the intervention. These findings are important because the greatest difficulties faced by participating students involve poor rates of homework completion. Therefore, one of the primary goals of participating parents and participating teachers is achieving improved rates of homework completion. While the strong effect size demonstrates that results of homework completion rates achieved are statistically significant, perhaps more importantly, they demonstrate clinical significance. As the literature shows, improved rates of homework completion may enhance the academic performance and academic grades of the students, but also serve to reinforce the meaningfulness of the time and effort being devoted by parents and teachers though their participation in the intervention.

A decrease in overall homework problems was reflected by changes in HPC total scores from baseline through follow-up. Behaviors that decreased included refusals to complete homework assignments, denying that homework had been assigned, not knowing what the

homework assignment is, responding poorly to parent corrections, and failing to bring home necessary homework materials. This supported the research hypothesis that participation in the intervention would result in a decrease in problematic homework behaviors, and also supported the overall effectiveness of the program as a viable homework intervention.

These findings are important because they indicate positive change within the home setting and suggest improvements in both student behaviors within the home and improvements in parent-child interactions regarding homework. Also, this addresses the short-coming of many school-based interventions where intervention doesn't extend beyond the school day. Now, parents are active participants in the intervention outside of the school setting. These results indicate that by offering an interactive and collaborative school-based intervention that directly involves parents, positive behavior change can be accomplished that extends into both the home and school settings.

Qualitative data regarding treatment satisfaction was assessed through parent completion of an anonymous treatment satisfaction questionnaire. Responses indicated that participants reported a very high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the program, as all parents reported that they enjoyed the program and benefited from participating in it, and that they would recommend the program to a friend. All parents also reported an improved relationship with their child, and reported having made positive changes to their parenting practices. All parents reported that they would continue to implement strategies taught during parent training after the program had completed.

Last, all parents reported the EDRC to be a helpful educational tool. Positive feedback regarding treatment satisfaction is an important component of a parent-training intervention, as continued participation and treatment compliance is an essential component of a structured

behavior modification program. Therefore, positive responsiveness to the intervention likely relies greatly on treatment satisfaction. For this reason, there is a heavy focus on the EDRC during initial group parent-training sessions, as access to this software appears to be amongst the most desirable features of the intervention. Fittingly, when asked how they would improve the program, parents reported that they wished to continue receiving the EDRC each day, and that it should be available to all students. While this speaks to the acceptability of the EDRC, one of the goals of the intervention is to foster the development of self-monitoring skills in participating students through the application of behavioral techniques. This includes accurately recording homework assignments though conventional methods. One possible way to further reinforce the development of self-monitoring skills while continuing to augment parent involvement would be to stagger use of the EDRC intermittently following completion of the intervention, thereby rendering students unaware of when their parents have knowledge of homework assignments. This approach may motivate children to accurately record their assignments, as they would be unsure whether or not their parents will have the assignment in advance. This may be a viable approach to aid in the development of self-monitoring skills, which is another long term goal of the program.

High rates of homework completion were reported almost immediately by parents upon beginning the program and receiving the EDRC. Since parents reported that they didn't help their children with the majority of assignments, it is unclear whether the improvements seen in the homework performance of all participants were the result of the parent training with the EDRC, or the EDRC alone. Future research should determine the role of these intervention components, and what individual effects they may have on homework performance. Examining the effectiveness of the EDRC alone, without the group parent-training component might yield

interesting results, as it could be applied to a much larger number of participants simultaneously. However, the results of this current study suggest that for at least some participants EDRC completion may be related to the frequency of the participant's computer usage. This was reflected in the lack of EDRC data obtained from Participant C in the study who reported checking email only once or twice per week. This participant attended all of the group parent-training meetings, completed all of the rating scales and questionnaires, and reported the intervention to be highly effective in decreasing problematic homework behaviors as evidenced by analysis of HPC data. Interestingly, a review of responses to treatment satisfaction questionnaires revealed that when parents were asked if they benefited from participating in the program, Participant C responded "yes, because I have access to the homework on a nightly basis." Since the EDRC was only completed on an infrequent basis by Participant C, perhaps simply knowing he/she could access the homework assignment on the computer was effective in modifying the student's homework behavior, even if he/she only occasionally chose to access the EDRC. Further, when asked what component of the program was most appealing, Participant C remarked "finding out I'm not the only one with a problem when it comes to homework", a reference to the therapeutic supports offered by the group session. This suggests that although this participant only infrequently utilized the EDRC, he/she likely benefited from the therapeutic component of the group parent-training sessions. Therefore, if a comparative study were conducted which examined the effectiveness of the whole intervention package and the effectiveness of the EDRC alone, frequency of computer usage may prove to be a significant factor.

The effectiveness of involving parents in education is well substantiated (Cooper, Jackson, Nye, & Lindsay, 2001; Epstein, 1994), with a considerable amount of literature

highlighting the value of parent-teacher communication as an essential component of an effective intervention (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). Interestingly, data collected through the EDRC regarding the frequency of parent-teacher contact indicated that direct contact was only initiated on 12 occasions during the study, or 9.5% of the time by all parents the duration of the entire intervention. Further, of the 12 instances where direct communication was initiated, 6 instances were initiated by a participant who reported the intervention to be generally ineffective, and who reported the highest levels of frequency and intensity of homework problems. These data may suggest that the receipt of nightly homework assignments and instructions, and regular reminders of class activities, tests, projects, and other relative information might be sufficient communication for parents. Perhaps addressing the involvement parents have with their children's homework is more important than direct communications with the child's teacher. Research on parent involvement supports this, as meaningful parent–child interaction during the completion of homework is a significant variable for improving learning for low-performing students (Bailey, 2006; Bailey, 2004; Bailey, Silvern, Brabham, & Ross, 2004; Campbell & Ramey, 1995). Therefore, while the notion of parent-teacher communication implies that there is reciprocal contact, perhaps future research should investigate the nature and frequency of parent-teacher communication itself, whether it is direct (e.g., phone, in person, email) or indirect (e.g., EDRC) and just how much and what type of communication is effective. Such findings could serve to be important in the development of future interventions.

The overall results of the study support the effectiveness of the program as a viable homework intervention. Data revealed that the intervention was at least moderately effective and mostly highly effective in improving rates of homework completion for all participants. Further, measures of treatment satisfaction indicate that all participants found the intervention to be

beneficial. However, data reflecting the frequency and intensity of homework problems revealed that the intervention was found to be ineffective in addressing problematic homework behaviors for 2 participants, Participant D and Participant G. Since homework completion rates were improved for all participants, it is unclear why parent ratings of problematic homework behaviors did not yield similar results for these participants. Qualitative data revealed that both participants reported the program to be highly beneficial, with participant D describing the program as "a big help", and the Participant G describing the intervention as an "excellent program" that also helped to "handle other issues" outside of homework. Similar to all other participants in the study, these participants consistently reported improved rates of homework completion and reported the program to be beneficial. Similar to all other participants, a decrease in parent reported rates of problematic homework behaviors on the HPC would also be expected.

A review of the HPC data for these 2 participants revealed that they both presented with unique sets of HPC data that differed from all other participants in the study. Participant D reported an HPC score of 25 at baseline, indicating a high number of homework problems. Participant D then missed the second parent-training session, and did not return until the third session. An HPC score of 33 was then reported at session 3, indicating that problems had worsened. This was followed by consecutive HPC scores of 29, 25, and 20, reflecting steady decreases in reports of problematic homework behaviors from sessions 3 through follow-up. Failing to attend the second session may have negatively impacted upon her progress, or perhaps escalating homework problems inspired the participant to return to the program after missing the session. However, another participant also missed the second session and demonstrated consistent progress throughout the program.

In the case of Participant G, a review of HPC data revealed an undesirable directional trend, as HPC scores continued to escalate throughout the intervention. Participant G consistently reported the highest rates of problematic homework behaviors, with HPC scores that were significantly higher than all other participants, often more than 20 points higher than the next highest score provided by any other participant, and typically more than double the average score reported by all participants on the 0-60 scale. HPC scores for Participant G ranged from 49 at baseline, followed by scores of 52, 54, 55, 55, with a follow-up HPC score of 30. With the exception of the follow-up condition, these scores consistently exceeded baseline rate and showed an upward directionality, indicating that the intervention was not effective in improving problematic homework behavior. During the study this participant requested information regarding local therapists and mental health agencies that might be available to help with behavioral difficulties within the home setting. Participant G also had the highest rate of teacher contact, as this participant used the EDRC to initiate parent-teacher contact as often as all other participants combined. This may suggest that Participant G entered the program with severe behavioral problems within the home setting and, while multiple attempts to seek assistance were made, the intervention may not have been powerful enough to address severe behavior problems within the limited time period in which data collection took place. However, when considering that this participant reported consistent improvements in rates of homework completion and reported benefiting from the program on measures of treatment satisfaction, perhaps HPC scores were inflated in an attempt to communicate a need for help with behavioral problems occurring within the home beyond that of poor homework behavior. This suggests that facilitators should consider criteria for participation in future group interventions.

The role of the facilitator in this study was complex and required knowledge and skills in both therapeutic and educational practices. Familiarity with group process, behavior modification techniques, the characteristics of the student population, and awareness of school policies and procedures is needed to offer the therapeutic components of the intervention. Participant feedback indicated that the therapeutic components of the group parent-training sessions were highly valued by participating parents. While the parent-training sessions were primarily designed to offer parent techniques based upon the principles of behavioral modification, the structure of the group format was adopted from a group-therapy model (Power et al., 2001). During the weekly group sessions, parents shared increasingly greater amounts of personal information, offered each other emotional support, and sometimes criticisms. Discussions regarding concerns about their children's academic performance, their individual feelings towards teachers and their children's school, and personal problems they've encountered throughout their children's academic career were held, and at times appeared to become emotionally charged. As a result, the group leader had to be prepared to deal effectively and professionally with each parent in the interest of the entire group; future facilitators may need to address the challenges presented by the wide range of personalities served in such a program (Power et al., 2001).

Parent responses to questionnaires emphasized the importance of learning that there were other parents experiencing similar difficulties with their children, and that talking to other parents during the group sessions was among the most valuable components of the program. Therefore, the therapeutic structure of the group sessions might have played an important role in the continued participation of the parents, the adherence to intervention strategies, and perhaps to the overall effectiveness of the intervention itself. As participants became more involved and

emotionally invested in group sessions, the role and responsibilities of the group facilitator had to adapt as well. While interactions among group members was highly encouraged, it became increasingly more challenging to allow for open discussion and support, while still ensuring that all necessary information and materials outlined in the treatment manual for each session was appropriately disseminated. This is consistent with recommendations made by Power et al. (2001) regarding group facilitation, as in addition to ensuring that the instructional content of the session is delivered, the group leader must work to facilitate group process, which is often difficult to maintain given the variety of personalities and needs of participants. Therefore, it may be important that those attempting to conduct these group parent-training sessions be prepared for the challenges that accompany group facilitation beyond simply becoming familiar with the material in the treatment manual.

While it is important that the group facilitator be capable of conducting group sessions in accordance with group process techniques, it is also important that the group facilitator be knowledgeable about the policies, procedures, and the recent history of the school itself. Due to the nature of the population the intervention is designed to address, many of the parents may have had unpleasant experiences with their children's school. A number of the parents involved in this study revealed that their children had a history of poor academic grades, difficulties meeting teacher demands, discipline problems, and in many cases, grade retention. While the participants were appreciative of the intervention being offered, they also brought many criticisms, asked many challenging questions, and were critical of the school. Therefore, the group facilitator should be prepared with the basic knowledge needed to field emotionally charged questions with general knowledge of school policies such as promotional criteria, academic standards, grading methods, and homework expectations, to name a few. Much of this

knowledge should be known by most school employees, while other information must be obtained through ongoing discussions with participating teachers. Therefore, it is important that the group facilitator maintain an open dialogue with participating teachers beyond simply receiving the daily electronic information needed to sustain the EDRC. Further, offering to "look into" questions asked by parents, and getting back to them with an answer, appeared to augment rapport between the facilitator and the group. If questions were general enough that answers could be shared in front of the whole group, then doing so served to enhance the perceived commitment of the facilitator. More personal questions were answered on an individual basis, permitting for more individual, but perhaps more meaningful rapport building with parents.

It is also important that the group facilitator be knowledgeable about the characteristics of the student population involved in the intervention, including the popular interests, age-appropriate activities, and developmental expectations of participating age groups. Further, the group facilitator should have familiarity and experience with behavior modification techniques. This body of knowledge is important as parents benefit from guidance, and specific and appropriate suggestions regarding the development and application of intervention procedures such as determining appropriate rewards when constructing individual point systems.

In considering the knowledge and skill sets that should be possessed by a group-facilitator, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, or Guidance Counselors with training in group process techniques are likely to be particularly well suited to conduct this intervention. Equipped with this knowledge base, all materials, weekly activities, handouts, and accompanying presentations are readily available in the intervention manual. While each session is clearly outlined including theoretical foundations and recommendations to facilitate group discussions, what is not specified is the amount of time that should be devoted to each topic.

Different groups tend to gravitate towards different topics and tend to shy away from others. Therefore, where one group may devote an extensive period of time on one intervention component, another might work quickly through it or attempt to neglect or avoid it altogether. While all components outlined in the manual must be addressed, the facilitator is given flexibility regarding the amount of time the group will devote to each specific topic. All important topics are not only addressed in the weekly presentations outlined in the intervention manual, they are also incorporated into the weekly parent homework assignments. It is often the parent responses, or lack of attention to specific homework exercises, that inform the group facilitator on which topics generate the most enthusiasm.

While the therapeutic value of the group format likely contributed greatly to continued parent participation and adherence to intervention expectations, the interactions among the group facilitator and group members that occurred after the group parent-training sessions should also be considered. After each session, parents and their children were provided with an informal catered meal, at which time everyone involved with the study interacted freely while sharing a meal together. During such occasions, parents interacted with children, research assistants, and the group facilitator in a less-structured and casual environment. Although the value of these interactions was not assessed, it is possible that such exchanges served to strengthen relationships among all stakeholders and therefore increased program compliance and prevented higher rates of attrition. Such interactions may have facilitated bonding and attachment among group members, and served to strengthen their relationship with the group facilitator. Therefore, it may be important that such opportunities for interaction and relationship building with group facilitators be provided in order to establish connections among all participants.

It is also crucial that the group facilitator develop and maintain a positive working relationship with teachers participating in the intervention. Teachers were asked to email all homework assignments, instructions, and other relevant information to the group facilitator on a daily basis. They were also asked to respond to parent emails. To minimize teacher's forgetting to email homework assignments, group emails were frequently sent to participating teachers reminding them to email the daily assignments, thanking them for their participation, offering updates regarding progress reported by parents, and reminding them of the time remaining before the intervention would conclude. These emails were sent on a daily basis during the first few weeks of the intervention, and then less frequently as the intervention progressed. Emails were always sent on the morning of the first day of the week throughout the intervention. While teachers typically remembered to email daily assignments, on the few occasions where one or two teachers forgot to send an assignment, group emails were sent out to all the teachers prior to the end of the school day reminding them to do so. During these occasions, the other participating teachers would either remind their colleagues to email the assignments, or they would send the assignments on their behalf. Due to the short duration of the 5 week intervention, this did not happen frequently, and did not appear to negatively affect teacher satisfaction with their participation.

All of the teachers had a positive response regarding their involvement during and after the study, and all of the teachers expressed their willingness to participate in the intervention again. While such sentiments are promising, it is important to remember that participating parents did not attempt to contact the teachers very often, and this intervention required limited teacher time. It is not clear whether this would be different if there were greater demands placed on the teacher.

The application of these new intervention techniques also provided an opportunity for new methods of data collection, as the EDRC appears to be well suited to collect data on a daily basis, rendering it sensitive to subtle changes in homework behavior. This makes it possible to deliver regular and accurate performance feedback, which serves to further strengthen the intervention. These data collection methods also provided for an opportunity to apply multiple Single Case Research (SCR) analytical methods, as the amount and type of data collected satisfied both Percentage of Non-overlapping Data (PND) and Percentage of All Non-overlapping Data (PAND) requirements. Combining these methods of statistical analysis also appears to be a rare, if not novel application, in current intervention research. Therefore, while the EDRC was designed to enhance this homework intervention, its data collection properties and its ability to lend that data to different analytical approaches may render it useful in other applied intervention procedures or research formats. In future EDRC applications, it is recommended that 3 weeks of baseline data be collected as opposed to the 2 weeks of baseline data collected in this study. This would better fulfill the requirements of the PND and PAND analytical techniques by allowing for the necessary 3 baseline data points to be derived from weekly mean homework completion rates equivalent to those represented during the intervention phase.

If baseline homework completion data is collected by teachers in future replications of this study, the data should be checked against teacher grading books to authenticate validity. This is because when averaged to derive a mean, the baseline data provided by classroom teachers regarding homework completion was identical for 4 of the study participants. While it is possible that these students failed to complete the same assignments because of the nature of the assignments themselves, the probability that these four students all failed to complete the same

amount of assignments during the 2 week baseline period is quite low. Therefore, referencing teacher provided data collection with grade books should help to address any potential concerns regarding the validity of teacher provided data in future studies.

With enhanced baseline data collection methods the EDRC should prove to be a valuable data collection technique. With regard to data obtained through parent rating scales, the lack of multiple baseline data points prevented the application of the SCR data analysis techniques applied in this study, leaving the data subject only to a visual analysis. The visual analysis indicated a strong directional trend, suggesting that problematic homework behaviors steadily decreased throughout the intervention. Future administration of this study should include a quantitative analysis of the slope and trend of parent reported HPC data to further support the effectiveness of the program as a viable homework intervention. Further, since the HPC was administered regularly throughout the intervention, perhaps applying a changing criterion design which identifies specific areas of concern on the HPC and focuses on the progressive enhancement of pre-specified problematic homework behaviors outlined in certain HPC questions could be applied to derive more quantitative results from the parent rating-scales.

It is hoped that the intervention tools and procedures that were designed for this study are replicated and expanded upon, as different age groups, different ethnic and cultural groups, and students with different areas of need would likely benefit greatly from the application of these methods. At present, it appears that no other group parent-training programs aimed at enhancing student homework performance have been examined for intervention effectiveness. Should similar programs be developed, a comparative analysis of programs might serve to add further support to the viability of this intervention.

Limitations

While the results of the study support the effectiveness of the program as a viable homework intervention which was well received by participants, there are several noteworthy limitations. First, the research is based on a small sample and replication of the program is needed to increase confidence in the findings. Second, the research was implemented by one consultant and the influence of this person on the treatment outcome is unknown. Replications with other consultants are needed in future research. It would also be helpful if the program were offered in different languages, with intervention materials including the EDRC and manual translated, as parents who aren't fluent in English are unable to fully benefit from the program. While these materials and accompanying handouts and presentations are comprehensive, offering them in different languages would serve to broaden their application to many students and families in need of academic support.

Although all participating students met the criteria for acceptance into the intervention program, the prior academic skills of each individual student participant remains unknown. While follow-up data conducted 4 weeks following intervention completion indicated that gains in performance were maintained, it might be helpful to track student performance for a lengthier period of time to see if future occurrences offer insight into students' skills. Future referrals to special education and the monitoring of performance of state-wide assessment scores may yield important information regarding correlations between student skill level and responsiveness to intervention techniques. Similarly, perhaps a review of student's past performances on state-wide assessments and other standardized measures of academic skills prior to participation might lend insight into intervention effectiveness on a comparative basis.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that the homework intervention was effective in enhancing the homework performance of children experiencing homework difficulties. All of the research hypotheses were supported, as decreases in problematic homework behaviors, increases in rates of student homework completion, and high rates of treatment satisfaction were evidenced by significant improvements on all outcome measures. While demonstrating treatment effectiveness was a primary goal of the study, applying the EDRC software and conducting a group-formatted parent-training program to address homework problems were exciting endeavors, as these intervention components were developed exclusively for the purposes of this study and had never been used in homework interventions. Therefore, it was particularly inspiring to receive such positive feedback from study participants, as they reported that they highly valued the EDRC, and that they greatly appreciated the therapeutic components of the group sessions.

While the quantitative results of the outcome measures are very promising from a research standpoint, the clinical value of the intervention was seen in the high levels of treatment satisfaction and the genuine value for the intervention and commitment to the group process communicated by the participants. As technology continues to rapidly develop and offers increasingly more versatile and efficient methods of communication, new approaches to treatment and education must develop accordingly. However, the personal and therapeutic aspects that accompany personal interactions should not be lost in the process. The intervention package developed for this study embraces both of these concepts. Perhaps future applications of these intervention procedures can be applied to a broader range of individuals with equally promising results.

Appendix A-Chronological Review of Individually Administered Parent-Training Homework Interventions

Author	Year	Pop.	Samp size	Grades	Length	Intervention Location	Independent Variables/Intervention	Methods of Home-School Communication	Dependent Variables	Results
Weiner, Sheridan, & Jensen	1998	At-Risk Gen. Ed.	5	6-8	Unknown	In School & By Phone	CBC Behavioral Consultation (semi-structured). Consultant works with pairs of parents & Teachers weekly.	Daily Planner (signed by parents and teachers each night). HW Tracking Sheet. Weekly phone contact.	HW completion. HW Accuracy. Teacher completed nightly tracking sheet.	Improvements in HW completion and Accuracy.
Rhoades & Kratochwill	1998	At-Risk Gen. Ed.	4	4-6	8 weeks	In School	5 Week structured individual parent training program.	Daily HW Log	HPC. HW Completion. HW Accuracy. Student Grades Parent Ratings of Treatment Satisfaction.	HPC-significant Improvement HW Completion rates increased to "normal" range. HW Accuracy rates improved to be "acceptable." High levels of treatment satisfaction reported by all parents.
Toney, Kelly, & Lanklos	2003	At-Risk Gen Ed.	37	6-8	4 weeks	Clinic. Weekly Phone contact.	Individual Semi-structured consultation sessions.	Daily Monitoring Sheet.	HPC. Consumer satisfaction questionnaire (CSQ). CPS.	HPC-Significant Improvements. No sig. change in HW completion & accuracy due to ceiling effects. CSQ-High Rates of satisfaction for parents

Appendix A
Chronological Review of Individually Administered Parent-Training Homework Interventions

Author	Year	Pop.	Samp size	Grades	Length	Intervention Location	Independent Variables	Methods of Home-School Communication	Dependent Variables	Results
Cancio, West, & Young,	2004	ED Self-contained spec. Ed.	6	6-8	4 months	Parents trained in their homes.	1 session of semi-structured parent training.	Self-monitoring matching sheets.	HPC Ratings. HW Completion. HW Accuracy. KTEA-Academic assessment.	HPC-Sig. Improvements. HW Completion-Sig. Improvement. HW Accuracy- Sig. Improvement. KTEA-Improved academic performance.
Meyers	2007	ADHD	42	6-8	4 weeks	Clinic. Weekly Phone contact.	Individual Semi-structured consultation sessions.	Daily Monitoring Sheet.	HPC. HW Completion. Amount of parent time devoted to HW help. Consumer satisfaction questionnaire (CSQ).	HPC-Significant Improvements. CSQ-High Rates of satisfaction for parent involvement condition. CPS-Teacher ratings showed improved classroom behavior.

Appendix B-Chronological Review of Group Administered Parent-Training Homework Interventions

Author	Year	Pop.	Samp size	Grades	Length	Intervention Location	Independent Variables/ Intervention	Methods of Home-School Communication	Dependent Variables	Results
Habboushe, Leff, Eiraldi, & Power	1999	ADHD	N/A	2-6	7 weeks	Clinic/University Training Center.	Structured Parent-Training Program (individual & group administration).	Daily HW Book (signed by parent & Teacher).	Impact of ADHD Symptoms assessed. HW Completion. HW Accuracy. Treatment Satisfaction/Social Validity.	No Data Collected. Empirical study not conducted.
Power, Karustis, Habboushe	2001	ADHD	9	2-6	7 weeks	Outpatient Clinic (Hospital)	Structured Group Parent-Training Program	Daily HW Book	HPC. HW Completion. HW Accuracy. APRS. CBQ. PSI.	HPC-Significant Improvement. No change in HW completion & accuracy due to ceiling effects. CBQ-Moderate reduction in parent-child conflict. APRS-No change in academic productivity. PSI-No change in family stress.
Power, Russell, Soffer, Blom-Hoffman, & Grim	2002	ADHD	N/A	2-6	13 weeks	Clinic/University Training Center.	Structured Group Parent-Training Program	Daily Report Card	Impact of ADHD Symptoms assessed. HW Completion. HW Accuracy. Treatment Satisfaction/Social Validity.	No Data Collected. Empirical study not conducted.
Beck & Fish	2011	At-Risk Gen Ed.	7	4-5	5-weeks	In School	Structured Group Parent Training Program	Electronic Daily Report Card-Online software.	HPC. HW Completion. HW Accuracy. Treatment satisfaction	HPC-Significant Improvements. High Rates of HW completion. Mixed results for HW accuracy. CSQ-High Rates of satisfaction

Appendix C-Outline of Homework Intervention Training , Rhoades & Kratochwill (1998)

MEETING 1 Introduction and Overview	
Content: Program Overview Discuss Dual Parent Support and plan ways to share readings and information. Present *Homework Solution* book. Introduce homework log. Problem Identification and Analysis Content: Identify areas of concern based on student work completion and accuracy data, teacher interview information, parent interview information, and completed parent questionnaires. Preview next week.	Assignments: Complete homework log. Complete weekly evaluation (bring both to next meeting). Read manual (first 12 pages, efficacy of homework and the study environment). Reading on study periods (Ch. 5). Obtain a timer.
MEETING 2 Designing a Homework Environment and Initiating Study Periods	
Content: Review homework log Review and graph teacher data, plan for parent to graph data with child. Discuss assigned readings. Clarify fading supervision and home note. Select homework environment. Review chapter 5 together. Establish study periods and discuss use of letters to child, involving all family members, different study times/grade, scheduling and posting times, separate timers, breaks for questions, availability for supervision, family meeting, contacts. Review and preview next week.	Assignments: Complete homework log. Present data graph and graph data with student. Complete weekly evaluations (bring both to next meeting). Read Chapter 6. Initiate study periods.
MEETING 3 Maintaining Effective Study Periods and Interfacing With School	
Content: Review homework log and graphing. Review and graph new data. Problem solve. Review manual. Discuss home note and teacher conference goals. Reconsider use of contracts. Prepare for teacher conference. Review and preview next week (incentives).	Assignments: Complete homework log. Complete weekly evaluation (bring both to next meeting). Graph data with student. Continue study periods. Respond to problems as planned. Initiate teacher conference. Conduct conference as planned. Plan home—school communication (bring notes from conference to next meeting).
MEETING 4 Behavior Management Techniques and Homework Incentive Programs	
Content: Review homework log and graph data. Complete new HPC Ratings. Review parent-teacher meeting. Plan response to problems.	Assignments: Complete homework log. Continue study periods. Complete weekly evaluations (bring both to next meeting).

Teach reinforcement techniques. Review manual. Plan incentive strategies. Review and preview next week (communication and evaluation).	Read manual. Graph data with student. Initiate incentive program.
MEETING 5 Maintaining Effective Intervention and Program Evaluation.	
Content: Review homework log and graph data. Review total program. Communication patterns. Complete evaluation forms. Plan for continued communication.	Assignments: Telephone consultant biweekly. Continue study periods. Continue incentive program.

Appendix D-Family School Success Program (FSS): Outline of session topics
Power, Russell, Soffer, Blom-Hoffman, & Grim (2002)

1. Introducing family-school success Overview of family involvement model Positively attending/improving the quality of children's play activities. Managing parental emotional responses in parenting children with ADHD.
2. Understanding children's problems using functional assessment methods Giving instructions effectively Positive reinforcement using attention and verbal praise
3. Structured reinforcement systems at home Reducing non-educational video time
4. Family-school consultation Importance of homework assignments books School-home notes Working with challenging teachers
5. Home-school conference Identify homework time limits Design school-home note
6. Review school-home note procedure Establishing a homework ritual Developing a structured reinforcement system at home
7. Managing time and setting goals Managing time and setting goals
8. Review of goal setting procedures Using punishment effectively with token reinforcement
9. Home-school conference Apply goal setting strategy to classwork Modify school-home note Identify academic skills deficits
10. Parent tutoring Academic intervention strategies
11. Individualized Parent Tutoring Interventions Developing individualized parent tutoring interventions for each family
12. Advocating for your child in school Overview of educational law Integrating strategies
13. One month follow-up Notes from teacher to parent regarding the child's general behavior or academic Performance

Appendix E-OUTLINE OF HOMEWORK IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (HIP)

Beck & Fish, 2012

Session 1-Welcome to the Homework Improvement Program	*Handouts-Session 1*
Introduction to the program. Rapport building exercise. An introduction to program goals and guidelines. Baseline data are collected. Information about the importance of homework, research findings regarding homework completion and accuracy, and the importance of limiting time spent on homework discussed. Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) Model introduced. Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) introduced. Guidelines for giving effective instructions outlined. Parent homework assigned	1. HPC completed (Baseline) 2. Welcome to the Homework 3. Improvement Program. 4 .Giving Effective Instructions.
Session 2-Establishing the Homework Routine	*Handouts-Session 2*
Session 2 introduce behavioral modification strategies. Guidance in identifying target behaviors and antecedents that may contribute to homework difficulties offered. Identification of problematic patterns of behavior. A-B-C (Antecedent, Behavior, Consequences) discussed. Context in which children complete homework examined. Homework Routine developed Parent Homework assigned	1. Establishing a Homework Routine. 2. A-B-C Sample Worksheet. 3. A-B-C Sample 4. HW Routine Checklist
Session 3-Developing the Point System & Rewards Menu	*Handouts-Session 3*
Point system introduced (token economy). Individual rewards menus developed. CISS-4 principles outlined. Types of positive reinforcement reviewed. Response Cost reviewed..	1. Developing a Point System. 2. Developing a Rewards Menu. 3. Sample HW Rewards Worksheet. 4. HW Rewards Worksheet (5 copies).
Session 4-Working Towards Self-Monitoring: Goal Setting & Time Management	*Handouts-Session 4*
Enhancement of the point systems and rewards menus. Role of positive reinforcement is reviewed. Developing time management skills. Developing goal-setting skills.	1. Using positive Reinforcement. 2. Using Correction Strategies Successfully. 3. Managing Time and Goal Setting. 4. Goal Setting Handout. 5. HW Routine Self-Checklist (5 copies)
Session 5-Individual HW Plans	*Handouts-Session 5*
Parent training program reviewed. Assistance developing individualized homework plans offered. Outcome data will be obtained.	*Outcome Measures* 1. HPC completed. *2.* Follow-Up Questionnaire

Appendix F-Homework Improvement Program (HIP)

Clinical Treatment Manual

Beck & Fish (2012)

Appendix F

Homework Improvement Program (HIP)-Clinical Treatment Manual

Table of Contents

Appendix F 1-Group Parent Training Session 1

Group Parent-Training Manual

Group Session 1

Goals:

1) Establish rapport/relationships with parents
2) Collect baseline data
3) Introduce program goals and guidelines for group sessions
4) Educate parents about:
    a) Importance of homework
    b) Research findings regarding homework completion and accuracy
    c) Importance of limiting time spent on homework
5) Introduce Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) procedures
6) Educate parents about giving effective instructions
7) Give parents their first parent homework assignment

Overview

Session 1 begins with a rapport building exercise. An introduction to program goals and guidelines for the group sessions is then offered. Baseline data is collected and then parents are offered information about the importance of homework, research findings regarding homework completion and accuracy, and the importance of limiting time spent on homework. Daily report card (DRC) procedures and method of recording homework assignments are then introduced.

Establishing Rapport

Rapport will be facilitated by focusing on what the parents have in common; they all have children who are exhibiting difficulties with homework. The following activities will be conducted:

a) Group members will be given name tags.
b) Clinician introduces themselves to the group.
c) Participants are asked to introduce themselves, share reasons for their involvement in the parent training program, and to discuss one or two problems they're experiencing in helping their child with homework.
d) Problems reported by parents will be recorded on a dry-erase board as they are stated. Parents will be assured that the specific problems they mentioned will all be addressed at some point during the program.

Collect baseline data

The importance of collecting data to assess progress in homework performance, academic and behavioral functioning will be explained to parents. Parents will then submit the following completed rating measures:

a) Homework Problem Checklist (Anesko et al., 1987)

Introduction of program goals/guidelines for group sessions

Parents will be informed of the goals of the homework program. The benefits of a group format will be explained. Since parents are likely entering the program already feeling discouraged (Power et al., 2001), the homework program will be introduced in a manner that instills hope in

them that their child will be successful. This will include explaining that all components of the parent-training program are based on research involving homework interventions.

a) The goals of the program that will be discussed with parents are:

- To improve homework performance and efficiency.
- To improve overall academic functioning.
- To strengthen parent-child relationships, which results in reduced parent stress (Power et al., 2001).
- Enhance parent-teacher communication.

b) Parents will be encouraged to generate their own goals they hope to achieve by participating in the program.

c) The following key point of the Conjoint Behavioral Consultation model (CBC) will then be discussed:

- Successful homework intervention requires collaboration between home and school.
- Successful home-school collaboration entails active parental involvement in educational issues and a mutual respect between parents and teachers.
- The student must be an active participant in planning homework interventions.
- Parents, teachers, and children must work together to identify antecedents and consequences that may be maintaining homework problems.
- Interventions must address the antecedents and consequences that are maintaining the homework problems in both the home and school settings.

d) Handout 1: "Welcome to the Homework Improvement Program" will be handed out and discussed. (Appendix)

e) The format for each session will be:

- 5 weekly group meetings.
- Each session will last approximately 60 minutes.
- Teachers will have ongoing communication with group facilitator throughout the duration of the program.
- Online methods of parent-teacher communication designed to enhance student's homework performance are designed to continue beyond the end of the group parent training sessions.
- Follow-up data (outcome measures) will be collected approximately one month after the last parent training session from parents and teachers.

f) The following ground rules will be discussed:

- Prompt arrival is essential.
- Consistent attendance is essential.
- Active participation is encouraged; however participation can be facilitated through active listening by each group member.
- Successful home-school collaboration requires that parents communicate frequently and respectfully with their child's teacher. This must include, but is not limited to, use of the Electronic Daily Report Card procedure.
- Parents must complete weekly family assignment sheets.
- Parents must complete parent homework assignments.
- Parents must complete Daily Report Cards accurately.

Educating parents about the Importance of homework

a) The specific homework expectations of the child's school will be explained, including the percentage that homework assignments are factored in to the student's overall class grade.

b) The importance of homework on their child's overall promotional criteria will be explained.

c) The following research findings regarding homework will be shared with parents:

- Many educators and policy makers see benefits of homework beyond improved test scores and advocate its assignment to students in all grades (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).
- Traditionally, homework has been defined as assignments given by teachers that are to be performed by students outside of school or during non-instructional classroom time (Cooper, 1989; Keith & DeGraff, 1997).
- There are several components to effective homework. First, there should be a clear purpose for the homework, with clear instructions that result in a specific product. Second, homework should be assigned in a way that it can be completed in a reasonable amount of time with at least 80 percent accuracy. Third, a variety of types of homework should be utilized. Fourth, it should be assigned regularly. Finally, there should be regular feedback and follow-up on all homework (Olympia, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1994).
- Research examining the effectiveness of homework indicates that homework has a positive effect on academic grades and test scores.
- Students who are assigned homework perform at a higher academic level than those who are not (Keith et al., 1993).
- Homework may be used to reinforce learning by giving students the opportunity to practice material presented in class, or to prepare for new material (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001).
- During the elementary grades, homework is typically designed to practice skills or to prepare for future lessons (Power et al., 2001).
- Homework can also be used for non-instructional purposes to promote parent-child interactions or to facilitate parent-teacher communication. These different functions for homework all vary depending upon the characteristics and needs of the students, teacher, and schools.
- Homework during the elementary school years provides frequent opportunities for home-school collaboration and parental involvement in school, which has been shown to be strongly related to student outcomes (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992; Fantuzzo, Davis, & Ginsburg, 1995; Olympia, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1994; Power et al., 2001).
- The effectiveness of involving parents in education are well substantiated, as several reviews have documented research supporting a variety of benefits to students, including improvements in academic achievement, attitude toward school, aspirations for the future, attendance, maturation, self-concept, and behavior (Christenson et al., 1992; Epstein, 1987; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jesnson, 1998).

d) *Homework completion and accuracy*

- Time spent doing homework is a critical component that influences achievement from elementary through high school.

- More importantly, the amount of homework completed has been strongly related to overall academic outcomes (Cooper et al., 1998; Keith & DeGraff, 1997). It can have a significant positive effect on the performance of all students regardless of ability (Keith, 1986).
- Results from a recent meta-analysis conducted by Cooper, Robinson, and Patall (2006) revealed a positive relationship between educational outcomes and homework.

e) *Limiting time spent on homework*

Parents will be informed that it is important that daily time spent on homework be limited to a pre-specified amount of time. As a component of the Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC), the maximum amount of time a child should spend on their homework assignment will be specified. It will be explained to parents that excessive amounts of time spent on homework sessions can lead to wasted time, frustration, discouragement, parent reinforcement of unproductive behavior, parent-child conflict, and failure to address other family issues (Power et al., 2001).

The benefits of limiting time spent on homework that will be shred with parents will include:

- Teaching children to work more efficiently.
- Enabling children to become more responsible by exercising the consequences of their inefficiency.
- Reducing the period of time parents need to spend on helping their child with homework.

Parents and teachers will communicate time spent on homework through the daily report card, as teachers will take this into consideration.

Electronic Daily Report Card (DRC) procedures (Appendix)

It will be explained to parents that a daily report card (EDRC) must be completed by the parent each night following the child's time spent on the homework activity. The Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC) was developed as an efficient means through which regular parent-teacher communication can be conducted online, thereby addressing some of the shortcomings associated with similar paper and pencil procedures. It is anticipated that the EDRC will place the absolute minimum burden on participating teachers compared to paper and pencil counterparts. Last, the EDRC has been formatted to be a data collection tool, through which nightly data will be collected directly from participants.

Each school day, teachers will email their homework assignments to the program facilitator. This will include any necessary homework instructions and the maximum amount of time that should be spent on an assignment. The homework assignment and corresponding information will then be entered into the already developed EDRC template, which is formatted by grade. The template will include the homework assignment and instructions (modified daily), followed by 4 brief questions through which parents are able to select only one answer from a rubric. These 4 questions will ask parents to provide information regarding rates of homework completion, the amount of parental involvement needed, the amount of time spent on each assignment, and whether or not the parent needed to contact the teacher about the assignment. Email links offering direct online contact with classroom teachers and with the program facilitator will also be included in the EDRC. Parents will receive the EDRC each day through their email accounts within a half an hour of the end of each school day. Parents answer the 4 questions after homework is completed and simply click a button labeled "done" and the student

homework survey results are submitted. The EDRC will be sent out in different colors each day to enhance interest and to differentiate from the previous night.

The portion of the EDRC that will be completed by the parent will include:

- Time spent on the homework assignment.
- Amount of homework completed.
- Level of parental involvement needed for the child to complete the assignment.
- Parent can directly contact the teacher via the email link with any questions/concerns regarding the HW assignment.
- Parents also indicate whether or not they've contacted the teacher about each particular assignment.

Giving Effective Instructions

Parents can benefit greatly from guidelines that are clear, concise, and reasonable (Power et al., 2001). If instructions are given correctly, children are more likely to comply and follow through with requests.

- Parents will be given the Effective Instructions Handout (Appendix H).
- The following characteristics of effective instructions will be presented in PowerPoint and reviewed:
    - Minimize Instructions (i.e. if television is on, stand between television and child when giving commands).
    - Maintain eye contact when giving instructions.
    - Give brief, concrete directives (avoid complicated, multi-step requests)
    - Issue instructions as a statement (not as a favor or a question).
    - Instructions must be reasonable and achievable.
    - Verify that child has heard and clearly understands instructions (if child does not appear to be following directions they can be asked to repeat instructions given to them).
    - Mean what you say and be ready to follow up if child does not comply (never make idol or grandiose threats that cannot be followed through with).
    - After a command is given, watch what child does and offer consequences (positive or negative) based on their actions.
    - Provide praise when child complies with instructions (child is more likely to follow through if praise is provided for initial attempts to comply).
    - Empathize with parents that this is "easier said than done" because it may be going against years of pre-established routines, so don't give up!
- Parents will be given the opportunity to voice any obstacles they anticipate or any concerns they have about giving effective instructions.

Homework for parents

Explain to parents that at the completion of each session they will be given a homework assignment. For this session, their homework assignment is to:

- Parents are asked to rigidly enforce the absolute time limit spent on their child's homework assignment in accordance with teacher recommendations.
- Parents are asked to fully complete the Electronic Daily Report Card on a consistent basis.

- Parents will be asked to follow the guidelines for giving effective instructions (emphasis will be placed on offering children praise for compliance).

Conclusion

At the conclusion of session 1, parents will be given an opportunity to ask questions and share any concerns they have regarding the program. Parents will also be provided with binders in which they will be asked to keep all of their handouts/materials. Parent homework assignments will be outlined and placed as the first page in their binder. Parents will be asked to bring their binders with them to each training session.

Appendix F 2-Session 1: Power Point Presentation

Welcome to the Homework Improvement Program

Meeting 1

Welcome to the Homework Improvement Program!

- **OUR GOALS:**
- To improve homework performance and efficiency.
- To improve overall academic functioning.
- To strengthen parent-child relationships, which results in reduced parent stress (Power et al., 2001).
- To enhance Parent-Teacher communication.

Overview of the Homework Improvement Program

- 5 weekly group meetings.
- Each meeting will last approximately 60 minutes.
- Teachers will have ongoing communication with group facilitator throughout the duration of the program.
- Methods of parent-teacher communication designed to enhance student's homework performance are designed to continue beyond the end of our group meetings.

Expectations

- Please arrive on time.
- Please attend all meetings.
- Active participation is encouraged.
- Communicate frequently and respectfully with your child's teacher. Take full advantage of the Electronic Daily Report Card!
- Complete Electronic Daily Report Cards accurately.
- Complete parent homework assignments.

Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC)

- Successful home-school collaboration entails active parental involvement in educational issues and a mutual respect between parents and teachers.
- The student should be an active participant in planning homework practices.
- Parents, teachers, and children should work together to identify causes for behaviors and consequences that may maintain any homework problems.
- Interventions must address the causes of homework behavior and their consequences that maintain any homework problems in both the home and school settings.

Homework: What the research tells us

- Many educators and policy makers see benefits of homework beyond improved test scores and advocate its assignment to students in all grades (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).
- Homework has a positive effect on academic grades and test scores.
- Students who are assigned homework perform at a higher academic level than those who are not (Keith et al., 1993).
- Homework may be used to reinforce learning by giving students the opportunity to practice material presented in class, or to prepare for new material (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001).

Homework: What the research tells us

Homework provides frequent opportunities for home-school collaboration and parental involvement in school, which has been shown to be strongly related to student outcomes (Christenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992; Rentuzzo, Davis, & Ginsburg, 1995; Olympia, Sheridan, & Jenson, 1994; Power et al., 2001).

The effectiveness of involving parents in education is well substantiated, as several reviews have documented research supporting a variety of benefits to students, including improvements in:

- Academic achievement.
- Attitude toward school.
- Aspirations for the future.
- Attendance.
- Maturation, self-concept, and behavior (Christenson et al., 1992; Epstein, 1987; Weiner, Sheridan, & Jesmon, 1998).

Homework: What the research tells us

- The amount of homework completed has been strongly related to overall academic outcomes (Cooper et al., 1998; Keith & DeGraff, 1997).
- The amount of homework completed can have a significant positive effect on the performance of all students regardless of ability (Keith, 1986).
- Current studies revealed a positive relationship between educational outcomes and homework (Cooper, Robinson, & Patall, 2006)

Changing Homework Habits: Time Limits

Excessive amounts of time spent on homework sessions can lead to wasted time, frustration, discouragement, parent-child conflict, and failure to address other family issues.

- Daily time spent on homework should be limited to a pre-specified amount of time.
- The maximum amount of time a child should spend on their homework assignment will be specified on the daily report card.

Changing Homework Habits: Time Limits

The benefits of limiting time spent on homework that will be shared with parents will include:

- Teaching children to work more efficiently.
- Enabling children to become more responsible by exercising the consequences of their inefficiency.
- Reducing the period of time parents need to spend on helping their child with homework.
- Parents and teachers can communicate time spent on homework regularly, as teachers will take this into consideration.

THE ELECTRONIC DAILY REPORT CARD (EDRC)

- You will receive an e-mail every day your child has homework which will include the Electronic Daily Report Card (EDRC).
- When you open the e-mail, please click on the link saying:
- "Here is a link to the survey": http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=5JK_2bOBtXe7gFNHhkzwMgQA_3d_3d"
- Once opened, you will be able to see your child's homework assignment for that night.
- Teacher's instructions and a maximum time limit to be spent on the homework assignment will also be posted

THE ELECTRONIC DAILY REPORT CARD (EDRC)

- Once your child has completed their homework, or when the time limit is up, please answer the following questions by simply clicking the appropriate checkbox:
- 1. How much of this homework assignment was completed?
- 2. How much help your child needed.
- 3. How long your child spent on the assignment.
- 4. If you plan on contacting your child's teacher.

THE ELECTRONIC DAILY REPORT CARD (EDRC)

- You can then contact your child's teacher directly via email by clicking on the "Email Teacher" link.
- If your computer has Microsoft Outlook already set up for email, this link will connect you directly to the teacher's email.
- If not, simply COPY the teacher's email address, then open up your email and PASTE it into an outgoing email message to be sent (recipient box).
- Make sure to click "DONE" at the bottom of the Daily Report Card once you've answered all of the questions- THIS IS THE ONLY WAY THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO ACCURATELY CHART YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS!!!

THE ELECTRONIC DAILY REPORT CARD (EDRC)

Data-Based Decision Making

- How is your child performing right now?
- Has there been any change in your child's homework behavior?
- Is your child's homework behavior improving?
- How much improvement is occurring?
- Is the Homework Improvement Program working for your child?
- What changes need to be made?

Giving Effective Instruction

1. Maintain eye contact.
2. Keep Instruction Brief (i.e. if television is on, stand between television and child when giving commands)..
3. Use a clear, neutral tone of voice.
4. Make a statement!
5. Don't compete.
6. Choose your battles.
7. Mean what you say.
8. Paraphrase.
9. "I'm not telling you again."
10. Have positive consequences waiting.

Don't forget the praise!

- It's very important to praise your child as much as possible during their homework time.
- Even if they are struggling with their work, you can easily praise them for following each of the steps of the homework routine.

Parent Homework

- Rigidly enforce the absolute time limit spent on your child's homework assignment in accordance with teacher recommendations.
- Fully complete the Electronic Daily Report Card on a consistent basis.
- Follow the guidelines for giving effective instructions to the best of your ability.
- Remember to praise your child for compliant behaviors.

Appendix F 3-Handouts: Session 1

Welcome to the Homework Improvement Program!

Thank you for choosing to participate in the Homework Improvement Program! This research-based program has been developed to empower you to work with your child to overcome the challenges of homework. Research has shown that parental involvement is essential in improving academic performance and achieving homework success for struggling learners. Becoming actively involved in your child's education can provide your children with a variety of benefits, including improvements in academic achievement, improved attitude toward school, greater aspirations for the future, better attendance, maturation, enhanced self-concept, and improvements in behavior. By working together with you and your child's teachers, it is hoped that we can help your child achieve their academic potential.

To achieve these common goals, it is important that you follow the follow the following program guidelines:

1. Please arrive at each session on time

One of the basic principles of successful homework is beginning at the same time each night. It is important that you model timeliness for your child by being ready to begin the group on time. We will be the meeting the same time each week for 6 weeks, with each meeting lasting 90 minutes. In order to achieve our goals in this short amount of time we'll need to take advantage of all of the time we have.

2. Be sure to consistently complete the daily report cards

Your child's teacher will be sending home a daily report card with your child each night. It is essential that you complete the brief parent portion of the daily report card each night. This will provide you with the opportunity for you to communicate with your child's teacher on a regular basis. It will also allow us to chart your child's improvement and to learn how to best help them achieve in school. In order to do this it is also important that you bring your completed daily report cards to each meeting.

3. Respect Confidentiality

A key requirement to the homework improvement program is that you do not discuss other families' problems or concerns outside of our meetings.

4. Do your homework!

This is an active, goal-directed program. After each session, you will be given a short assignment to help practice the principles reviewed during each meeting. This will help you

strengthen your ability to help your child. Parents who are committed to improving the quality of their child's homework will consistently complete their assignments. One way to ensure that you do not become frustrated is to allow us to assist you in troubleshooting problems with assignments.

5. Please bring your homework folder to each meeting

You will be given a homework folder in which you can keep all of the materials and worksheets that are given to you. Please be sure to bring this folder and all your materials to each meeting.

6. Participate!

By expressing your concerns and voicing your opinion , you will gain support from one another and will have a greater opportunity to learn and to address the needs of your children.

7. Listen to each other

In this group you will learn that you are not alone. By actively listening to one another you can benefit by learning through each others experiences.

8. Don't give up

While your child's homework performance may improve right away, lasting benefits will become more evident as the group unfolds.

9. Feel free to call

If you have any questions or concerns during the week, or if you need assistance or guidance on any of the group activities, please do not hesitate to call me during school hours at 973-450-3500 x5451.

10. Enjoy the group and have fun!

GIVING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Maintain eye contact. You are more likely to have your child's attention if you make and keep eye contact.

2. Keep instructions brief. It is easier for children to follow clear, simple, single-step instructions. They should be limited to one specific behavior at a time. (e.g. "Take out your daily planner", rather than; "Take off your shoes, take out your planner, put your books on the table, and start your homework").

3. Use a clear, neutral tone of voice. When spoken to in an emotional tone, children may hear the tone of voice instead of the content of what is being said. By speaking in a neutral tone of voice you can convey what you are trying to tell them and minimize hostility and oppositional reactions.

4. Make a statement! Instructions should be given as a statement. Avoid presenting instructions as a question, a favor, or by using sarcasm.

5. Don't compete. Instructions should be given free from distractions. Don't give instructions if you're competing for your child's attention with the TV, stereo, computer or video games.

6. Choose your battles. Be reasonable. Don't set your child up to fail. Instructions should be reasonable and achievable.

7. Mean what you say. Deliver instructions firmly and be sure that you can follow up on promised consequences. Actions speak louder than words. Children may "test the waters" because they likely won't believe you're serious until you consistently follow through with your promises.

8. Paraphrase. Have your child repeat the instructions you gave back to you by stating "please tell me what I just said." This will allow you to make sure that your instructions have been heard, and it will also provide you with feedback on exactly what you are actually telling them.

9. "I'm not telling you again." Be clear about how many times you will repeat an instruction before you enforce negative consequences. (Research indicates that it is best to issue an instruction, wait 15 seconds for your child to comply, issue a warning if necessary, and then provide a consequence within 5 seconds if the child does not comply).

10. Have positive consequences waiting**.** State positive consequences clearly before you state your instructions.

Appendix F 4-Group Parent Training Session 2

Group Session 2
Goals:
1) Review of parent homework assignments
2) Review Electronic Daily Report Card procedures
3) Assist parent in developing an understanding and analyzing the antecedents and consequences of behavior (ABC's)
4) Assist parents in developing a Daily Homework Routine
5) Assign parent homework for session 2

Overview

Session 2 is designed to begin to introduce behavioral modification strategies to parents. Parents will be offered guidance in identifying target behaviors and antecedents that may contribute to homework difficulties. Guidelines for developing a structured Daily Homework Routine with their children will also be outlined.

Homework Review

This session will begin with a review of the parent homework assignment given at the end of session 1. Beginning each session with a review of the previously assigned homework will serve to provide parents with feedback about their participation in the program and will reinforce the importance of parents completing their homework in a timely manner (power et al., 2001). The review of homework during this session will involve discussing parent's experiences enforcing a maximum homework time limit. It will also attend to any concerns or compliance issues regarding completion of EDRC's.

- Parents will be asked to share their experiences using the EDRC.
- Parents will be asked to discuss the conversation they had with their child about homework concerns.
- Homework concerns that children shared with their parents will be written on a dry erase board (which will be referred to later during this session.
- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences implementing homework time limits (the importance of adhering to time limits and not helping their children with homework issues after the time limit has expired will be stressed).
- It is recommended that parents who had a difficult time enforcing time limits use a countdown timer to help enforce limits on future occasions (power et al., 2001).

Analyzing Antecedents and Consequences of Behavior

Since parents attending the program are likely to feel that they are to blame for their child's homework problems, parents will be reassured that problems with homework have many causes, and that one important factor is that children may have a strong, intrinsic tendency to have difficulties with homework (Power et al., 2001). It will be explained to parents that children often feel negatively about homework, the interactions surrounding it, and describe homework as boring and lacking intrinsic interest (Coutts, 2004). Many students are even found to lack the incentive to record their homework assignments diligently due to beliefs that they will receive poor grades on their homework regardless of the level of effort they put fourth (Greene, 2002). Overall, research suggests that the level of dissatisfaction with homework appears higher for

those most closely involved, namely the students, than for either parents or teachers (Cooper, Lindsay, Nye, & Greathouse, 1998).

In this section it will be explained to parents that the way in which the homework environment is organized and the way they respond to their child's behavior are strong contributing factors to their child's homework problems (Power et al., 2001). To assist them in overcoming these difficulties, strategies will be offered to help them identify specific problematic patterns of behavior. This will involve assisting parents in identifying antecedents and consequences that may be triggering and maintaining target behaviors. This will be done by:

- Parents will be asked to discuss some of the behavioral factors that are involved in their children's difficulties completing their homework.
- Parents will be asked to share some environmental events that may preceded homework difficulties (i.e. allowing children to watch television prior to, or while doing their homework which may make it difficult to concentrate and be productive).
- Consequences that can maintain problematic behaviors will be discussed (e.g. allowing a child watching television when homework hasn't been completed can reinforce unproductive behaviors).
- Problems will be recorded on the marker board.
- The Homework A-B-C Worksheet will then be distributed (Appendix F).
- The acronyms of "A"= Antecedent, "B"=Behavior, "C"=Consequences will be explained.
- Parents will be invited to volunteer to do a functional assessment of homework difficulties experienced by their children during the past week (the list of problems on the marker board will be referred to when applicable).
    - Parents will be asked to describe environmental events that precede the occurrence of an identified target behavior.
    - Participants will be encouraged to identify which of these events may have triggered the problem.
    - Parents will also be asked to describe events that took place during and after the child's problematic behavior with a focus on the parent's responses to the child's behavior.
    - Parents will be encouraged to identify consequences that may be maintaining the problem.
- All parents will then be asked to perform a quick functional assessment of a specific difficulty their child is having with homework using the A-B-C worksheet.
- If parents are willing to share their functional assessment, one or two of the functional assessments will be reviewed with the group after the parents have completed the exercise.

Developing a Daily Homework Routine

Parents will focus on changing antecedents of undesirable homework behavior as a means of encouraging a more productive response. The context in which children complete homework will be examined including the "when, where, and what of homework" which will be referred to as the "homework Routine."

- The Establishing the Homework Routine handout will be distributed (Appendix).
- The importance of doing homework in a location that is conducive to attentive and productive work will be emphasized.

- Parents will be asked to identify such a location that will be designated as the location in which their child will complete their homework on a consistent basis (this location will be compared to the current location being used).
- The importance of having children do their homework at an optimal time will be emphasized.
- Parents will be asked to discuss what time their children do their homework.
- Parents will be asked to analyze the extent to which their child is working at an optimal time (e.g. a time that promotes attentive behavior, minimizes distractions, accounts for fatigue, etc.).
- Parents will be asked to select an optimal time for their children to do their homework. An optimal time will:
    - Account for obstacles children encounter (promoting attentive behavior, minimizing distractions, accounting for fatigue, etc.).
    - Be a time that is convenient for parents so that they can offer assistance and guidance without interrupting other parental responsibilities.
    - Be consistent (Having a set time each evening establishes a routine and prevents the child from perceiving the parent as arbitrarily deciding when homework should begin).
- The importance of the child being organized and prepared to begin their homework at the designated homework time will be emphasized (having assignment, books, materials, etc. ready when homework time begins).
- Parents will be instructed to put together a "homework kit" which contains the supplies needed for children to complete most of their homework assignments.
- The Homework Routine Worksheet will be distributes and reviewed with parents.

Homework for parents

- Parents are asked to continue to rigidly enforce the absolute time limit spent on their child's homework assignment in accordance with teacher recommendations.
- Parents will identify at least three problematic homework behaviors and complete the Homework A-B-C exercise for each of these behaviors.
- Parents will be asked to post the Homework Routine in a prominent place close to where the child will be doing their homework.
- Parents are asked to continue to consistently complete the Electronic Daily Report Card

Appendix F 5-Session 2: Power Point Presentation

Homework Improvement Program

Meeting 2

Welcome Back!

Our Goals:

- Review Homework.
- Review Daily Report Card Procedures.
- Develop a Daily Homework Routine.
- Learning Our A-B-C's

Understanding Homework Behavior

- Problems with homework have many causes.
- Children may have a strong, intrinsic tendency to have difficulties with homework (Power et al., 2001)
- Children often feel negatively about homework, the interactions surrounding it, and describe homework as boring and lacking intrinsic interest (Coutts, 2004).

Understanding Homework Behavior

- Many students lack the incentive to record their homework assignments due to beliefs that they will receive poor grades on their homework regardless of level of effort (Greene, 2002).
- The level of dissatisfaction with homework appears higher for those most closely involved, namely the students, than for either parents or teachers (Cooper, Lindsay, Nye, & Greathouse, 1998).

The A-B-C's of Behavior

- **Antecedent**- Events that precede the occurrence of a target behavior(s). (e.g. time of day, physical setting, people, activity).
- **Behavior**- Observable behavior(s) following identified antecedent.
- **Consequence**-Event/occurrence/change in environment that results when the child engages in/exhibits a behavior.

The A-B-C's of Behavior

- ***B:*** What are some behavioral factors involved in your children's difficulties completing their homework assignments?
- ***A:*** What are some environmental events that may ***precede*** homework difficulties? (i.e. allowing children to watch TV prior to, or while doing their homework which may make it difficult to concentrate and be productive)
- ***C:*** What are some ***consequences*** that can maintain problematic behaviors? (e.g. allowing a child to watch TV when homework hasn't been completed can reinforce unproductive behaviors)

Daily Homework Routine:
"when, where and what of homework."

1. Designate a "Homework Spot".
2. Designate a "Homework Time".
3. Following Time Limits.
4. Take a Break.
5. Use a Timer.
6. Create a Homework Kit.
7. Post the Homework Rules.
8. Don't Forget the Praise.

What the Research Tells Us

- How the homework environment is organized and how parents respond to their child's behavior are strong contributing factors to their child's homework performance (Power et al., 2001).

Daily Homework Routine:
Where? The Homework Spot

- Select a location that is conducive to attentive and productive work.
- Find a spot in which your child will complete their homework on a consistent basis.
- It is important that this place is free from distractions (television, toys, siblings, etc.).
- The Homework Spot should also be a place where you can provide the necessary supervision, including being able to enforce time limits and provide spot checks.
- You can negotiate this with your child.

The Homework Spot

- It is important that this place is free from distractions (television, toys, siblings, etc.)
- This should also be a place where you can provide regular supervision, including being able to enforce time limits and provide spot checks.
- You may choose to negotiate this with your child.

Daily Homework Routine:
When? Designate a Homework Time

- Set up a homework time and stick to it!
- Begin homework at the same time each day.
- Try to consider a time when your child is able to pay attention and remain focused best after school.

Homework Time

- Find a time that you will be free to offer supervision.
- Take into account meals and after-school activities.
- If possible, allow you child enough time to play/relax after homework as a reward for getting it done.

Daily Homework Routine:
Following Time Limits

- Follow the maximum time limit designated by your child's teacher.
- Tell your child when "time's up!"
- *Remember:* Excessive amounts of time spent on homework sessions can lead to wasted time, frustration, discouragement, unproductive behavior, and conflict.
- Set goals to reinforce your child's behavior for greater and greater levels of productivity.

Daily Homework Routine:
Taking Breaks

- If you feel that your child will need to take a break during homework time, it should be agreed upon before hand.
- Break time should only be for a minute or two.
- Break time should be used only to go to the bathroom or to get a snack.

Daily Homework Routine:
Using a Timer

- It may be helpful to your child to set a timer to monitor homework time.
- The timer can be used to remind your child when homework time is up.
- The timer can be used to remind them how much time is left before their break time.

Daily Homework Routine:
The Homework Kit

- It's important to have a homework kit prepared for your child before Homework Time begins.
- The kit should include all the necessary items needed for your child to complete their homework (e.g. pencils, paper, calculator, eraser, pencil sharpener, scissors, etc.)

Daily Homework Routine:
Post the Homework Rules

- Post the rules of the Homework Routine prominently in the Homework Spot so you and your child can reference it easily.

Daily Homework Routine:
Don't forget the praise!

- It's important to praise your child as much as possible during homework time.
- Even if they are struggling with their work, you can easily praise them for following each of the steps of the homework routine.

Daily Homework Routine:
Review the E-Daily Report Card

- As part of the homework routine, let your child see the instructions and time limit provided by their teacher on the electronic daily report card before homework time begins.
- Then, let them see that your completing the daily report card when homework time is up.
- This will convey that you and their teacher have regular communication with one another.

Homework Routine Worksheet

- Complete the Homework Routine Worksheet each night.
- This will help us to learn what is working and what needs to be improved upon.
- Follow the instructions on the sheet.
- Note any difficulties you're having on the "notes" section of the worksheet.
- Be sure to bring your worksheet in to next weeks meeting.

Parent Homework

- Continue to rigidly enforce absolute time limit.
- Continue to complete the e-daily report card.
- Be sure to post the homework routine in a prominent place close to where your child will be doing their homework.
- Complete the homework routine worksheet each night.

Appendix F 6-Handouts: Session 2

Establishing the Homework Routine

1. Where? Designate a Homework Spot. It's essential that a specific place is chosen where homework will be completed each night. You can negotiate this with your child. It is important that this place is free from distractions such as television, toys, siblings, etc. However, the Homework Spot should also be a place where you can provide the necessary supervision, including being able to enforce time limits and provide spot checks.

2. When? Designate a Homework Time. It is important to set up a homework schedule and stick to it. Try to begin homework at the same time each day. Try to consider a time when your child is able to pay attention and remain focused best after school. Also, find a time that you will be free to consistently offer the necessary supervision. Remember to take into account meals and after-school activities. If possible, allow your child enough time to play after homework as a reward for getting it done.

3. Following Time Limits. Follow the maximum time limit designated by your child's teacher on the daily report card. While it may be uncomfortable to tell your child that "time's up", research shows us that excessive amounts of time spent on homework sessions can lead to wasted time, frustration, discouragement, parent reinforcement of unproductive behavior, and parent-child conflict. You will learn to set goals to reinforce your child for greater and greater levels of productivity.

4. Taking a Break. If you feel that your child will need to take a break during homework time, it must be agreed upon before hand. Break time should only be for a minute or two and should be used only to go to the bathroom or to get a drink of water or a snack.

5. Use a Time. It may be helpful to your child to set a timer to monitor homework time. The timer can be used to remind your child when Homework Time is up, or to remind them how much time is left before their break time.

6. The Homework Kit. It is important to have a homework kit prepared for your child before Homework Time begins. The kit should include all the necessary items needed for your child to complete their homework (e.g. pencils, paper, calculator, erased, pencil sharpener, scissors, etc.).

7. Reviewing the Daily Report Card and Homework Planner. As part of the homework routine, make sure your child promptly provides you with their daily planner and the daily report card before Homework Time begins. This will ensure that you are aware of their assignment for that night and the maximum homework time limit. It will convey the importance of the brining the daily report card home and will remind them that you and their teacher are in constant communication.

8. Post the Homework Rules. Post the rules of the Homework Routine prominently in the Homework Spot so you and your child can reference it easily.

9. Don't forget the praise. It is very important to praise your child as much as possible during their Homework Time. Even if they are struggling with their work, you can easily praise them for following each of the steps of the Homework Routine.

HOMEWORK ROUTINE WORKSHEET

When	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
Consistent time to begin? check box if goal is met						
Time limits? check box if goal is met						

Where	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
Consistent Place? check box if goal is met						
Minimal Distractions? check box if goal is met						
Is HW easily supervised? check box if goal is met						

What	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Notes
Daily Report Card Completed? check box if goal is met						
Has all needed materials from school? check box if goal is met						
Has needed supplies (HW kit)? check box if goal is met						

Appendix F 7-Group Parent-Training Session 3

Group Session 3
Goals:
1) Review of parent homework assignments
2) Review electronic daily report card procedures
3) Introduction to CISS: 4 principles
4) Elicit examples of positive reinforcement
5) Discuss types of positive reinforcers
6) Assist parents in developing a rewards menu
7) Assist parents in developing an individualized point system (token economy)
8) Assign parent homework for session 3

Overview

During this session parents will be introduced to principles and techniques of positive reinforcement. The use of consequences to increase desired behaviors in accordance with the A-B-C model introduced in session 2 will be emphasized. Specific types of positive reinforcers including parental attention, praise, privileges and tangible rewards will be reviewed. Parents will be offered assistance in developing a token reward system for their children.

Homework Review

This session will begin with a review of the parent homework assignment given at the end of session 2. Beginning each session with a review of the previously assigned homework will serve to provide parents with feedback about their participation in the program and will reinforce the importance of parents completing their homework in a timely manner (power et al., 2001). The review of homework during this session will involve discussing parent's experiences enforcing the Homework Routine, following the A-B-C guidelines, and giving effective commands. It will also attend to any concerns or compliance issues regarding completion of the Electronic Daily Report Card.

- Parents will be asked to share their experiences using the Electronic Daily Report Card.
- Parents will be asked to discuss the conversation they had with their child about developing a Homework Routine (assistance finalizing a time and place for homework will be offered).
- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences delivering effective commands to their child.
- Parents will be asked to provide examples of both effective and ineffective commands that they issued during the week (group members can be encouraged to provide assistance to parents having difficulties issuing effective commands).
- Parents will be asked to discuss the A-B-C exercise (including identified antecedents to problems discussed during the last session.
- Homework concerns will be written on a dry erase board (which will be referred to later during this session).
- If parents fail to complete homework assignments, they will be praised for what they did complete (modeling effective praising techniques)
- The rationale for completing homework will be restated (e.g. strategies are unlikely to be effective parents and children do not implement them to the point at which the

interventions become a part of their regular routine, and parents will be offered help refining the strategies presented if they come to the group prepared to discuss their experiences in attempting to implement techniques in the home).

- A brief dialogue will be initiated regarding barriers to implementing assignments.
- Once barriers have been identified, group members will be encouraged to offer suggestions for overcoming them.

Positive Reinforcement

- Parents will be asked to report two or three occasions during the past week when they openly acknowledged their child's responsible and cooperative behavior.
- The specific ways in which parents positively reinforced their child's behavior will be verbally praised and recorded on the marker board.
- The Using Positive Reinforcement handout will be distributed (Appendix).
- The following principles of positive reinforcement will be introduced and presented in a Power Point format.
    - Positive Reinforcement involves presenting a consequence or an event following a response, which increases the likelihood of that response occurring in that situation. (For example, getting free time after a child does his/her homework demonstrates positive reinforcement for doing homework, with television being the reinforcer).
    - A consequence that may appear to be aversive may actually be positively reinforcing (e.g. parental reprimands may reinforce disruptive behavior by increasing attention given to the child).
    - Delivering positive reinforcement to a desired behavior and simply not delivering positive reinforcement to an undesired behavior a is very effective behavior change strategy (e.g. supervisors at work can have a significant impact on employees simply by praising certain behaviors and not praising others).
- The importance of focusing on positive reinforcement strategies before other methods (e.g. punishment) will be emphasized.
- Positive reinforcement strategies are more effective than punishment techniques in promoting skills development.
- Positive reinforcement methods help to develop self-esteem in children (Power et al., 2001).
- Punishment can result in negative side effects if it is not embedded in a primarily positive system of contingency management.

Components of Positive Reinforcement

- Since a high volume of information has been disseminated during this session, the following key points of positive reinforcement will be reviewed. The following overview of positive reinforcement will be presented in a Power Point format.
- The CISS-4 acronym will be used to help parent to be mindful of the principles of reinforcement. CISS-4 includes:
    - Consistency: Children know what to responses to expect when they behave in a particular fashion. Therefore, it is important that parents respond in the same way when children display a given set of behaviors. When parents are consistent about what behaviors they want, children know what is expected of them (Power et al.,

2001). It will be emphasized that the techniques of this program, such as the token system, facilitate consistency.

- Immediacy: It is important to reinforce desirable behaviors as immediately as possible after they occur to ensure that the child understands the connection between their behavior and the parent's response. The closer the timing between the child's behavior and it's consequence, the greater the chance of the child learning to behave in the desired manner (Power et al., 2001).
- Specificity: Being specific about exactly which behaviors are being reinforced is important. This strengthens the connection between responsible behaviors and desirable consequences, thereby resulting in an increased likelihood that the targeted behaviors will be repeated (Power et al., 2001). For example, "I am letting you stay up because you were good" as opposed to "I am letting you stay up because you finished your math homework on time."
- Saliency: Reinforcers are more likely to be effective if they are valuable to the child (Power et al., 2001). Therefore, it is often necessary to vary reinforcers to keep them meaningful.
- 4:1 Ratio of Positive Reinforcement to Punishment: A child must experience success approximately 80% of the time in order for a behavioral program to be effective (Power et al., 2001). Therefore, it is important for parents to make a conscious effort to identify and reinforce desirable behaviors. A ratio of at least 4 to 1 positive-reinforcement-to-punishment is effective. Further, primarily positive responses from parents can also serve to improve the parent-child relationship.

Developing a Positive Reinforcement System (Token Economy)

The concept of a positive reinforcement system as an approach whereby children earn points for a desired behavior that can be exchanged at some time in the future for a privilege or concrete reward will be reviewed with parents.

- The following rationale for using a point system will be introduced in a hierarchical format and presented in a Power Point format.
  - Point systems enable parents to strengthen the reinforcement they provide, making behavior modification systems more effective.
  - Point systems provide parents with a tool to respond immediately to a child's desired behavior.
  - Point systems are easy to use: Parents can dispense tokens and points readily at the time their child exhibits the desired behavior.
  - Point systems provide a means of reinforcing children that is affordable: Instead of giving children expensive items for desired behaviors, parents can provide points that can be saved and cashed in at a later time.
  - Points can be dispensed on a frequent basis, enabling a parent to reinforce target behaviors as often as needed.
  - These systems may help children to learn to work for long-term reinforcers (Power et al., 2001).
- The Developing a Point Systems handout will be distributed (Appendix).
- The following instructions for implementing a point system will be reviewed:
  - Parents must sit down with their child and discuss the program.
  - The system must be introduced in a positive manner (e.g. as a means of rewarding their homework efforts).

  - The use of a daily rewards menu, which is a list of rewards that the child can choose from when a reinforcer is earned, will be described. This includes creating a rewards menu collaboratively with the child (parents should develop a list of rewards that the child can choose from that include relatively inexpensive items or less time-consuming activities/privileges (practicality is important).
  - Parents must clearly outline the tasks needed to earn rewards for the child. This should include tasks that are relatively difficult (e.g. starting homework on time), as well as those that are easy (having necessary materials such as books and pencils when starting homework).
  - The number of points required for each reinforcer must be specified (parents should be generous with point values in the initial stages of the point system).
  - The system should be devised so that the child is able to earn a reward approximately 80% of the time (if the reinforcers are earned to easily, or if it is too difficult to earn reinforcers the incentive to improve behaviors is less likely to be successful).
  - Parents will be reminded to focus on positive behaviors (bonus points should be given for exceptional behaviors).
  - It will be recommended that parents frequently and creatively vary how reinforcers are distributed in order to maintain their child's interest. Strategies to do this include: using a grab back where the child can reach in and pull out a small toy or reward, rolling a dice when a reinforcer is earned, using a mystery motivator in which a reward is written on a note card inside an envelope that is taped high on the wall in the designated homework area. When the reinforcement criterion is reached, the child is given the envelope that reveals the reinforcer.
  - Parents must devise a method to keep track of the tokens or points earned for each of the target behaviors.
  - It will be explained to parents that, although tokens/points can be distributed frequently, reinforcers are to be given only after homework is completed and only if they are genuinely earned (as some children may attempt to bargain with the parent by making promises for future behavior).
  - If reinforcers are not earned, the child should not be criticized. Instead, the parent should express that they hope a reward will be earned in the next session.
  - Parents will be encouraged to actually have the child deposit tokens or chips in the fabricated bank, or to enter points in a point book, as the physical act of doing so may promote the child's investment in the reinforcement system.
- The Homework Rewards Worksheet (Appendix) and the Sample Homework Rewards Worksheet (Appendix) will be distributed. This worksheet specifies possible targets for intervention and provides spaces for indicating points earned for each behavior each day.
- It is important that parents leave this session with a firm understanding of how to implement a point system. Therefore, it is important that they be given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the material presented.

Types of Positive Reinforcers

- The following types of positive reinforcers will be introduced in a hierarchical format and presented in a Power Point format.

    - Sense of personal pride: referring to the intrinsic reward for performing a behavior that results in a sense of accomplishment.
    - Social: Attention from another (affectionate hugs, "high-fives", praise, nods, gestures, smiles).
    - Professional: Opportunities to temporarily own and enjoy a desirable item (sitting in favorite chair).
    - Activity: Opportunities to participate in something the person likes to do (i.e. watching TV, looking at a book, etc.)
    - Consumable**:** Items that one can eat or drink (i.e. candy, cookies, soda, etc.)
    - Manipulative: Opportunities to interact with and handle and enjoyable object (toy, coloring, computer).
- The same reinforcers do not work for all individuals
- Motivating Operations: Events or conditions that temporarily alter the effectiveness of a reinforcer and alter the frequency of behavior reinforced by that reinforcer must be considered (i.e. deprivation and satiation when food is used)

Parent Homework Assignment

- Parents are asked to meet with their child to devise a token reinforcement program. This includes:
    1. Rewards menu: Parent and child should create a reward menu of reinforcers that includes various reinforcer types, with a particular focus on privileges. Parents should encourage their child to suggest reinforcers of varying levels of expense.
    2. Identifying homework tasks: The parents and child should develop a list of homework tasks. Parents are encouraged to include tasks that vary in levels of difficulty.
    3. Assigning point values: Parents and child should determine point values for each homework tasks, with more difficult tasks earning a higher number of points.
- Parents are requested to work with their child to create a chart that clearly identifies the rewards menu, the homework tasks, and the point value for completing each task (this chart should be posted in a prominent place near the homework location).
- Parents are asked to continue to rigidly enforce the absolute time limit spent on their child's homework assignment in accordance with teacher recommendations.
- Parents are asked to continue to complete the Electronic Daily Report Card.

Appendix F 8-Session 3: Power Point Presentation

Homework Improvement Program

Meeting 3

Positive Reinforcement: Fundamental Principles of CISS-4

1. ***Consistency***
2. ***Immediacy***
3. ***Specificity***
4. ***Saliency***
5. ***4-to-1***

CISS-4: Consistency

- **Consistency**
- Children know what responses to expect when they behave in a particular fashion.
- When parents are consistent about what behaviors they want, children know what is expected of them.

CISS-4: Immediacy

- **Immediacy**
- It's important to reinforce desirable behaviors as immediately as possible after they occur.
- The closer the timing between the child's behavior and it's consequence, the greater the chance of the child learning to behave in the desired manner.

CISS-4: Specificity

- **Specificity**
- Being specific about exactly which behaviors are being reinforced is important.
- This strengthens the connection between responsible behaviors and desirable consequences (e.g. "I am letting you stay up because you finished your math homework on time." as opposed to "I am letting you stay up because you were good."

CISS-4: Saliency

- **Saliency**
- Reinforcers are more likely to be effective if they are valuable to the chld.

CISS-4: 4-to1

- **4-to-1:** *Ratio of positive reinforcement to punishment.*
- A child should experience success approximately 80% of the time in order for a behavioral program to be effective.
- Therefore, it's important to make a conscious effort to identify and reinforce desirable behaviors.
- A ratio of at least 4 to 1 positive reinforcement to punishment is effective.

Point Systems

- A point system is an approach where children earn points for desired behaviors.
- Points can be exchanged at some time in the future for privileges or concrete rewards.

Why use a Point System?

- They enable you to strengthen the reinforcement you provide.
- They allow you to respond immediately to a child's desired behavior.
- They're easy to use: You can dispense points readily at the time your child exhibits the desired behavior.

Why use a Point System?

- They provide a means of reinforcing children that is affordable: Instead of giving children expensive items for desired behaviors, you can provide points that can be stored and cashed in at a later time.
- Points can be dispensed on a frequent basis, enabling you to reinforce target behaviors as often as needed.
- Point systems may help children to learn to work for long-term reinforcers.

Developing a Point System

- Tell your child that points will be earned for each positive behavior displayed.
- Explain that the different behaviors will be worth different points, and that every time they display any of these behaviors they will be earning points towards their rewards.

Developing a Point System

- Clearly outline the tasks needed to earn rewards.
- Include tasks that are relatively difficult (e.g. starting homework on time without a fuss).
- As well as those that are easy (having necessary materials when starting homework).
- The number of points required for each reinforcer must be specified.
- Be generous with point values in the initial stages of the point system

Developing a Point System

- The system should be devised so that the child is able to earn a reward approximately 80% of the time.
- If the reinforcers are earned too easily, or if it is too difficult to earn reinforcers, the incentive to improve behaviors is less likely to be successful.
- Remember to focus on POSITIVE BEHAVIORS
- Bonus points should be given for exceptional behaviors.

REWARDS MENU

- *Remember:*
- The more involvement your child has in creating and developing the program, the more likely they will be to get excited about it.
- Particularly at the outset, do not make the price of rewards overly expensive, or else your child may become discouraged and loose interest in the system.

Positive Reinforcement: Rewards Menu

- *Remember:* The same reinforcers do not work for all children.
- Positive reinforcement systems are more effective when children know ahead of time that they will have a reward menu to choose from.
- Select a good time to sit down with your child and tell them "We're going to start a program in which you can earn things. Lets start a list!"

Positive Reinforcement: Rewards Menu

- If your child names expensive items or unrealistic activities, you can direct them to draw a picture of the item out of a magazine.
- Tell them that the picture will then be cut into a few smaller pieces.
- Each time they earn a reinforcer, a part of the picture can be pasted onto a piece of paper posted in the Homework Spot.
- When the picture is completed the reinforcer is earned!

Positive Reinforcement: Rewards Menu

- Reinforcers should be divided into:

A. **Short Term:** Reinforcers that can be earned on a daily basis.

B. **Mid-Term:** Reinfocers that can be earned on a weekly basis (at the end of the week), or for a special bonus.

C. **Long-Term:** "Bigger ticket" items that can be earned from many or points over longer periods of time.

Rewards Menu: *Variety*

- Maintain interest by adding an element of mystery to the rewards system.
- Write a few desirable rewards on a piece of paper.
- Put each piece in different numbered envelopes.
- Tape the envelopes on the wall in the Homework Spot.

Rewards Menu: *Variety*

- When your child has earned a reward they'll be able to choose which envelopes they would like to open and they'll be given the "mystery Reward" inside.
- A grab bag or spinner can also be used.

Positive Reinforcement: Rewards Menu

- **BONUS TIME!**
- Let your child know that bonuses can always be earned for exceptionally good behavior.
- Bonuses can be given for having a "good attitude", such as cooperating and beginning work without being asked.

Rewards Menu: Bankbook

- **Creating a Bankbook**
- It's a good idea to create a "bankbook" when planning a point system for Homework Time.
- Make columns for the date. "deposit" of points, "withdrawals", and balance.
- Label the front of the bankbook "Homework Bankbook", or use a label suggested by your child.
- Keep the book in your possession except during Homework Time.

Rewards Menu: Bankbook

- In order to jump-start the system, you may wish to place some points in the homework account as a reward for cooperating during the initial discussion of the point system (e.g. 100 points).
- At the end of Homework Time, display the bankbook in front of your child and remind them about the current balance.

Rewards Menu: Bankbook

- ***Deposits and Withdrawals:***
- Use the Homework Rewards Worksheet to keep track of points earned during homework.
- Once homework is completed, supervise your child as they enter points in the deposits column of the bankbook.
- Provide similar supervision when points are withdrawn in exchange for rewards from the rewards menu.

When a Reward Hasn't Been Earned

- **What to do:**
- If a reward hasn't been earned, *DO NOT* criticize your child.
- *INSTEAD,* express your hope that they'll earn the reinforcer during the next homework session.
- Refer to the Homework Rewards Worksheet as a reminder of which behaviors need to be displayed at that time.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT!

- Your point system should be devised so that your child earns a reward about 80% of the time.
- This is important because overly stringent standards may discourage your child, or lead to frustration and conflict.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT!

- On the other hand, if your child earns 100% of the points all of the time, there is little incentive for behavior change.
- As you implement the system, you may need to adjust point values of your rewards.

I PROMISE I'll Finish my Homework!

***PLEASE** GIVE ME THE REWARD NOW!*

- Some children may try to "bargain" with you by making promises about future behaviors.

DON'T FALL FOR IT!

- Rewards must be given only after your child has fulfilled their end of the bargain and completed their homework.
- This ensures **consistency** and **structure** in your point system.

Using Consequences in the Point System: Response Cost

- Response cost entails the taking away of points in response to misbehavior.
- The removal of positive reinforcement (points) is often an underused method of punishment that can be highly effective when used correctly.

Using Consequences in the Point System: Response Cost

- Much like earning rewards, the amount of points lost for misbehavior MUST be outlined in advance (Structure and Consistency is KEY).
- You should always give your child ONE verbal warning before removing pints.

Homework for Parents

Devise a point reinforcement program with your child:

- Create a reward menu of that includes various reinforcer types, with a particular focus on privileges.
- Encourage your child to suggest reinforcers of varying levels of expense (i.e. short-term, mid-term, long-term).
- Develop a list of homework tasks (include tasks that vary in level of difficulty)
- Determine point values for each homework task, with more difficult tasks earning a higher number of points.
- Continue to enforce the absolute time limits spent of homework assignments in accordance with teacher recommendations.
- Try using the homework rewards worksheet online

Appendix F 9-Handouts: Session 3

Developing a Point System

Now that you're aware of some of the main categories of positive reinforcers you are ready to develop a home point system. Establishing and using a point system can provide you and your child with a means of consistency and immediately reinforcing positive behaviors in a meaningful, yet simple way.

Introducing the system: In a positive manner, sit down with your child and discuss the system you are about to implement (e.g. "We are going to begin using a system to reward you for all of the efforts you are putting in at homework time.")

Refer your child to the Homework Rewards Worksheet. Point to each behavior and tell your child that points will be earned for each behavior displayed. Explain that the different behaviors will be worth different points, and that every time they display any of these behaviors they will be earning points towards their rewards.

Reward Menu: Now it's time to create a reward menu with your child to be used with the point system. If your child immediately begins to name expensive items DO NOT CRITICIZE THEM. Instead, write them on the reward menu in the category labeled "Long-Term Rewards." Then provide some examples of reinforcers that can be earned on a short-term basis such as staying up later, computer time, 30 minutes of television or video games, etc. After these ideas have been generated, create a more formal looing rewards menu. It can be fun to create a rewards menu that resembles a restaurant menu, with the point values listed as the prices. Your child may enjoy creating this on the computer with you.

Remember:

1) The more involvement your child has in creating and developing the program, the more likely they will be to get excited about it.
2) Particularly at the outset, do not make the price of rewards overly expensive, or else your child may become discouraged and lose interest in the system.

A sample rewards menu may look like this:

REWARD	PRICE
• 30 minutes of TV	5 points
• Staying up later	15 points
• Trip to movies	40 points
• Weekend sleepover	100 points

Creating a Bankbook

It's a good idea to create a "bankbook" when planning a point system for Homework Time. Make columns for the date. "deposit" of points, "withdrawals", and balance. Label the front of the bankbook "Homework Bankbook", or use a label suggested by your child.

The point system bankbook should be kept in your possession except during Homework Time. In order to jump-start the system, you may wish to place some points in the homework account as a reward for cooperating during the initial discussion of the point system (e.g. 100 points). At the outset of Homework Time, display the bankbook in front of your child and remind them about the current balance.

Deposits and Withdrawals

Use the Homework Rewards Worksheet to keep track of points earned during homework. Once homework is completed, supervise your child as they enter points in the deposits column of the bankbook. Provide similar supervision when points are withdrawn in exchange for rewards from the rewards menu.

What to do when a reward hasn't been earned

If a reward hasn't been earned, DO NOT criticize your child. Instead, express your hope that they'll earn the reinforcer during the next homework session. Refer to the Homework Rewards Worksheet as a reminder of which behaviors need to be displayed at that time.

The Price is Right!

Your point system should be devised so that your child earns a reward about 80% of the time. This is important because overly stringent standards may discourage your child, or lead to frustration and conflict. On the other hand, if your child earns 100% of the points all of the time, there is little incentive for behavior change. As you implement the system, you may need to adjust point values of your rewards.

Variety

Remember, it's important to vary the list often. A prove way to increase motivation and maintain a child's interest is to add an element of mystery to the reward system. This can be done by writing the names of a few rewards on pieces of paper and putting each piece in different numbered envelopes. Tape these envelopes on the wall in the Homework Spot. When your child has earned a reward they will be able to choose which envelope they would like to open and they will be given the "mystery motivator" written inside. The use of a grab bag or spinner can also be applied.

I PROMISE I'll finish my homework! Please give me the reward now!

Some children may try to "bargain" with you by making promises about future behaviors. DON'T FALL FOR IT! Rewards must be given only after your child has fulfilled their end of the bargain and completed their homework. This ensures consistency and structure in your point system.

Be Patient

Some children may initially oppose the system during homework time. Therefore, it is important to introduce the system in a positive manner. If your child doesn't earn points immediately, adjust the point value and stick to it. Most children typically find the experience to be a positive and enjoyable one.

Developing a Rewards Menu

Reward Menu

Positive reinforcement systems are more effective when children know ahead of time that they will have a reward menu to choose from. Select a good time to sit down with your child and tell them "We're going to start a program in which you can earn things. Let's start a list!"

Note: If your child names expensive items or unrealistic activities, you can direct your child to draw a big picture of the activity or item, or to cut a picture of the item out of a magazine. Tell them that the picture will then be cut into smaller pieces. Each time they earn a reinforcer, a part of the picture can be pasted onto a piece of paper posted in the Homework Spot. When the picture is completed the reinforcer is earned!

Reinforcers should be divided into:
A) Short-Term: Reinforcers that can be earned on a daily basis.

B) Mid-Term: Reinforcers that can be earned on a weekly basis (at the end of the week), or for special bonuses.

C) Long-Term: "Bigger ticket" items that can be earned from many tokens or points over longer periods of time.

Variety

Reward systems tend to become stale. Therefore, it's important to vary the list often. A proven way to increase motivation and maintain a child's interest is to add an element of mystery to the reward system. This can be done by writing the name of a few rewards on pieces of paper and putting each piece in different numbered envelopes. Tape these envelopes on the wall in the Homework Spot. When your child has earned a reward they will be able to choose which envelope they would like to open and they will be given the "mystery motivator" written inside. The use of a grab bag or spinner can also be used.

Bonus Time!

Let your child know that bonuses can always be earned for exceptionally good behavior. Bonuses can be given for having a "good attitude", such as cooperating and beginning work without being asked.

Tokens and Points

Giving concrete rewards or privileges every time they do what they are supposed to do is not practical. Instead, giving tokens or points are much more practical. An additional handout will be given to you with guidelines for using token or point systems.

Be Patient!

Many parents who have begun systems like this one report large improvements in their child's behavior almost as soon as the system is begun. However, it may take a week or two of consistently using the system before you begin to notice results. With an emphasis on "catching them being good", over time you will begin to experience changes in behavior and an improvement in your relationship with your child.

"We've already tried this!"

If you are thinking that you've tried this before and it works for a week, and then stops working, we encourage you to reread this handout and closely examine where in the CISS-4 system your previous attempts may have missed. As with other strategies in this program, if you experience problems, please call me.

Homework Rewards Sheet

Name:_____ **Week of:_____**

# of points	**Behavior**	**Mon**	**Tues**	**Wed**	**Thurs**	**Fri-Sat-Sun**
	Bonus Points for (write is):					
	Totals:					

Total Points for the Week _____

Sample Homework Rewards Sheet

Name:_____ **Week of:_____**

# of points	Behavior	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri-Sat-Sun
15	Daily Report Card signed by teacher	15	15	15	15	15
15	Has daily planner with HW assignment	15	15	15	15	15
5	Work Area Neat	5	5			5
5	Has Materials Ready	5		5		5
10	Work started after one request			10	10	
10	Stayed on task for 10 minutes	10	10	10		10
	Bonus Points for (write is):		Didn't roll eyes 10	Didn't need reminder to start work! 25		
	Totals:	50	55	80	40	50

Total Points for the Week: 275

Appendix F 10-Group Parent Training: Session 4

Group Session 4

Goals:

1) Review of parent homework assignments
2) Review electronic daily report card procedures
3) Introduce time management and goal setting techniques
5) Assist parents in implementing time management methods
6) Assist parents in implementing goal setting procedures
7) Assign parent homework for session 4

Overview

Research indicates that improvements in academic functioning occur when children 1) actively participate in goal setting, 2) engage in self-evaluations of performance, 3) receive feedback regarding performance, and 4) are provided with positive reinforcers that are contingent upon meeting goals (Power et al., 2001). All of these components are included in this session, as session 4 serves to bring together these elements of behavioral parent training and child self-management of homework.

Homework Review

This session will begin with a review of the parent homework assignment given at the end of session 3. Beginning each session with a review of the previously assigned homework will serve to provide parents with feedback about their participation in the program and will reinforce the importance of parents completing their homework in a timely manner (power et al., 2001).

- Parents will be asked to share their experiences using the daily report card.

The review of homework during this session will involve discussing parent's experiences developing the token reinforcement system with their child. Since this is a complex endeavor, a considerable amount of time may need to be spent on this activity.

- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences in planning the token economy, identifying elements that were successful (parents will be encouraged to praise one another's efforts).
- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences implementing the token economy with their child.
- Parents will be asked to discuss their progress developing a rewards menu.
- Parents will be asked to discuss their progress identifying tasks to be completed during homework.
- Parents will be asked to discuss their progress assigning points or token values to each task.
- Guidance will be offered to parents in addressing each element of the token economy.
- Parents will be asked to discuss any obstacles they've encountered implementing the program (e.g. lack of time, defiance on the part of the child, ambivalence about delivering high rates of positive reinforcement to their child who is causing them frustration, etc.)
- Parents will be reminded of the CISS-4 principles.
- The 4:1 ration of positive reinforcement to punishment will be stressed.

Introduction to Consequences, Correction Strategies, & Response Cost

It will be explained to parents that consequences and correction strategies must be implemented strategically in order for it to be effective. Accordingly, correction should be

delivered in a well-planned manner in response to specifically targeted, problematic behavior (Power et al., 2001). It is anticipated that after completion of this session, parents will be able to apply consequences and correction strategies that can be effective, and that are embedded within the context of a positive reinforcement system as response cost.

- The handout Using Correction Strategies Successfully will be distributed (Appendix).
- The following information regarding consequences will be provided and presented to parents in a Power Point format:
    - Positive reinforcement is primarily useful in promoting skill development and increasing desirable behaviors.
    - Consequences and correction strategies can be helpful in reducing undesirable behaviors and decreasing the likelihood of future instances of behavior.
    - The strategic use of consequences and correction strategies as response cost can serve to enhance the contrast between the consequences for adaptive verses maladaptive behavior, thus leading to more rapid behavioral change.
    - Involves presenting a negative reinforcer, or Removing a positive reinforcer in order to decrease the likelihood of responding to a stimulus.
    - Response Cost involves the removal of a specified amount of reinforcer immediately following a particular behavior. It is sometimes used in behavior modification programs in which learners earn tokens as reinforcers.
    - In response cost, a reinforcer is taken away following an undesirable response.
    - An example of response cost and consequences is losing a pre-specified amount of points for cursing/swearing, time out for hitting, etc.
- Discussions regarding Response Cost will be presented in a Power Point format and will include:
    - Emphasizing that the removal of positive reinforcement is often an underused method of imposing consequences that can be highly effective when used correctly.
    - Parents will be instructed to use Response Cost techniques for the removal of positive reinforcement.
    - Response Cost may entail: the taking away of a token in response to a targeted misbehavior.
    - Parents will be expected to incorporate a response cost component into their point system.
    - Time Out procedures will not be used, as they interfere with the scheduled time limits of the homework routine and can actually provide the child with an opportunity to avoid their homework, which may unintentionally reinforce maladaptive behaviors.
- Discussions regarding administering mildly aversive consequences will be presented in a Power Point format and will include:
    - The only type of aversive consequences to be administered is Correction.
    - Correction can be verbal or nonverbal.
    - Corrections must be stated clearly and briefly.
    - Corrections must me offered firmly, under emotional self-control.
    - Your actions must match your words (e.g. do not laugh or smile when making a correction to behavior).

- Do not use sarcasm (e.g. comments such as "it's about time you did some work" only serve to antagonize the situation).
- When correcting a child, state what the child should be doing and not what the child should not be doing so expectations are clear and concise (e.g. say "pay attention to your work" rather then "you are not paying attention to your work").
- Comment on specific aspects of behavior and not personal traits of the child (e.g . you need to read the directions carefully" instead of "why are you always so lazy").
- After offering a correction, observe the child carefully and make sure to offer praise when the child exhibits compliance with your correction.

Time Management and Goal Setting Techniques

The purpose of this section is to aide parents in ensuring that the time being allocate to spend on homework is being utilized as efficiently as possible. Spending long periods of time on homework can be very frustrating to both children and parents. This can result in increased child defiance, parenting stress, and parent-child conflict (Power et al., 2001). Therefore, it is essential that parents and teachers comply with the designated time limits outlined in the Daily Report Card.

- The importance of complying with the maximum homework time limit outlined by the teacher on the Electronic Daily Report Card will be stressed.
- It will be explained to parents that the critical variables to be focused on when setting appropriate goals for children are rates of homework completion and rates of homework accuracy.
- It will be emphasized to parents that if their child can get more work done and achieve higher rates of accuracy within the allotted time limit, then behavioral difficulties should diminish automatically. Therefore, parents will be asked to try not to focus on other, less important behaviors such as talking, fidgeting, arguing, etc.
- The Goal-Setting Tool handout will be distributed to parents (Appendix).
- The following steps to goal setting will be reviewed with parents and presented in a Power Point format.
    1. Review assignment on Electronic Daily Report Card and segment work into two or more subunits if necessary (e.g. if the child is given 20 math problems to complete in 30 minutes, the assignment can be broken up into two subunits of 10 problems each in 15 minutes).
    2. Parents and child negotiate goals for homework completion. If a child's past performance suggests that they will likely only be able to complete 60% to 80% of their assignment, then setting a goal of 80% completion to receive positive reinforcement and earn points in the token system is reasonable at this phase to allow the parent and child to experience success (Of course, the long term goal is 100% completion).
    3. Parents and child negotiate to set reasonable accuracy goals. Parents can estimate a reasonable goal to set with their child regarding homework accuracy. Setting a goal of 80% accuracy to receive positive reinforcement and earn points in the token system is reasonable at this phase to allow the parent and child to experience success (Of course, the long term goal is 100% accuracy).
    4. Parents will look over their child's assignment to make sure that the child understands the directions and how to complete the task. The parent may wish to

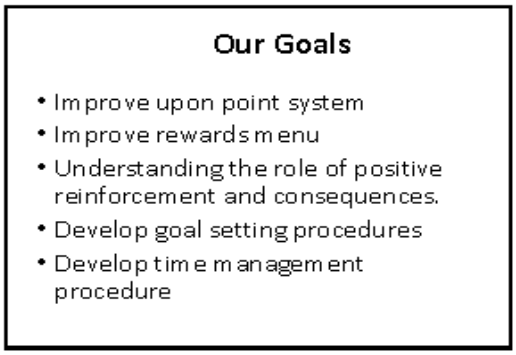
model completing a given problem and provide tutoring until they are clear that the child knows what to do (this a good time to offer verbal praise). Then parents should supervise (not tutor) the homework assignment.

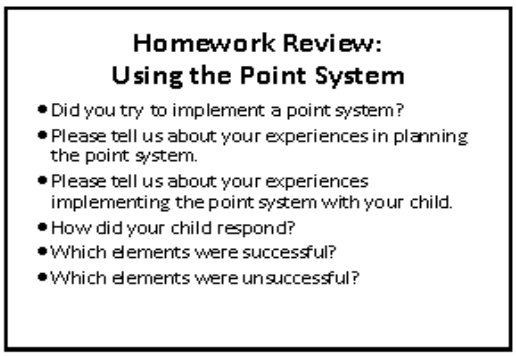
5. Parents should monitor the time spent on the homework unit (or subunit), reminding the student of the allocated time remaining (in a positive manner) in accordance with time limits outlined on the Electronic Daily Report Card.
6. Parents should remain close enough to their child to monitor progress and provide praise when their child is being productive (providing praise every 1 to 2 minutes is reasonable, as providing too much praise may become distracting to the child). Inattentive and inappropriate behaviors should be actively ignored.
7. Midway though the time period the parent can ask their child if they need help. The parent can provide help briefly (for approximately 30 seconds). If the child asks for more help while doing their assignment the parent should tell them to wait till the midpoint or endpoint of the time period of the subunit being completed.
8. At the end of the time limit the parent and child should review the assignment together to determine rates of completion and accuracy. If the child chooses to go over the work later, on their own time, that is acceptable. However, it is important that the parent doesn't spend any additional time working with their child on subunits after the allotted time has expired.
9. Parents can then sit with their child and evaluate whether the homework goals have been achieved. Possibilities such as "exceeded goal"= 2 points, "met goal"= 1 point, and "did not meet goal"= 0 points, can be used to determine points in the token economy. Children can earn points for both completion and accuracy.
10. This process can be completed for each subunit of homework.

Homework for parents

- Parents are asked to continue to implement the token reinforcement program, with the inclusion of the time management and goal setting strategies offered during this session.
- Parents are asked to continue to rigidly enforce the absolute time limit spent on their child's homework assignment in accordance with teacher recommendations.
- Parents will explain the time-management and goal setting procedures to their child.
- Parents will use the Goal Setting Tool for each homework assignment (2 if the assignment is divided into subunits).
- Parents are asked to continue to complete the Electronic Daily Report Card.
- Parents will be reminded that the next session is the last one. They are encouraged to integrate all of the skills they have developed in the program.

Appendix F 11-Session 4: Power Point Presentation





Homework Review: Developing a Rewards Menu

- Please tell us about your progress developing a reward menu
- Were you able to identify tasks to be completed during homework?
- Were you able to effectively assign point values to each task?
- Does the rewards menu that you've developed with your child appear to be practical?
- Were you able to use response cost in your point system?

Positive Reinforcement

- Positive Reinforcement involves presenting a consequence or an event following a response, which increases the likelihood of that response occurring in that situation.
- (For example, getting free time after a child does his/her homework demonstrates positive reinforcement for doing homework, with television being the reinforcer).

Positive Reinforcement-What we know

- Focus on positive reinforcement before using other strategies.
- Positive reinforcement strategies are more effective than punishment techniques in promoting skills development.
- Positive reinforcement develops self-esteem in children (Power et al., 2001).
- Be aware of motivating operations that temporarily alter the effectiveness of a reinforcer (e.g. satiation when food is used).

Positive Reinforcement

- A consequence that may appear to be aversive may actually be positively reinforcing (e.g. parental reprimands may reinforce disruptive behavior by increasing attention given to the child).
- Delivering positive reinforcement to a desired behavior and simply not delivering positive reinforcement to an undesired behavior a is very effective behavior change strategy (e.g. supervisors at work can have a significant impact on employees simply by praising certain behaviors and not praising others).

Using Positive Reinforcement

Types of Rewards/Reinforcers (hierarchy)

- **Sense of personal pride**
- **Social Attention**
- **Professional**
- **Activity**
- **Consumable**
- **Manipulative**

Types of Rewards

Sense of personal pride

- Refers to the intrinsic reward for performing a behavior that results in a sense of accomplishment.

Types of Rewards

Social: Attention from another including:

- Praise
- Affectionate hugs/ "high-fives"
- Positive Body Language (nods, gestures, smiles etc)
- *"Nice Job!"*
- *"I like it when you work so hard!"*
- *"You're doing great!"*
- *"Keep up the good work!"*

Types of Rewards

Professional:

- Opportunities to temporarily own and enjoy a desirable item:
- *Sitting in favorite chair.*
- *Favorite seat in car.*

Types of Rewards

Activities

- Opportunities to participate in something they like:
- *Staying up late*
- *Playing a special game*
- *Going to movies*
- *Computer time*
- *30 minutes of computer time*
- *Watching TV*
- *Looking at a book, etc.*

Types of Rewards

Consumable: Items that one can eat or drink (i.e. candy, cookies, soda, etc.)

Manipulative: Opportunities to interact with and handle and enjoyable object:

- *Earning points*
- *New Clothes*
- *Selecting a gift*
- *Toys*
- *Money*

"Consequences"

- **Choose correction:** Correction offered verbally and nonverbally can be an effective form of punishment.
- **Offer corrections immediately:** Respond to your child as soon as possible after misbehavior occurs.
- **Clear and simple:** Corrections are more useful of stated clearly and simply.

"Consequences"

- **Mean what you say:** Remember to deliver instructions FIRMLY, but NOT harshly. BE SURE THAT YOU CAN FOLLOW-UP on promised consequences.
- **Be Specific:** Remember to specify the behavior that your child needs to improve (e.g. "you need to pay attention to your work" instead of vague statements such as "you're doing badly."

Implementing Consequences

Know yourself:

- Observe your reactions when you deliver punishment to your child.
- Your emotional responses to your child's misbehavior are critical.
- If you are firm and under control, you will be more successful in managing misbehavior.

Implementing Consequences

Be Strategic:

- Remain in control of the situation.
- Use punishment sparingly until you are comfortable with the structure of your positive reinforcement system for homework.

Keep a 4-to-1 Ratio:

- Make sure the amount of positive reinforcement that you use is at least for times the amount of punishment.
- This approach will help to prevent unintended side-effects, including discouragement and anger.

Managing Time and Goal Setting

- Spending long periods of time on homework can be frustrating to you and your children.
- This can result in increased child defiance, parenting stress, and parent child conflict.
- In order to master effective time management and goal setting techniques, it's important to consistently complete the daily report cards including monitoring your child's time spent on homework.

Goal Setting: Homework Completion

- **How much do I need to do?**
- Negotiate ***GOALS*** for homework completion.
- If their past performance suggests that they will likely only be able to complete 60% to 80% of their assignment, then setting a goal of 80% completion to receive positive reinforcement and earn points is reasonable at this point to allow your child to experience success.
- Of course, the long term goal is 100% completion.

Goal Setting: Homework Accuracy

- **Do I need to get them all right?**
- Negotiate reasonable **accuracy goals** with your child (use teacher feedback on the DRC).
- Estimate a reasonable goal to set with their child regarding homework accuracy.
- Setting a goal of 80% accuracy to receive positive reinforcement and earn points in the token system is reasonable at this to allow your child an opportunity to experience success.
- Of course, the long term goal is 100% accuracy.

Goal Setting: Earning Rewards

- Decide ahead of time what the reward will be when goals are met:
- Present this as an opportunity to learn something positive.
- Decide how many points are needed to earn a reward and follow the guidelines for delivering points after each unit of work.
- Be very clear about what you expect, including how many points are required for the reward.

Managing Time and Goal Setting

- It's OK to break it up
- After reviewing your child's homework assignment, feel free segment work into two or more subunits if necessary.
- E.g. If the child is given 20 math problems to complete in 30 minutes, the assignment can be broken up into two subunits of 10 problems in 15 minutes.

Goal Setting

- **Understanding the directions:**
- Make sure your child understands the directions before beginning their assignment.
- **Follow the time limits:**
- Make sure to follow the maximum time limits provided by your child's teachers.

Managing Time and Goal Setting

- **Knowing what to do**
- Look over your child's assignment to make sure that they **understand the directions** and how to complete the task.
- You may wish to model completing a given problem and provide tutoring until they are clear that the child knows what to do (this is a good time to offer verbal praise).
- After this, be sure only to supervise (not tutor) the homework assignment.

Goal Setting: Supervision

- Act only as a supervisor and not a tutor.
- Remain close enough to monitor progress and to provide praise (praise every 1 to 2 minutes is reasonable, too much praise is distracting).
- Ignore inappropriate behaviors.
- Midway through the homework time, you can ask your child if they need help.
- Provide help briefly if needed (approx 30 sec).
- If your child asks for more help, tell them to wait until the midpoint or endpoint of the time period.

Goal Setting

- **Provide verbal praise**
- When your child is working, provide verbal praise for on-task behaviors and productive work.
- Remember to be specific.
- Provide praise about 2 to 3 times during each session.

Goal Setting

- **Direct your child to evaluate their work**
- At the end of the time limit, compliment your child for the work that was completed.
- Have your child write how many items they think they've gotten correct their homework.

Goal Setting in the Point System

- Evaluate Accuracy and Completion:
- Sit with your child and evaluate whether the homework goals have been achieved.
- The following possibilities can be used in the point system.
  - "Exceeded Goal" = 2 points
  - "Met Goal" = 1 point
  - "Did Not Meet Goal = 0 points
- Children can earn points for both completion and accuracy.
- Do this process for each homework unit.

Goal Setting in the Point System

- **Count up total points:** Write in points earned in the Homework Rewards Worksheet. Be sure to praise your child's efforts regardless of whether a reinforcer has been earned.
- **Provide rewards!** At the end of homework, be sure to give the reinforcer if it has been earned. Remember that if your child is not succeeding at least 80% if the time, you may need to adjust the goals.

Homework for Parents

- Have your child complete the Goal-Setting Homework Routine Checklist with you each night until the can do so independently.
- Consider the different types of rewards your child might enjoy.
- Modify the Point System/Rewards Menu to meet your child's specific needs.
- Continue to complete the Daily Report Card each night.

Appendix F 12-Handouts: Session 4

USING POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Positive reinforcement involves providing a desirable consequence for a behavior that makes the behavior more likely to happen again. For example, getting free time after a child does his/her homework demonstrates positive reinforcement for doing homework, with television being the reinforcer. Positive reinforcement is a powerful method for changing behavior and has been proven to be more effective than punishment in promoting behavior change. The key to using positive reinforcement is to selectively reinforce specific behaviors and to specifically withhold reinforcement for undesirable behaviors.

Delivering positive reinforcement to a desired behavior and simply not delivering positive reinforcement to an undesired behavior a is very effective behavior change strategy (e.g. supervisors at work can have a significant impact on employees simply by praising certain behaviors and not praising others).

Remember, a consequence that may appear to be negative may actually be positively reinforcing (e.g. parental reprimands may reinforce disruptive behavior by increasing attention given to the child).

Types of Positive Reinforcers

- **Sense of personal pride**: referring to the intrinsic reward for performing a behavior that results in a sense of accomplishment.

- **Social**: *Attention* from another (affectionate hugs, "high-fives", praise, nods, gestures, smiles). Other types of social attention include statements such as:

"Nice Job!"
"You're doing great!"
"Keep up the good work!"
"I like it when you work so hard!"

- **Professional:** Opportunities to temporarily own and enjoy a desirable item (sitting in favorite chair).
- **Activity:** Opportunities to participate in something they like to do"

Staying up later	Coloring
Computer Time	30 minutes of video games
Going to the movies	Playing a special game
30 minutes watching TV	Looking at a book

- **Consumable:** Items to eat or drink (i.e. candy, cookies, soda, etc.)
- **Manipulative:** Opportunities to interact with and handle and enjoyable object:

Tokens/Earning Points

Toys
New Clothes
Selecting a gift
Money
Remember: The same reinforcers do not work for all individuals

Fundamental Principles

When developing a positive reinforcement system, it is recommended that you follow the principles of **CISS-4 (Consistency, Immediacy, Specificity, Saliency, 4-to-1)**

Consistency: Children know what to responses to expect when they behave in a particular fashion. When parents are consistent about what behaviors they want, children know what is expected of them.

Immediacy: It is important to reinforce desirable behaviors as immediately as possible after they occur. The closer the timing between the child's behavior and it's consequence, the greater the chance of the child learning to behave in the desired.

Specificity: Being specific about exactly which behaviors are being reinforced is important. This strengthens the connection between responsible behaviors and desirable consequences. (e.g. "I am letting you stay up because you were good" as opposed to "I am letting you stay up because you finished your math homework on time.")

Saliency: Reinforcers are more likely to be effective if they are valuable to the child.
4-to-1: *4:1 Ratio of Positive Reinforcement to Punishment*: A child should experience success approximately 80% of the time in order for a behavioral program to be effective. Therefore, it is important to make a conscious effort to identify and reinforce desirable behaviors. A ratio of at least 4 to 1 positive-reinforcement-to-punishment is effective.

Practice *catching* them being good!

At this point it's important to use positive reinforcement very often. Pay close attention to what your child is doing, and make it a point to notice the productive and cooperative behaviors. A good way to do this is to think of yourself as a "sportscaster" and verbally praise your child's positive actions. (This can be as simple as praising actions such as sitting nicely at the dinner table and appropriately passing the table salt). The key point here is to make a radical shift in the ratio of positive to negative feedback you are giving your child and to get into more positive parenting habits.

Decide ahead of time what rewards will be when goals are met: Present this as an opportunity to learn something positive. Decide how many points are needed to earn a reward and follow the guidelines for delivering points after each unit of work. Be very clear about what you expect, including how many points are required for rewards.

Follow Time Limits: Make sure to follow the maximum time limits provided by your child's teacher.

Set Completion Goals: Negotiate goals for homework completion with your child. If past performance suggests that your child will be able to complete 60% to 80% of their assignment, then setting a goal of 80% completion to receive positive reinforcement and earn points is reasonable at this point to allow your child to experience success (Of course, the long term goal is 100% completion).

Set Accuracy Goals: Estimate reasonable accuracy goals with your child. If past performance suggests that your child will likely be able to accurately complete 60% to 80% of their assignment, then setting a goal of 80% accuracy to receive positive reinforcement and earn points is reasonable at this point to allow your child to experience success (Of course, the long term goal is 100% accuracy).

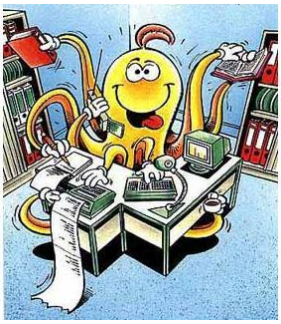
Understanding Directions: Make sure your child fully understands the directions before beginning their homework assignments

Provide verbal praise: When your child is working, provide verbal praise for on-task behaviors and productive work. Remember to be specific. As a rule of thumb, it's good to provide praise about two to three times during each homework session. Do not respond to requests for assistance during this time. If they ask for help, tell them to keep working and that you'll give them assistance when the time is up.

Direct your child to evaluate their work: At the end of the time limit, compliment your child for the work that was completed. Have your child write how many items they think they've gotten correct their homework.

Evaluate Accuracy and Completion:
Sit with your child and evaluate whether the homework goals have been achieved.
The following possibilities can be used in the point system. "Exceeded Goal" = 2 points
"Met Goal" = 1 point "Did Not Meet Goal = 0 points. Children can earn points for both completion and accuracy. Do this process for each homework unit.

Count up total points and Provide rewards!: Write in points earned in the Homework Rewards Worksheet. Be sure to praise your child's efforts regardless of whether a reinforcer has been earned.
At the end of homework, be sure to give the reinforcer if it has been earned. Remember that if your child is not succeeding at least 80% if the time, you may need to adjust the goals



Managing Time and Goal Setting

Spending long periods of time on homework can be frustrating to you and your children. This can result in increased child defiance, parenting stress, and parent child conflict.
In order to master effective time management and goal setting techniques, it's important to consistently complete the daily report cards including monitoring your child's time spent on homework. It is also important to look at where you are in this point in the program. Review your progress regarding giving effective instructions. Continue being clear, direct, specific, and consistent with consequences. Continue using the positive reinforcement system.

Electronic Daily Report Cards

Continue using the EDRC to monitor the amount of time your child spends on their homework. Also, be sure that your child is aware of the maximum amount of time recommended by your child's teacher.

It's OK to break it up

After reviewing your child's homework assignment, feel free segment work into two or more subunits if necessary (e.g. If the child is given 20 math problems to complete in 30 minutes, the assignment can be broken up into two subunits of 10 problems in 15 minutes).

Knowing what to do

Look over your child's assignment to make sure that they understand the directions and how to complete the task. You may wish to model completing a given problem and provide tutoring until they are clear that the child knows what to do (this is a good time to offer verbal praise). After this, be sure only to supervise (not tutor) the homework assignment.

How much do I need to do?

You can negotiate goals for homework completion with your child. If their past performance suggests that they will likely only be able to complete 60% to 80% of their assignment, then setting a goal of 80% completion to receive positive reinforcement and earn points is reasonable at this point to allow your child to experience success (of course, the long term goal is 100% completion).

Do I need to get them all right?

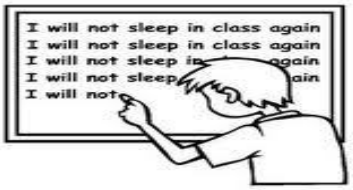
You can also negotiate reasonable accuracy goals with your child. Use teacher feedback on the EDRC to estimate a reasonable goal to set with their child regarding homework accuracy.

Setting a goal of 80% accuracy to receive positive reinforcement and earn points in the token system is reasonable at this to allow your child an opportunity to experience success (of course, the long term goal is 100% accuracy).

Don't Tutor, Supervise

After you're sure your child knows how to do their assignment, remember to act only as a supervisor, not a tutor. Try to remain close enough to monitor progress and to provide praise (praise every 1 to 2 minutes is reasonable, too much praise is distracting).

Ignore inappropriate behaviors. Inattentive and inappropriate homework behaviors should be ignored. Midway through the homework time, you can ask your child if they need help. Provide help briefly if needed (approximately 30 seconds). If your child asks for more help, tell them to wait until the midpoint or endpoint of the time period of the subunit being completed. At the end of the time limit provide verbal praise and compliment your child for the work that was completed.



Using Correction Strategies Successfully

Most parents are familiar with procedures such as time-out, removal of privileges, and other punishments. However, in order to consequences to be effective they must be used strategically. When children become accustomed to receiving large doses of criticism and punishments, they often give up easily when they are unsure of they will succeed. Therefore, the emphasis in any sound behavioral program should remain on incentives and reinforcers.

Know yourself:
Observe your reactions when you deliver consequences to your child. Be sure to *observe*, not to judge. Your emotional responses to your child's misbehavior are critical. If you are harsh and highly emotional, your child's misbehavior can escalate. You will be more successful in managing misbehavior If you are firm and under control.

Be Strategic:
Remember, when you use consequences, remain in control of the situation. Therefore, use punishment sparingly until you are comfortable with the structure of your positive reinforcement system for homework.

Keep a 4-to-1 Ratio:
Make sure the amount of positive reinforcement that you use is at least for times the amount of punishment. This will help to prevent unintended side-effects, including discouragement and anger.

Choose correction:
Correction offered verbally and nonverbally can be an effective consequence. When giving corrections, state what your child *should do*, not what they shouldn't do (e.g. "you should be finishing your math problems" instead of, "stop daydreaming and wasting time!").

Offer corrections immediately:
Respond to your child as soon as possible after misbehavior occurs. While responding immediately isn't always possible, it should be your goal.

Clear and simple: Corrections are more useful of stated clearly and simply.

Mean what you say: Remember to deliver instructions FIRMLY, but NOT harshly. Be sure that you can follow-up on promised consequences. Actions speak louder than words. Children may "test the waters" because they likely won't believe you're serious until you consistently follow through on your consequences.

Be Specific: Remember to specify the behavior that your child needs to improve (e.g. "you need to pay attention to your work" instead of vague statements such as "you're doing badly."

HOMEWORK ROUTINE SELF-CHECKLIST

When	**Mon**	**Tues**	**Wed**	**Thr**	**Fri**	**TOTAL POINTS**
Has Complete HW Assignment? Enter points if goal is met						
Began HW on time? _____ Enter points if goal is met						
Time limits? _____ Enter points if goal is met						
Has School materials? Enter points if goal is met						
Child has supplies (homework kit)? Enter points if goal is met						

HW ROUTINE POINTS TOTAL: _____

THIS WEEKS GOALS

(2) Exceeded Goal (1) Met Goal (0) Haven't met goal yet

	Mon	**Tues**	**Wed**	**Thr**	**Fri**	**TOTAL POINTS**
ACCURACY GOALS: _____% CORRECT How did we do today? (2), (1), (0)						
COMPLETION GOALS: _____% COMPLETED How did we do today? (2), (1), (0)						

GOAL SUMMARY:

WEEKLY ACCURACY GOAL: POINTS _____

WEEKLY COMPLETION GOAL: POINTS _____

TOTAL POINTS FOR THE WEEK: _____

Appendix F 13-Group Parent-Training: Session 5

Group Session 5

Goals:

1) Review of parent homework assignments
2) Review of Electronic Daily Report Card procedures
3) Summarize progress
4) Review homework strategies
5) Develop individualized homework plans
6) Obtain outcome data

Overview

During this final session parents will be invited to review the information and materials provided during the parent training program. Group troubleshooting will be conducted, as parents are encouraged to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Assistance developing individualized homework plans will be offered to ensure that parents continue to implement homework strategies contoured to their children's needs. Lastly, outcome data will be obtained.

Homework Review

This session will begin with a review of the parent homework assignment given at the end of session 4. Beginning each session with a review of the previously assigned homework will serve to provide parents with feedback about their participation in the program and will reinforce the importance of parents completing their homework in a timely manner (power et al., 2001).

- Parents will be asked to share their experiences using the Electronic Daily Report Card.
- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences in continuing to implement planning the point system with the inclusion of response cost procedures (specific values of targeted behaviors and the designated removal of chips/loss of points will be discussed).
- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences implementing the Goal-Setting Tool.
- Parents will be asked to discuss their experiences limiting the help they offered to their child to only designated time intervals.

Summarizing Progress

- Parents will be shown data obtained through EDRC analysis regarding changes in student's homework behaviors from baseline to present.
- Parents will be asked to note differences between baseline and current performance.
- A group discussion regarding persisting problems and how to modify procedures will be facilitated.

Review of Homework Strategies

The following strategies offered during the parent training program will be briefly reviewed and presented in a Power Point format:

1. *Daily Homework Routine*

The context in which children complete homework will be examined including the "when, where, and what of homework" which will be referred to as the "Homework Routine."

- The importance of doing homework in a location that is conducive to attentive and productive work will be emphasized.
- The importance of having children do their homework at an optimal time will be emphasized. (e.g. a time that promotes attentive behavior, minimizes distractions, accounts for fatigue, etc.).

- The importance of the child being organized and prepared to begin their homework at the designated homework time will be emphasized (having assignment, books, materials, etc. ready when homework time begins).
- Providing a "homework kit" which contains the supplies needed for children to complete most of their homework assignments.

2. *Giving Effective Instructions*

Parents can benefit greatly from guidelines that are clear, concise, and reasonable (Power et al., 2001). If instructions are given correctly, children are more likely to comply and follow through with requests.

- The following characteristics of effective instructions will be reviewed:
    - Minimize Instructions
    - Maintain eye contact when giving instructions.
    - Give brief, concrete directives
    - Issue instructions as a statement (not as a favor or a question).
    - Instructions must be reasonable and achievable.
    - Verify that child has heard and clearly understands instructions (if child does not appear to be following directions they can be asked to repeat instructions given to them).
    - Mean what you say and be ready to follow up if child does not comply (never make threats that cannot be followed through with).
    - After a command is given, watch what child does and offer consequences (positive or negative) based on their actions.
    - Provide praise when child complies with instructions (child is more likely to follow through if praise is provided for initial attempts to comply).
    - Empathize with parents that this is "easier said than done" because it may be going against years of pre-established routines, so don't give up!

3. *Positive Reinforcement*

The following principles of positive reinforcement will be reviewed:

- Positive Reinforcement involves presenting a consequence or an event following a response, which increases the likelihood of that response occurring in that situation.
- A consequence that may appear to be aversive may actually be positively reinforcing (e.g. parental reprimands may reinforce disruptive behavior by increasing attention given to the child).
- Delivering positive reinforcement to a desired behavior and simply not delivering positive reinforcement to an undesired behavior is a very effective behavior change strategy (e.g. supervisors at work can have a significant impact on employees simply by praising certain behaviors and not praising others).
- The basic elements of the token economy will be reviewed.
- The principles of CISS-4 will be reviewed.

4. *Time Management and Goal Setting*

- The importance of complying with the maximum homework time limit outlined by the teacher on the Electronic Daily Report Card.
- Children can get more work done and achieve higher rates of accuracy within the allotted time limit, then behavioral difficulties should diminish automatically.

Developing Individualized Homework Plans

Parents are offered the opportunity to develop their own formula for homework success. They are encouraged to consolidate what they have learned to develop their own personalized program.

- Parents will be asked to identify the strategies that they have found to be most successful in addressing their child's homework problems.
- Parents will be asked to write these strategies on a notepad.
- Parents will be encouraged to share any adaptations they made that they've found to be successful with the group.
- Parents will be asked to write down their "Formula for Success." An example might be:

1. Start homework at 4:30 at the kitchen table.
2. Turn off the television.
3. Review Daily Report Card.
4. Review assignment using the Goal-Setting worksheet with child.
5. Use a token reinforcement system.
6. Make sure to allow enough time in the evening to play a game if the child earns enough points.
7. Do not yell while child is doing their homework.

- Parents will be encouraged to place a written copy of the Formula for Success in a visible place in the home where it can be referred to when needed.
- If the child is having a bad day, parents are encouraged to refer to their formula for success and make sure they are following it.

Obtaining Outcome Data

Parents will be asked to complete the following forms:

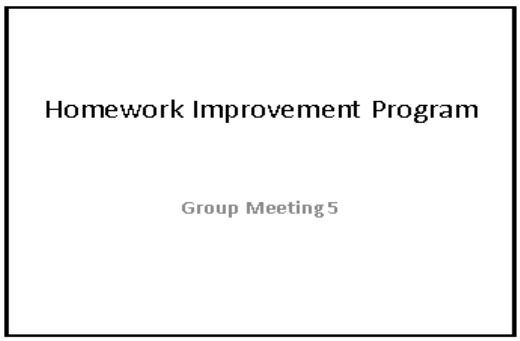
- The Homework Problems Checklist.
- Homework Improvement Program: Follow-Up Questionnaire

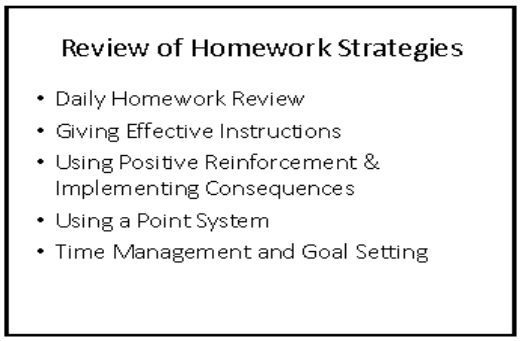
It will also be explained to parents that their child's teacher will also be contacted to complete additional outcome measures.

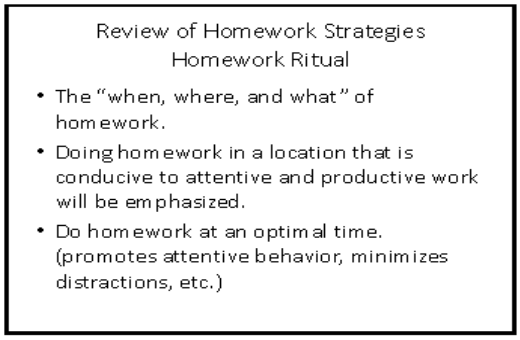
Conclusion

- At the conclusion of this session, parents will receive a certificate of completion (Appendix).
- Parents will be praised for their efforts and encouraged to continue using the Electronic Daily Report Cards to communicate with their child's teacher.
- Food/refreshments will be provided in celebration of completion of the program.

Appendix F 14-Sesssion 5: Power Point Presentation







Review of Homework Strategies
Homework Ritual

- Being organized and prepared to bring their homework at the designated homework time (having assignment, books, materials, etc. ready when homework time begins).
- Providing a "Homework Kit" which contains the supplies needed to compete homework assignments.

Review of Homework Strategies
CISS-4

- **Consistency**
- **Immediacy**
- **Specificity**
- **Saliency**
- **4–to-1**

Review of Homework Strategies
Implementing Consequences

RESPONSE COST

- **The removal of positive reinforcement is often an underused method of punishment that can be highly effective when used correctly.**
- **Response cost may entail the taking away of a point in response to a targeted behavior.**

Goal Setting: Supervision

- Act only as a supervisor and not a tutor.
- Remain close enough to monitor progress and to provide praise (praise every 1 to 2 minutes is reasonable, too much praise is distracting).
- Ignore inappropriate behaviors.
- Midway through the homework time, you can ask your child if they need help.
- Provide help briefly if needed (approx 30 sec).
- If your child asks for more help, tell them to wait until the midpoint or endpoint of the time period.

Goal Setting

- **Direct your child to evaluate their work**
- At the end of the time limit, compliment your child for the work that was completed.
- Have your child write how many items they think they've gotten correct their homework.

Developing Individualized Homework Plans

Developing your own formula for success

- **Identify the strategies that you have found to be most successful in addressing your child's homework needs.**
- **Write these strategies on a notepad.**
- **Please share any adaptations you've made that you've found to be successful with the group.**

Sample Individualized Homework Plan

1. **Start HW at 4:30 at the kitchen table.**
2. **Turn off the TV.**
3. **Review the Daily Report Card.**
4. **Review assignment and establish accuracy and completion goals with your child.**
5. **Use the point reinforcement system.**
6. **Make sure to allow enough time in the evening to play a game if points are earned.**
7. **Do not get overly frustrated while my child is doing HW.**

Developing Individualized Homework Plans

- Place written copy of the formula for success in a visible place in the Homework Spot where it can be referred to when needed.
- If your child is having a bad day, please refer to your formula for success and make sure you're following it.

THANK YOU!!

- Please continue to communicate with your child's teacher.
- Thank You for participating in the program.
- GOOD LUCK!!

Homework Improvement Program

Certificate of Completion

This certificate certifies that this caring and devoted parent has completed the Homework Completion Program and has become even more skilled at helping their child become a successful student.

_____

Program Facilitator

Appendix F 16-Outcome Measures

Your Name:_____

Your Child's Name: _____

The best phone # to reach you:_____

Your email address:_____

How often do you check your email? (please check one of the following choices):

_____I check my email many times per day

_____I use email once or twice per day

_____ I use email a few times per week

_____ I use email one or twice per week

_____I rarely use email (not every week/a few times per month)

_____ I never/very rarely use email

SAMPLE ELECTROINIC DAILY REPORT CARD TEMPLATE

THE NIGHTLY HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TYPED HERE EACH DAY

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TYPED HERE

THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF TIME THAT SHOULD BE SPENT ON THIS ASSIGNMENT IS:_____

1. HOW MUCH OF THIS HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT WAS COMPLETED?

☐ HOW MUCH OF THIS HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT WAS COMPLETED? THE WHOLE ASSIGNMENT WAS COMPLETED (100%)

☐ MOST OF THE ASSIGNMENT WAS COMPLETED (75%-99%)

☐ SOME OF THE ASSIGNMENT WAS COMPLETED (25%-74%)

☐ LITTLE WAS COMPLETED (0%-24%)

2. CHOOSE LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

○ CHOOSE LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT I HELPED MY CHILD WITH MORE THAN HALF OF THE ASSIGNMENT

○ I HELPED MY CHILD WITH LESS THAN HALF OF THE ASSIGMENT

○ I DID NOT NEED TO HELP WITH THIS ASSIGNMENT

Other (please specify)

3. HOW LONG DID YOUR CHILD SPEND WORKING ON THIS ASSIGNMENT

○ HOW LONG DID YOUR CHILD SPEND WORKING ON THIS ASSIGNMENT LESS THAN 15 MINUTES

○ 16 TO 30 MINUTES

○ 31 TO 45 MINUTES

○ 46 TO 60 MINUTES

Other (please specify)

4. DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT?

☐ DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT? YES, I PLAN ON E-MAILING THE TEACHER

☐ NO, I DON'T NEED TO CONTACT THE TEACHER

TALK TO TEACHER VIA EMAIL: Email Teacher

Homework Problems Checklist

Child's Name:_____ Your Name:_____
Date:_____ Child's Birth Date:_____ Child's Age:_____
Grade_____ Male____ Female_____

Instructions: Please complete all of the following questions regarding your child's performance to the best of your ability. Please do not leave any items blank.

FOR EACH STATEMENT CHECK ONE:	**NEVER (0)**	**AT TIMES (1)**	**OFTEN (2)**	**VERY OFTEN (3)**
1. Fails to bring home assignment and necessary materials (textbook, dittos, etc.)				
2. Doesn't know exactly what homework has been assigned.				
3. Denies having homework assignment.				
4. Refused to do homework assignment				
5. Whines or complains about homework.				
6. Must be reminded to sit down and start homework.				
7. Procrastinates, puts off doing homework.				
8. Doesn't do homework satisfactorily unless someone is in the room.				
9. Doesn't do homework satisfactorily unless someone does it with him/her				
10. Daydreams or plays with objects during homework sessions.				
11. Easily distracted by noises or activities of others.				
12. Easily frustrated by homework assignment.				
13. Fails to complete homework.				
14. Takes unusually long time to do homework.				
15. Responds poorly when told by parent to correct homework.				
16. Produces messy or sloppy homework.				
17. Hurries through homework and makes careless mistakes.				
18. Shows dissatisfaction with work, even when he/she does a good job.				
19. Forgets to bring assignment to class.				
Deliberately fails to bring assignment back to class.				
TOTAL SCORE				

Homework Improvement Program: Follow-Up Questionnaire

Please complete the following questions to assess your child's progress.

Daily Report Card Procedures

1. Are you continuing to use the daily report cards? _____

2. How often are you completing the daily report cards?
   - Every night_____
   - Only sometimes (inconsistently) _____

3. Are you still using the daily report card to develop homework accuracy goals with your child?_____

4. Are you still using the daily report card to develop homework completion goals with your child?_____
Comments:

Homework Routine

1. Is your child continuing to follow the homework routine?_____

2. How often are they following the homework routine?
   - Every night_____
   - Only sometimes (inconsistently) _____

3. Have you encountered any obstacles in following the Homework Routine? _____
Comments:

Point System

1. Are you continuing to use the point system with your child?_____

2. How often are you using the point system?
   - Every night_____
   - Only sometimes (inconsistently) _____

3. Have you encountered any obstacles in following the Homework Routine? _____
Comments:

4. Do you continue to use the rewards menu with your child?_____

5. Do you continue to reward your child for meeting specified homework completion goals?_____
6. Has your child earned any long-term rewards yet?_____
Comments:

Overview of Program

1. Do you feel you've benefited from participating in the Homework Improvement Program?_____
Comments:

2. Do you think that you will continue to use the homework strategies after this school year?_____

3. Do you feel that your relationship with your child's teacher has improved since before you participated in the program?_____
Explain:

4. Do you feel that your relationship with your child has improved since before you participated in the program?_____
Explain:

5. Do you feel that your participation in the program has changed your approach to parenting in other situations aside from getting your child to do their homework?_____
Explain:

6. Would you recommend this program to a friend whose child was experiencing homework difficulties?_____

7. Did you enjoy participating in the program?_____

8. What parts of the program were most appealing to you?_____

9. What do you feel should be changed about the program in the future?_____

Appendix F 17-Consent Forms
Parent Consent Form

Dear Parents,

This letter is to inform you that during the next few weeks there will be a research study conducted in your child's school aimed at improving student's homework. This program is being conducted by Richard Beck, a school psychologist and doctoral student in the Ph.D. Program in Educational Psychology, at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The study is designed to learn if participation in a parent program and enhanced parent-teacher communication through the use of an online Electronic Daily Report Card software program can help to improve student homework performance. While the goal is to improve children's homework performance, it is actually parents and teachers that are being asked to participate in the study.

I'd like to invite you to join the study. Participants are asked to attend 5 group parent meetings held in your child's school offering skills to better assist your children with their schoolwork. Each meeting will last approximately one hour, one night per week, for five weeks. Participants will also receive online access to the Electronic Daily Report Card program, which will provide you with your child's homework assignments and instructions each night. It will also provide a direct link through which you can contact your child's teacher, and will allow you to rate your child's homework performance and to chart their progress involve maintaining daily parent-teacher communication with your child's teacher. You will be asked to complete questionnaires prior to beginning the program, during the program, and upon completion of the program. You will also receive handouts outlining methods to help you child improve upon their homework performance.

To help make participation more convenient, a supervised homework tutorial group will be offered to you children where they can complete their homework or projects with the help of graduate students to assist them. Student tutorials will be held during parent meeting times and is open to all of your school-age children, so you won't have to worry about childcare interfering with your ability to participate. Hot food, beverages, and refreshments will also be served.

Your participation is strictly voluntary, and there are absolutely no repercussions for deciding not to participate. There are no anticipated risks for participating, but the results are intended to improve your child's homework performance and to strengthen your ability to help your children succeed academically. It is hoped that the skills you gain though your participation in this program will serve to enhace your child's homework habits for years to come.

If you'd consider participating in the program, or if you'd simply like to learn more about it, please complete the form below and return it to school with your child and you will be contacted by phone with more information.
Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Richard Beck M.S. Ed., NCSP
CUNY Doctoral student and Principal Investigator.

_ _

Please check one:
☐ I would like to be contacted to receive information about this study.
☐ I would like to be contacted to receive information about this study.

Your Name: (Mr./Mrs./Ms.)_____
Phone #:_____
E-mail (optional):_____
What is the best time to contact you?_____

Teacher Consent Form

My name is Richard Beck, and I am a nationally certified school psychologist, a doctoral student in the Ph.D. Program in Educational Psychology, at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), and principal investigator of this project, entitled "Effects of Group Parent Training on the Homework Completion and Homework Accuracy Rates of Upper Elementary School Students." This is a research study designed to learn if parent participation in a structured group program, coupled with daily parent-teacher communication can serve to enhance the homework performance of children exhibiting homework difficulties. The study is expected to improve the homework performance.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to email nightly homework assignments to the primary investigator which will be posted on an online daily report card. This will include recording the homework assignment, and the maximum duration of time that the student should spend on their homework assignment. You will also be asked to communicate with parents involved in the study via email. You will also be asked to complete two questionnaires prior to beginning the program, and two questionnaires upon completion of the program. These activities are designed to occupy only a brief amount of time each day, and should not at all alter or hinder the current structure and pace of your class. If you choose to participate it is essential that you keep the identities of those students whose parents are involved in the study strictly confidential. Only participating parents, this researcher, and the school Principal will be aware of your participation. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You can withdraw your consent at any time and have the results of your participation returned to you, and removed from the research records.

There are no anticipated risks for participating in this study, but the results are intended to improve your student's homework performance, enhance communication with parents, and inform my dissertation.
I may publish results of the study, but names of people, or any identifying characteristics, will not be used in any publications. If you would like a copy of the study I will be happy to provide you with one.

If you have any questions about this research study or would like feedback on the results, please feel free to contact Richard Beck at (347) 262-8290 or at rbeck@gc.cuny.edu. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Marian Fish at **mfish@gc.cuny.edu**. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you can contact Kay Powell, IRB Administrator, The Graduate Center/City University of New York, (212) 817-7525, **kpowell@gc.cuny.edu**.

If you agree to participate in the study, please sign and return this letter in the enclosed envelope. Thank you very much for your consideration!
Sincerely,
Richard Beck M.S.Ed., NCSP
CUNY Doctoral student and Principal Investigator.

Please check one and sign below:

☐ I have read the information above, and I voluntarily **AGREE** to participate in this study.
☐ I have read the information above, and I **DO NOT AGREE** to participate in this study.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Teacher signature	Date	Principal Investigator Signature	Date

Letter to Principals

Dear Principal,

My name is Richard Beck, and I am a nationally certified school psychologist, a doctoral student in the Ph.D. Program in Educational Psychology, at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), and principal investigator of this project entitled "Effects of Group Parent Training on the Homework Completion and Homework Accuracy Rates of Upper Elementary School Students." This is a research study designed to learn if parent participation in a structured group program, coupled with daily parent-teacher communication can serve to enhance the homework performance of children exhibiting homework difficulties.

I would like conduct a homework intervention in your school for children exhibiting homework difficulties. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of the City University of New York. Parents who choose to participate in the study will be asked to attend five group-meetings held once per week, for five weeks, with each meeting lasting approximately 60 minutes. During that time they will be given techniques through which they may be able to better assist their child shape and structure their homework habits. Parents and participating teachers will be asked to complete and online daily report cards through which they will be able to communicate with each other via email on a daily basis. Participating teachers will also be asked to email nightly homework assignments to this researcher to be posted on the online daily report cards each day. These activities are designed to occupy only a brief amount of time each day, and should not alter or hinder the current structure and pace of the in your school. Parents and teachers will also be asked to complete two questionnaires prior to beginning the program, and two questionnaires upon completion of the program. The identity of all participants in this study will be kept strictly confidential. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

There are no anticipated risks for participating in this study, but the results are intended to improve student's homework performance, enhance parent-teacher communication, and inform my dissertation.

I may publish results of the study, but names of people, or any identifying characteristics, will not be used in any publications. If you would like a copy of the study I will be happy to provide you with one.

If you have any questions about this research study or would like feedback on the results, please feel free to contact Richard Beck at (347) 262-8290 or at **rbeck@gc.cuny.edu**. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Marian Fish at **mfish@gc.cuny.edu**. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you can contact Kay Powell, IRB Administrator, The Graduate Center/City University of New York, (212) 817-7525, **kpowell@gc.cuny.edu**.

Thank you very much for considering the possibility of permitting me to conduct this study in your school.
Sincerely,
Richard Beck M.S.Ed., NCSP
CUNY Doctoral student and Principal Investigator.

_Please check one and sign below:

☐ I have read the information above, and I voluntarily **AGREE** to participate in this study.

☐ I have read the information above, and I **DO NOT AGREE** to participate in this study.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Principal signature	Date	Principal Investigator Signature	Date

References

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