

EMPOWERED!

(Parenting With Respect and Dignity)

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family who taught me the value of patience, respect and humor: George, whose love and strength encouraged me to first visualize and then realize my dreams. Dixie, whose determination and commitment to her own family made me proud; Kerri, whose strength of character gave me the courage to develop my own; Tricia whose vibrancy created many opportunities to practice what I preached; and Shelly who taught us all to follow our dreams.

I also dedicate the project to those fine parents who had the courage to respond to my call and submit themselves to my passionate belief in the value of strong parenting.

Culminating Project - Abstract

EMPOWERED

(Parenting with Respect and Dignity)

The purpose of this project was to examine the efficacy of the 1-2-3 Magic (Phelan, 1995) parenting program. This project involved 13 parents who were interested in participating in a six week study of the program. These parents were presented with an outline of the program, a brief description of the philosophy behind the program, and an opportunity to discuss questions or concerns. The parents then completed a pre-test of the Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1995).

The participating parents attended six sessions during which the 1-2-3 Magic program was examined in detail. The parents were also asked to keep a journal detailing interactions with their children - recording specific thoughts, ideas and concerns. As well, they were asked to use the SUDS (Subjective Units of Discomfort Scale) to record the level of emotion in each of their interactions. This information was used as anecdotal support for the conclusions in the study.

The PSI was used as a pre- and post- measure of the parent's perception of the child's behavior, and the stress involved in dealing with the behavior. After the post-tests of the PSI's were scored, all tests were returned to the respective subject with a written summary of the results.

The results of this study suggest that the 1-2-3 Magic program was influential in reducing parent stress and child-related family conflict. The parents reported overall improvement in their children's behavior and improved family dynamics. Several of the parents indicated that they felt an increased sense of self-control and self-esteem in addition to a more positive approach to parenting. Anecdotal data reported in the daily journals kept by all parents

and the pre- and post- test measures done with the Parenting Stress Index lead to the conclusion that the 1-2-3 Magic program can be used to reduce misbehavior in children ages 2 - 12. This suggests that the program could be a valuable tool to offer to parents through school groups, family centers, or mental health workers.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I first encountered the 1-2-3 Magic (Phelan, n. d.) program in my work with elementary age school children who had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This program offered practical strategies to help parents and teachers deal with misbehavior in an effective, non-emotional manner. Somewhat skeptical, I asked a parent to provide me with details of the program so that I could examine it in light of my interest in children with behavior problems, and also, if appropriate, to assist in implementing the program in classrooms.. The parent provided me with an undated manuscript version of the program which has since been revised significantly to include information for teachers and an important section on self esteem and active listening.

Coincidentally during that same year, our School Based Team (made up of an administrator, Student Services teachers, counselor, and receiving classroom teacher) met with members of Social Services to discuss the needs of a young boy who was reentering the school system after an extended period of home schooling after suspension for violent behavior. The social workers had been using the 1-2-3 Magic program with this disturbed youngster for about six months and had noticed significant improvement in his behavior. They asked members of the team to watch the accompanying video and to read the book in preparation for this boy's entry into a Grade Five classroom. They suggested that the strategies suggested in the program would be very useful for the classroom teacher and any other staff members who would need to deal

with this child. Although the classroom teacher was somewhat skeptical about the feasibility of implementing the program in a classroom setting, she agreed to give it a try. Within a week, she reported that she was finding the program useful with her entire class.

Since throughout the course of my career I had developed an intense personal and professional concern regarding the increase in discipline problems with elementary age school children, this program peaked my interest. Prior to embarking on this Master's Degree through the University of Lethbridge, I had already begun to research material which I hoped to use to develop a process for teaching parenting strategies to the parents of difficult children. The 1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12 program, which I subsequently purchased and read, was added to my growing collection of information on parenting.

As I read through the new revised second edition of the book, I became increasingly convinced that the methods described were: a) based on sound research, and b) practical and easy to learn. The suggested methods fit with my belief in an authoritative parenting style and as an advocate of this program I have undertaken to examine the research basis for its underlying tactics of: Time-Out, No-Talk/No-Emotion Rules, Start and Stop Behavior, Sloppy Positive Verbal Feedback, Natural Consequences, the Docking System, the 1-2-3 Counting Method, Active Listening, the Family Meeting, and the Kickoff Conversation.

In addition to researching the theory behind this program, I arranged to interview a parent who has been using the program for about a year with her three children, two of whom have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The program is used as the primary means of behavior management/discipline in this household. As this parent expressed during the interview,

I found it very difficult to get my children to respond, and I would be angry... we would get into a lot of conflicts andwith my children it's very difficult to get through to them when they're angry so we weren't getting anywhere with the discipline and everyone was just quite angry...I needed something that would make them stop their behavior immediately so that they would calm down. Otherwise it escalated and got out of hand and then there was no dealing with. (J. Kunz, personal communication, April 15, 1999)

In describing other strategies she had tried, this same parent said,

I didn't use any strategies out of the book before hand...I think probably spanking was the big thing that I used before...with Michael, a lot of it is emotional and the 1-2-3 Magic just stops the emotion part of it...I mean he goes to his room and he deals with it there, which is what we required of him, and that makes things easier for all of us, and the hardest thing for my husband is to not follow him and get involved in the emotional part of it...I have to keep reminding him that this is his right, to go to his room and do his emotional stuff there.... (J. Kunz, personal communication, April 15, 1999)

Throughout the course of this interview, the parent expressed her gratitude for the information and strategies described in the program. She indicated that counting to three out loud seems to distract the child from the misbehavior. In her opinion, the use of numbers seems to change the side of the brain dominating the interaction, consequently moving the child from emotional "right brain" thinking to the more logical "left brain" processes of logical thinking about consequences.

Having already decided that I would use my interest in parenting practices as the focus for my culminating project, it seemed logical to develop a research project based on my experiences with the 1-2-3 Magic program. The purpose of this project was to examine the efficacy of the 1-2-3 Magic parenting program which is an intervention based on behavior management principles. In his introduction Phelan suggests that its overall orientation “is what you might call *dictatorship to democracy*” (p. 13). He explains that although his methods may seem quite heavy handed for some, his program is based on the assumption that parents need to know how to handle difficult behavior, encourage good behavior, and manage the inevitable testing of the rules in a way that is fair, clear, and not abusive. The methods he suggests are intended to eliminate behaviors such as arguing, fighting, screaming, tantrums and teasing with a procedure called the 1-2-3 or “counting” procedure. In addition to stopping unacceptable behaviors, Phelan offers tactics such as positive reinforcement, timers, token economy, natural consequences, and charting to encourage good behavior.

This project involved the parents of 13 families who were interested in participating in a six week study of the program. These parents were presented with an outline of the program, a brief description of the philosophy behind the program, and an opportunity to discuss questions or concerns. Those parents who agreed to participate signed a consent and release form detailing mutual obligations and responsibilities.

The PSI (Abidin, 1995) was used as a pre- and post-test to measure the effectiveness of the program. The PSI was developed to measure parenting stresses which can lead to dysfunctional parenting and behavioral and/or emotional problems in children. The Child Domain subscales of the PSI measure the effects of child characteristics on parental stress. The

Parent Domain subscales of the PSI measure the parents' personal behaviors as a possible source of stress and potential dysfunction.

In addition to completing the PSI, the parents were asked to keep a daily journal while they were participating in the study. In the journal, they were asked to record specifics of interactions with their children, both positive and negative. While documenting interactions with their children, the parents were also asked to specify a word that most accurately described the emotion accompanying the interaction. They were asked to use an adapted form of SUDS and assign a number between 1 and 10 to the emotion. The higher the number, the more intense the emotion. This anecdotal information was used to support the results of the study.

Session One:

During Session One we discussed the purpose of the study and the general philosophy of the 1-2-3 Magic program. At this time, I explained my expectations regarding implementation of the strategies within the program, weekly attendance at the sessions, and confidentiality of information. Parents were asked to read and sign a Consent and Release Form (see Appendix F) which was required to receive a Certificate of Ethical Approval from the Human Subject Research Committee at the University of Lethbridge (see Appendix G). Then I introduced the PSI and explained the purpose of pre- and post-testing. Parents were given time to complete the assessment.

Once the assessment was completed, I gave each parent a copy of Phelan's book. We spent a short time discussing the 1-2-3 counting process. I also described the SUDS and the journaling process I wanted them to use for the purpose of the study. Parents were asked to read Chapters 1-13 in the book which describe the basic counting process and to begin using the 1-2-3 counting system BEFORE the next session.

Session Two:

Session Two began with a short segment from the video 1-2-3 Magic (Phelan, 1995) as a way of demonstrating how the 1-2-3 counting procedure can be used. Then we reviewed the main features of the program using overheads and cartoons. During this session, we discussed the importance of giving children responsibility and ways to teach children about responsibility. We also reviewed the six different kinds of testing and manipulation and discussed ways to deal with it.

Session Three:

During Session Three we reviewed the behaviors and characteristics that we as parents, want to encourage in our children. The focus of this session was START behaviors such as doing chores and going to bed on time and ways to encourage good behavior. This discussion included information about using positive verbal feedback, the difference between praise and encouragement, and the importance of being specific when encouraging your child. Parents were given suggestions about the kinds of incentives and reinforcers that work with children of different ages, as well as a list of praise phrases that can be adapted for use in any situation (see Appendix H).

Session Four:

During Session Four we examined the suggested steps for building self-esteem. The discussion focused on the importance of good communication, discipline, positive reinforcement, shared fun, affection, encouragement, open-mindedness, and active listening. Parents were asked to select specific factors that they could use to help build self-esteem in their children.

Session Five:

Session Five focused on active listening skills. Parents were given an opportunity to practice using closed questions, open questions, declarative probes, reflection of verbal content, and reflection of feelings. During this session, we discussed the importance of being nonjudgmental, of using a calm, concerned tone of voice, and of attending skills to focus on the child, as well as perception checks to ensure getting the message. As well, parents were given an opportunity to practice using active listening skills to respond to imaginary situations with an angry or upset child.

Session Six:

During this session, we reviewed some of the main features of the program including: start and stop behavior, time-out as a consequence, natural consequences, the 1-2-3 counting process, the six kinds of testing and manipulation, and strategies for encouraging start behavior. There was time for questions and discussion. Then parents were given the PSI as a post-test to measure changes in their stress levels since completing the pre-test seven weeks previous. I collected their journals to use as anecdotal evidence in the project summary. The journals and both copies of the PSI were returned to the respective individuals after they had been scored and interpreted. Each participant then completed an anecdotal evaluation of the program, and of the effectiveness of its presentation in these sessions (see Appendix E).

Evaluation of Results:

After the pre- and post-tests were scored and interpreted by the researcher, they were examined and the results checked by Ms. Donnie Scott, a chartered psychologist. The information contained in the tests was transferred to graphs which illustrate any changes which have occurred between the pre- and post-testing (see Appendices A, B, and C). Changes in the individual profiles were examined and evaluated using the PSI manual and information contained in completed journals and questionnaires. Conclusions are based on: pre- and post-testing with the PSI, incidents recorded in journals, the SUDS as recorded in the journal, and specific comments recorded by participants in the program evaluation (see Appendix D).

Privacy/Confidentiality:

The privacy of individuals and their confidentiality was protected by ensuring that names and/or identifying information were not used at any time in the written summary of this study. Each participant had the opportunity to examine both pre- and post-results of the PSI and to have that information interpreted if necessary. All information including both pre- and post-tests, and journals were returned to the participants or shredded at the School District office. All information regarding this study was kept in a safe place in my home with all names replaced by numbers.

Referral/Disclosure:

During this study, test results for two parents indicated a crisis profile. I contacted those two parents, shared my concerns about their test results, and referred them for private counseling.

Limitations of the Study

Inherent in the design of this project was an understanding that participants would enter the program with different parenting styles, different levels of competence, different life experiences, and children with different behavior and characteristics. Consequently the pre- and post-measurement of the PSI resulted in extremely different profiles. Some of the pre-tests suggested that except for some subscale scores, parenting stress levels and child characteristics were within or below normal range of 15th to 80th percentiles. Other pre-tests indicated parents in crisis. All scores were interpreted and evaluated based on known information about the subject involved. In all cases the researcher used the Defensive Responding score to determine that the results of the PSI closely reflected the participants' present levels of stress. In all individual profiles, post-test scores indicated change in subscale and/or domain scores or both (see Appendix B).

There could be several factors affecting the "normalization" of the PSI. First, although each parent was provided with a copy of 1-2-3 Magic and a journal in which to record their progress through the program, each individual had to use his/her own judgment in the implementation of the tactics. Group discussions suggested that some parents were very faithful in implementing the program as suggested in the book and in our weekly sessions. Other parents were inconsistent. Some individuals found that their children did not respond as expected and consequently had to revise their tactics. Two parents chose to use only some of the suggestions and discarded many of the ideas presented, especially the concept of time-out, which is a critical part of the program. Therefore, one of the limitations of this type of study is the consistency of its implementation.

Secondly, although the program is suggested for use with 2-12 year olds, many of the parents thought that it would not work well with 2 and 3 year olds. Other parents felt that it was not useful with children over the age of 10. However, one of the parents used the program with her two daughters aged 13 and 14 and reported amazing results! Interestingly, even though some of the participants had difficulty implementing the tactics with some of their children, all (except for the two who opted not to use the program) reported positive results in their journals and on their final evaluation forms.

In this type of study, the researcher is not able to control the process of implementation. As well, it is impossible to control the entry level behavior and characteristics of the children involved. Although many of the test scores suggested that the children involved did not have characteristics of ADHD or other physical, emotional or behavioral problems, some of the profiles indicated children who caused critical stress levels in their parent. After this six week intervention, many of the scores were moderated although they remained above the 85th percentile. Several of the participants were referred for individual counseling for their children and/or themselves.

This study was limited to a 6 week period due to time constraints. However, it would be interesting to examine the scores once again after a period of about 3 months to determine if the strategies learned in this program effected long term change in the parenting stress levels. It would also be interesting to examine the effects of this parenting program on the behavior of the children in other settings, such as in the classroom and on the playground.

CHAPTER 2

Program Details

Program Description

1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12 is a program based on behavior management principles. Inherent in its conception is a belief in an authoritative model of parenting which is characterized by the use of firm consequences contingently applied (Baumrind, 1996). Pettit, Bates, and Dodge (1997) indicate that authoritative parents tend to be warm and accepting, democratic in decision making and firm in establishing behavioral guidelines. In his introduction, Phelan (1995) explains that although his methods may seem quite heavy handed for some, his program is based on the assumption that parents need to know how to handle difficult behavior, encourage good behavior, and manage the inevitable testing in a way that is fair, clear, and not abusive. The methods he suggests are intended to eliminate unacceptable behaviors with a procedure called the 1-2-3 or “counting” procedure. In addition to stopping unacceptable behaviors, Phelan offers tactics such as positive reinforcement, timers, token economy, natural consequences, and charting to encourage good behavior.

The principle of using the 1-2-3 count is based on the Response-Contingent Aversive Stimulation (RCAS) guidelines which claim that punishment is most effective if it is enforced as soon as possible after the target behavior (Nemeroff & Karoly, 1991). Phelan uses the counting process as a method for deterring parents from falling into the trap of lecturing, arguing with and/or negotiating with their children. Turecki (1989) suggests that it is important to punish only

the unacceptable behavior. He states that parents must be brief but reasonable in their demands and assert their authority in an objective and neutral way. He reminds us, though, that parents need to determine which behavior is relevant, then explain future expectations **before** embarking on disciplinary action. Turecki suggests that it is very important to follow through with consequences after adequate warning.

In 1-2-3 Magic the 1-2-3 counting process is used initially as a method to STOP inappropriate behaviors. Each count is considered a warning that the behavior is inappropriate. If the behavior stops, nothing more needs to be said or done. If the behavior continues and the 3 count is reached, consequence in the form of “time out” is applied. This program suggests one minute for each year of the child’s age, but extra time can be added for more serious offences. When the child returns from time out, the parent may take the time to debrief the behavior or not - depending on the circumstances.

Another goal of the program is to provide parents with information and alternatives to the testing and manipulation which often occur when children are being disciplined. Phelan warns us that testing and manipulation are purposeful behaviors which children use in efforts to get their own way. He suggests six main tactics that children use to avoid unwanted consequences: badgering, intimidation, threat, martyrdom, buttering up and physical aggression. Nemeroff and Karoly (1991) suggest that oftentimes inappropriate behaviors are reinforced when care givers give in to long term tantrums. The child learns that all s/he has to do to get his/her way is to persevere a little longer.

If, as many behaviorists suggest, most behavior including misbehavior is learned, then it can also be unlearned. The process of unlearning behavior by ignoring it is called extinction.

Extinction is the process of reducing the frequency of a behavior by ending its reinforcement (Osborne, 1989). Phelan's program suggests that testing and manipulation tactics can be extinguished by breaking the cycle of negative control between the parent and the child. This requires that the parent recognizes testing and manipulation tactics when they occur, remains unemotional and firm, ignores these behaviors if possible, and uses the 1-2-3 count if necessary.

A critical aspect of the program is its use of time-out as the primary consequence for misbehavior. Time-out is a negative consequence which can be used to help parents stop reacting to misbehavior in ways which can be inadvertently reinforcing. It gives parents an opportunity to withdraw their attention in a systematic, non-emotional way. Golant and Golant (1992) provide some useful tips that can help with time-outs. They suggest to use a matter-of-fact voice, both verbal and non verbal communication, a neutral environment to serve the time-out, and an appropriate length of time-out based on the child's age. Time-out can be used in a variety of situations and can be adapted with children of all ages (Osborne, 1989).

Although Phelan doesn't spend a lot of time describing the time-out procedure, he does offer several suggestions. It is not necessary that the time-out room be sterile and isolated so long as the child has no phone, no friends, no TV, and no Nintendo or computer games. He or she is allowed to read, nap, listen to music, or play quietly. The time-out room can be the child's bedroom, or another room in the house that can be closed off with a door. The main thing is that the child is REMOVED from all other influences for the required period of time. When the child returns from time-out, nothing more is said about the incident, unless he/she brings it up.

Another important aspect of this program is the No-Talk/No-Emotion Rule. Phelan suggests that many parents unwittingly create conflict by giving unclear messages to their

children. When parents are unassertive or too aggressive, they create opportunities for power struggles which result in the testing and manipulation tactics mentioned above. It is often the arguing, yelling, badgering, intimidation, threatening, martyrdom, buttering up, and physical aggression behaviors of children which cause parents to erupt emotionally. Turecki (1989) warns us to be brief, avoid negotiation, be firm and single minded. It is especially important to be clear about rules and consequences so that there is no room for argument. Clear and concise expectations, assertive application of consequences, and consistency help parents achieve and maintain authority in the home.

Phelan describes two main types of behavior in the 1-2-3 Magic program. “STOP” behavior is considered any behavior that involves arguing, badgering, interrupting, fighting, screaming, tantrums, and teasing. He suggests that this type of behavior can be stopped by implementing the 1-2-3 counting method with consequences applied immediately. Children soon learn that they are unable to engage their parent in an argument about either their behavior or its consequences. He suggests that by removing the possibility of argument or avoidance of the consequence, the misbehavior will stop. This theory is supported by parent educators such as Mrazek and Garrison (1993) who suggest that inconsistency tempts a child to push a situation to see how far his parents will let him go.. Dinkmeyer, McKay , and Dinkmeyer (1997) state that “without limits, children are likely to have more trouble learning responsibility. They won’t learn to care about the feelings and rights of others. They won’t see that people have responsibilities to each other” (p.5). They also state that when parents give in, many children come to believe that no one’s wishes but theirs matter (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997).

“START” behavior is, as the name suggests, behavior that you want the child to DO, such

as to get children to eat properly, do homework, go to bed, clean their rooms, do chores, get up and ready in the mornings, and the myriad of other things that parents want their children to do. Phelan offers six suggestions: sloppy positive verbal feedback (PVF), kitchen timers, the docking system, natural consequences, charting, and a variation of the 1-2-3.

Sloppy PVF is another way of describing a variable reinforcement schedule. As opposed to continuous reinforcement, sloppy PVF means that although positive reinforcement should be used on a regular basis, it should not become too predictable, nor should appropriate behavior be contingent on the reinforcer. Reinforcement programs often need to be tailored to the individual since what is reinforcing for one person may not have the same effect on another. Although Phelan does not suggest *extrinsic* reinforcers such as money, candy or toys in his discussion of sloppy PVF, he does refer to tangible rewards as *bribery* in the section on charting. He indicates that special kinds of rewards may be needed in some instances to encourage DESIRED behavior. He suggests that use of bribery be limited to a specific period of time and that once the desired behavior is achieved, the reward system is no longer necessary.

Since many desired behaviors require things being done within a certain period of time, Phelan suggests kitchen timers as an effective device for encouraging cooperation. If, from the behaviorist point of view, we recognize that children respond well once limits are defined, it is not surprising that they respond equally well to the limits set when the timer is turned on. By using the timer after a brief explanation of expectations, the parent has set limits and built in immediate reinforcement when the expectations are met. The child is rewarded with praise for “beating the clock” or is counted if he does not respond to the parent’s request. Another advantage to the kitchen timer is that it cannot be coaxed, bribed, or argued with - it just keeps on

ticking. Phelan's work suggests that some children respond well to this timing procedure because of a natural tendency to try to beat the clock. Rief's (1993) work with ADD and ADHD school-age children suggests that timers can be used very successfully with these children to delineate a reasonable amount of work to be done within the time limits. She also suggests using a timer for children who work well with a beat the clock system. In my experience, and in support of Phelan's kitchen timer strategy, I have found that children from all age groups respond very well to timed situations as long as the amount of work required is reasonable and is developmentally appropriate. A caution though: some children become very stressed in timed situations so this method would only be used by parents who knew that their children were able to cope with the added pressures involved.

The docking system as described by Phelan is an aversive technique which uses response-cost procedures. Phelan suggests that this process can be used with children aged five and over by paying them a small allowance and then docking small amounts for work not done. It is important to ensure that the reinforcer to be lost is something that the child values - if not money, then television time, computer time or some other reasonable consequence. In this system, the fines should be paid as soon as possible after the problem and should be neither too steep or too inconsequential (Nemeroff & Karoly, 1991).

In Dreikurs' (1964) work *Children the Challenge*, he defines natural consequences as "the natural flow of events [which] occur without any interference from adults"(p. 84). Since at times natural consequences can result in dangerous circumstances (e.g., a child running into the road after a ball), sometimes we need to structure events which logically follow the misdeed (e.g., the child is restricted to playing indoors). Dreikurs states that,

Natural consequences represent the pressure of reality without any specific action by parents and are always effective. In contrast, logical consequences cannot be applied in a power struggle except with extreme caution because they usually deteriorate into punitive acts of retaliation. For this reason, natural consequences are always beneficial but logical consequences may backfire. (p. 84)

Although Phelan does not distinguish between natural and logical consequences, he suggests that children need to learn to accept the consequences of their behavior. I assume from his light treatment of this subject that he recognizes that some circumstances lend themselves to natural consequences without putting the children in danger (e.g., teenagers walking to school in winter with coats unzipped could be allowed to feel cold, or children not making a lunch when supplies are available should be allowed to be hungry). For more serious situations he would probably recommend other tactics such as counting, time out, or docking.

The charting system described by Phelan involves using a chart or calendar to record different tasks. Completed tasks are recorded on the chart with checks or stickers for small children and grades or numbers for older children. Ideally, reinforcement with this system would be in the form of parental praise (sloppy PVF), or just in the inherent satisfaction which comes with doing a good job. Dreikurs (1964) argues that, "The system of rewarding children for good behavior is as detrimental to their outlook as the system of punishment" (p. 72). He says that,

Satisfaction comes from a sense of contribution and participation - a sense actually denied to our children in our present system of rewarding them with material things. In our mistaken efforts to win cooperation through rewards, we are actually denying our children the basic satisfactions of living. (p. 75)

Phelan suggests that tangible rewards can sometimes be used at the outset to encourage and reward good behavior. Rewards for completed tasks could involve special treats, being taken out to McDonald's for a burger, or even extra time for television or games. Dreikurs states that satisfaction should come solely from the sense of contribution and participation when children behave appropriately. The key is that parents should learn the basic concepts but tailor the program to fit their own unique needs.

The 1-2-3 counting process can also be used to encourage START behaviors such as picking something up, brushing teeth, and/or doing a quick errand. The most important factor is that the desired behavior should not require more than about two minutes to do. With this procedure, it is critical to remember that spontaneous requests often create unnecessary problems, so it is important to try to respect the child's right to not be interrupted by unanticipated demands. An emergency on an adult's part doesn't necessarily equate to an emergency in the child's life.

Active listening as described by Egan (1986) involves three things: (1) observing and reading nonverbal behavior; (2) listening to and understanding verbal content; and (3) listening for the intended meaning behind what the individual is saying. Good communication comes from active listening even if it means acknowledging what a child has said even if you don't agree with it. Active listening may mean helping the child find words to describe emotions and being willing to talk when he/she is ready. By engaging in active listening, the parent is showing the child that his/her opinion is valuable and legitimate (Mrazek & Garrison, 1993).

The concept of active listening is so important to successful parenting in Phelan's opinion that he devotes two chapters to it. He describes active listening as a way of talking to someone

with empathy. Brehms & Sohl (1995) describe empathy as an awareness of a child's needs that includes the ability of a parent to understand the emotional state of the child without actually experiencing the child's feelings. Phelan suggests that empathy involves ignoring one's own opinions, suspending judgment and attempting to see a particular situation from someone else's perspective. He offers simple descriptions and gives examples of several active listening strategies. He describes "openers" as brief comments or questions designed to elicit further information. Openers are especially important if a child enters the scene angry or upset about something. To be effective, the parent must ask nonjudgmental questions which allow the child freedom to discuss whatever it is that is bothering him/her. Reflection of feelings lets the child know that the parent is trying to understand, and it also lets the child know that it is acceptable to be angry, embarrassed, upset, or whatever the feeling might be. Reflection of feelings reinforces self esteem and allows a child to vent in the safety of his/her home. To ensure that the parent is understanding the child, Phelan suggests occasional perception checks which could include: paraphrasing verbal content, declarative probes, reflection of meaning, and/or summarizing skills (Carkhuff, 1993).

Counseling Concerns

The main objective of this program is to provide parents with practical information about child rearing such as the importance of positive reinforcement, active listening, self esteem, expressions of affection, and non-emotional discipline. However, it is possible that some parents may require individual counseling. Although introduction to the 1-2-3 Magic program is a significant part of the intervention, it may be important to explore specific issues with individuals in order to anticipate any problems s/he may encounter. If the parent finds that s/he is unable to deal with misbehavior without getting emotionally involved, it may be that there are other issues at the root of the problem. It may be helpful for the parent to undergo counseling or psychotherapy prior to attempting to implement any parenting program.

The second counseling objective would be to assist parents in implementing effective discipline in their home by providing specific strategies to deal with children's misbehavior. This objective assumes that the parent has already dealt with underlying personal issues. If the family has become dysfunctional as a result of ineffective parenting, the parent may need emotional support in order to implement the strategies suggested in this program.

Phelan suggests that psychological counseling is indicated *before* using this program if the child has a history of excessive separation anxiety, physical violence, or extremely self-punitive behavior. He indicates that psychological evaluation and/or counseling are indicated if: marital instability or conflict is interfering with the implementation of the program, one or both parents are unable to follow the No-Talking/No-Emotion rules, or if Testing and Manipulation continue at a high level for more than three weeks after implementation of the program. Also, it is critical that the counselor does a thorough examination of the nature of the problem to ensure

that any indications of family violence are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

These counseling issues are relevant to this study because individual participants were reassured that private counseling would be available on request. Two of the parents were involved in divorce proceedings and were referred to a counselor to discuss confidential issues which affected their ability to implement this program.

Implementation of the 1-2-3 Magic Program

The first concern in the implementation of this program was to ensure that the subjects had the cognitive, behavioral, and physiological capabilities required to required to change (Hiebert, 1983). An informal assessment in the form of an interview helped to determine if the parent was physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of dealing with the stresses involved in parenting. During this interview parents were given a checklist to help determine if they would benefit from participating in this study. This interview involved exploration of the ways in which the parent(s) presently deal with discipline in various situations. Once it was determined that the parent had addressed any problems which might interfere with successful implementation, it was then possible to introduce the key concepts of the 1-2-3 Magic.

First, the parents were taught to use the 1-2-3 counting method to deal with “STOP” behaviors such as arguing, fighting, whining, yelling, and tantrums. The counting procedure is effective in stopping behavior because it eliminates emotional involvement on the part of the parent, and teaches the misbehaving child that s/he cannot draw the parent into a power struggle. Parents were taught to use common sense, humor and patience in dealing with children but to expect compliance for reasonable requests. During individual and group discussions, the researcher helped the parents make up a list of countable behaviors so that both parent and child knew what behaviors were unacceptable. At this point, it was also recommended that the parents initiate a family meeting to explain their concerns and to describe how the 1-2-3 Magic program would be used.

Since the primary consequence for the 1-2-3 Magic program is time-out, it was critical that the parents understood some basic principles of the time-out process. First, time-out is a

behavior management technique that can be used as a consequence for unacceptable behavior, or as an opportunity for the child to regain emotional self control. Time-out is most effective if it is applied immediately and unemotionally. The parent sends or takes the misbehaving child to the time-out spot where he begins to serve the time-out which is one minute for each year of the child's age up to age twelve. This guideline was determined by trial and error. It appears to be just enough to accomplish good behavior without resentment for the consequence being too harsh (Harrison, 1994). Time-out should be a non-interesting but safe place where the child is not allowed to watch television, use a computer, or interact with other people (Canadian Pediatric Society, 1999). The time-out can be timed with a kitchen timer (or other device that has a loud beeper or bell), so that the child can see and/or hear it. The child can leave time-out on his/her own when the time is up.

If the child is uncooperative in time-out, and leaves before time is up, the parent can put him/her back quickly and reset the timer. For a particularly stubborn child, this may have to occur several times, but it is necessary to teach the child that the parent means what s/he says. If a child is especially noisy or defiant even while in the time-out room, the parent can wait until s/he is quiet before setting the timer. Once the child realizes that his/her behavior is prolonging the time-out, the behavior should quickly stop. When the time-out is over, the parent simply goes to the child's room and lets him/her know that the time-out is over and that s/he may come out when ready. It is best to save lectures and reminders for a later time when emotions are less involved. The child should know that the time-out is directed toward the misbehavior and not at him/her as a person. It's important not to hurt the child's self esteem by instilling shame, guilt, loss of trust, or feelings of abandonment (Canadian Pediatric Society, 1999).

Once the parents had successfully learned the techniques to stop inappropriate behavior, it was then time to learn the six “START” behavior tactics. Before teaching these strategies, the parents were reminded that they needed to use their own intuition and common sense in dealing with their children. Some of the most important factors discussed were: avoid speaking in anger, be sure that the child knows exactly what is expected (e.g., What do you expect when you ask for a clean room?). The parents were advised that sometimes it is important to ignore minor misbehavior and focus on one or two behaviors that most seriously affect the parent/child relationship.

Parents were reminded that another important thing to remember when dealing with children is to focus on the positive! Dreikurs (1964) states that, “Encouragement is more important than any other aspect of child-raising. It is so important that the lack of it can be considered the basic cause for misbehavior” (p. 36). He says that, “Children respond to their various predicaments with a tremendous desire to gain skills and to overcome the deep sense of their own smallness and inadequacy.” (p. 36) Although Phelan (n.d.) claims that children are born irrational, selfish, undisciplined, and impulsive, he agrees that encouragement should be given on a regular basis to ensure the development of self esteem, build confidence and teach children the importance of self-discipline. Included in Appendix H of this paper is a partial list of ways to praise and encourage a child, which was distributed to all participants.

Since many of the strategies used in this intervention require the use of a timing device, it was suggested that the parent purchase an inexpensive kitchen timer. Other means of timing were discussed such as stove top timers, clock-radio timers, alarm clocks or simply the process of clock watching by the parent. In any case, it is important to remember that the purpose of the

time-out strategy is to decrease the child's general level of stimulation and so aid him/her in regaining self-control (Nemeroff & Karoly, 1991). The timer should ensure that time-out periods remain within the limits established, and that they do not become overly punitive and traumatic for the child (Nemeroff & Karoly, 1991; Sandler & Steele, 1991).

In order to implement the docking system as suggested, it is first necessary that the child have an allowance or some other reinforcer from which something can be removed. In addition to money, parents often use edible treats, particularly with young children, but they can usually rely on people privileges, fun activities or tangibles such as toys, clothes or music (Hersey & Blanchard, 1978). Detailed lists of reinforcers commonly used for children and teenagers were distributed and are included in Appendices I, J and K.

These reinforcers can also be used to support the charting system. Although the reinforcement from charting should come mainly from parental praise and the inherent satisfaction of doing a good job, artificial reinforcers may be useful to encourage good behavior or completion of household tasks. The reinforcers could also be used as a way of celebrating a child's successes along the way.

When working on encouraging positive behavior, it is important to remember that spontaneous parental requests which involve interrupting children from whatever they are engaged in are often unnecessary and usually unfair. Such requests usually maximize irritability and minimize cooperation. Parents were reminded to avoid spontaneous requests, and let their children know that, except in emergencies, their need for privacy and relaxation would be respected. That way, when parents unexpectedly ask for help the child can be reasonably sure that their immediate assistance is truly necessary.

Evaluation

This study made use of both formal and informal assessment tools. All subjects were asked to keep a journal to record their children's behaviors and their own reactions to the behavior. Each was asked to assign a number between 1 and 10 to the emotion experienced during the time of the incident. In the journal, the parent could also comment on the usefulness of the 1-2-3 Magic program and the weekly sessions which were designed to supplement the information in the book.

At the end of the study, the participants were asked to complete an evaluation of the 1-2-3 Magic program. The parents were asked to specify what they liked best and least about the program. They were asked to describe changes in their child's behavior and/or in their family dynamics. They were also asked to describe changes in their own personal parenting style. As well, they were given an opportunity to explain why they would or would not, recommend the program to other parents.

The Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1995) was used after an introductory session which explained the purpose of the parenting study. Parents with more than one child were asked to focus their answers on the most difficult of their children. The PSI assesses three main areas of stress: the Child Domain, the Parent Domain, and Life Stress. Subscales under the Child Domain measure Distractibility/Hyperactivity (DI), Adaptability (AD), Reinforces Parent (RE), Demandingness (DE), Mood (MO) and Acceptability (AC). The Parent Domain subscales measure Competence (CO), Isolation (IS), Attachment (AT), Health (HE), Role Restriction (RO), Depression (DP), and Spouse (SP). Life Stress measures stressful circumstances outside the parent/child relationship such as divorce, death, marriage, pregnancy, debt, loss of job, move to a

new town, etc. After six sessions which focused on the specifics of the 1-2-3 Magic program, the subjects were again given the PSI to determine if the program had been effective in reducing stress within the parent/child relationship

CHAPTER 3

Literature Review

Working Hypothesis:

.....misbehavior such as arguing, fighting, screaming, tantrums and teasing in children ages 2-12 can be ameliorated by teaching effective parenting practices to parents.

In order to prepare a project which addressed the value and effectiveness of various parenting practices, I was compelled to first look at research which described and analyzed different styles of parenting, and some of the main issues in family dynamics today. To facilitate discussion of the various materials I selected for this project, I chose to focus on 6 areas that I felt would concern parents with children between the ages of two and twelve. These areas were:

1. Discipline
2. Logical Consequences
3. Respect/Responsibility
- 4.. Family Meetings
5. Unconditional Love
6. Time-out

Discipline

The common thread running through the literature was “discipline with dignity” (Mendler,1997). It was clear that effective discipline requires kindness, respect, firmness, and

encouragement (Nelson, 1987). In his work *Children the Challenge*, Dreikurs (1964)

hypothesized:

Today, our whole social structure is changed. Children have gained an equal social status with adults and we no longer enjoy a superior position to them. Our power over them is gone: and *they* know it, whether *we* do or not. (p. 69)

Although this was written 35 years ago, I believe that it is true today. Much of the work in the area of parenting in the '90's suggests that we need to view discipline differently. Although the 1-2-3 Magic program is authoritarian in nature, its implementation can be viewed as a movement from an authoritarian to a democratic parenting style.

I suggest that this program is, in fact, more *authoritative* than authoritarian. Dumka, Roosa, Michaels, and Suh (1995) suggested that authoritative parenting involves the demonstration of firmness through the use of consistent discipline. Similarly, Baumrind (1996) described authoritative parents as parents who remain receptive to the child's view but take responsibility for guiding their child(ren)'s actions by emphasizing reasoning, communication and the use of firm control contingently applied. She indicated that authoritative parents endorse the judicious use of aversive consequences within the warm, engaged parent-child relationship.

The Systematic Training for Effective Parents program (Dinkmeyer et al. 1997) described three parenting styles. The authoritarian parent views discipline as a system of reward and punishment. Children are expected to obey rules or be punished. Permissive parents set no limits or are inconsistent in their rule making. These parents provide no discipline and no limits. The democratic style of parenting provides a balance of freedom, rights and responsibilities to

help children grow into responsible, self disciplined adults. It is the democratic or positive parenting style that provides discipline in a firm but fair manner. The 1-2-3 Magic program is authoritative because it combines the firmness of the authoritarian philosophy with the democratic practices of family meetings, positive reinforcement and warm family relationships. As family dynamics improve the parent is able to become more democratic.

In the study by Bronstein et al. (1996) the authors suggested that supportive parenting fosters social and emotional growth, requires acceptance, love, warmth, and nurturance and consists of combinations of characteristics such as approval, affection, attentiveness, responsiveness, involvement, reassurance, equalitarianism, and the use of reasoning. Thomas (1996) described responsive and sensitive parents as parents who notice what their child needs, who accurately read their child(ren)'s cues, and provide contingent, consistent, and appropriate responses. Rueter & Conger (1995) suggested that the key to a healthy relationship between parents and their children is a family atmosphere of warmth and supportiveness. In most of the literature, discipline was not seen as punishment. MacPherson (1981) stated that the word discipline has nothing to do with punishment. He suggested that discipline is the process of dealing with the issues of training or control, including self-control. Farber and Mazlish (1982) described how to engage cooperation, alternatives to punishment, and ways to encourage autonomy. In his work on *The Difficult Child*, Turecki (1985) concluded that we must "...replace ineffective discipline with a benign, firm, practical, adult attitude..." (p. 121). In a study reported by Herrenkohl, Egolf and Herrenkohl (1997) the authors determined that physical punishment in childhood could, in fact, increase the likelihood of aggressive behavior in adolescence. They concluded that there should be an immediate concentrated effort to stop all aggressive behaviors

in the home such as parents hitting their children and allowing children to be aggressive and destructive toward others.

Logical Consequences

There is a fine line which separates logical and natural consequences from punishment. Consequences that just happen because of an action are *natural* consequences (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997). Sometimes natural consequences aren't safe, so parents need to create *logical* consequences. The key is that consequences should: be respectful, fit the misbehavior, be as immediate as possible, and provide some choice. It is important that consequences are used to teach children and not punish them. Punishment usually leads to resentment, revenge, or retreat in the form of rebellion or reduced self esteem (Nelsen, 1987). Faber and Mazlish (1987) looked at alternatives to punishment as opportunities to teach: ways to express feelings strongly without attacking character, expectations about behavior, how to make amends, ways to make choices, why rules are made and how to problem solve.

Most experts in the field of child rearing agreed that consequences are most effective when specific factors are in place. Children learn best from this model when parents intentionally foster individuality and self assertion by being attuned, supportive and acquiescent to children's needs and demands. Other important facets of effective parenting included warmth, reciprocity, clear communication, and attachment (Baumrind, 1996). Baumrind also stated that the crucial factor in behavior management is the contingent use of positive or negative reinforcers immediately following the desired or prohibited child behavior.

Dreikurs (1964) cautioned us to use consequences in a firm, friendly manner but to be careful that logical consequences do not become punishment. This occurs when logical

consequences are used as a threat, imposed in anger, or used as a springboard to a lecture.

Respect and Responsibility

Dreikurs (1964) stated that “once we have established respect for parental firmness and shown our own respect for the child, it is much easier to guide the child into further learning respect for order” (p. 96). Faber and Mazlish (1982) cautioned us to show respect for a child’s struggle by allowing him/her a certain amount of autonomy as s/he learns independence and problem solving skills. Teaching our children respect for themselves and others builds self esteem, and children who feel good about themselves are more likely to think for themselves (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997).

In 1-2-3 Magic Phelan described arguing, whining, screaming, demanding, and disrespect as STOP behavior which is created as a result of children losing respect for parents who become angry and/or helpless when dealing with misbehavior. He suggested that when children are taught respect in a firm, non-emotional manner, they will become more responsible and cooperative. Lansky (1998) suggested that one of the most important ways of getting respect from children is to give it. Children learn more by observing our behavior than by listening to our lectures and scoldings. Communication with teenagers requires that parents build relationships based on trust and mutual respect (McCoy, 1998). Good communication starts with children when they are very young. Nelsen (1987) informed us that mutual respect incorporates attitudes of faith in the abilities of yourself and others; interest in the point of view of others as well as your own, and a willingness to take responsibility and ownership for your own contribution to the problem.

The theme of The Community Circle of Caring Journal, (Summer, 1997) was “Building

Respect and Responsibility”. Each article in this issue focused on the importance of building relationships with children based on respect as a key to developing adult responsibility. Curwin and Mendler (1997), in the same journal, described a program which teaches that respect and responsibility can grow over time, and that young people can be taught how to make responsible choices. Rockwell (1994) stated that children have a right to express their feelings and a responsibility to themselves and others to learn how to handle emotions in a healthy manner. She also suggested that a distinction must be made when disciplining children, between their ultimate worth as individuals, and the mistakes that they make.

Family Meetings

One of the most important characteristics of any parenting style is the consistency with which it is applied. This is probably the most difficult aspect of parenting. Dreikurs (1964) suggested that our efforts are intended to encourage children, and that mistakes are a part of being human. Communication is a key feature of consistency. Unless we learn to communicate with our children so that they know our expectations regarding behavior, consistency is difficult to achieve (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997). Spoth & Redmond (1996) reminded us that parent competencies figure prominently in the development of problem behaviors in children. One way to achieve competence and consistency is to use family meetings to outline family activities including recreation, chores, and consequences (Nelsen, 1997). Family meetings also open up great opportunities to share feelings, have fun together, to make plans, and to talk about problems and help each other (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997). Bartz and Rasor (1978) suggested that all members of a family should be involved in attempting to change a child’s behavior. Macpherson (1981) described family meetings as family conferences during which family members are free to

share their hurts, frustrations, disappointments, triumphs and victories in a safe, supportive environment. Dreikurs (1984) suggested that the family council is one of the most important means of dealing with troublesome problems in a democratic manner. Although Carkhuff (1985) did not describe the family meeting in these terms, he did suggest that parenting requires communication skills such as listening, responding, giving and getting feedback which are key ingredients to a family meeting. Spoth & Redmond recommended the use of family meetings as a vehicle for improving child management and positive child involvement. Even Phelan (n.d.) who described the most authoritarian approach to parenting in this literature review, suggested that the family meeting is “one of the most aggravating and *effective* things you can do with your kids” (p. 43)

Unfortunately, according to Turecki (1985), democratic parenting strategies are generally ineffective with a small population known as the “difficult child”. He described difficult children as those who are defiant, resistive, stubborn, shy, particular, complaining, interrupting, intrusive, verbally angry, poorly mannered, selfish, “wild” in their behavior, impulsive, physically aggressive and demonstrate temper tantrums (Turecki, 1985). Difficult children are also described by Turecki as children who are normal, not emotionally disturbed or brain damaged, but are like this because of their innate make-up. They are difficult to raise and many times make their parents feel inadequate, angry or guilty. If not parented correctly, they could cause marital strain, family discord, sibling problems, and emotional problems of their own. Turecki identified several temperamental traits which identify a difficult child. Their activity level, distractibility level, intensity level, and negative persistence level are all very high. These children are not very predictable, their sensory threshold is low, and they are very poor at

adapting to transition and change. Their mood is usually negative and withdrawn. With these children, the most effective responses are based on true parental authority which is broken down into a series of steps with the *parent* as the *expert*. These children and their parents need help from counselors trained in dealing with temperament and behavior disorders.

Unconditional Love

It seems somewhat redundant to make unconditional love a condition of good parenting. However, for some parents, especially those who use the reward or punishment system of discipline, the withholding of affection is a commonly used punishment for bad behavior. Carkhuff (1985) suggested that the communication of love and concern for the welfare of the child is second only to ensuring that basic life needs are met. Positive discipline teaches children that they are more important than anything they do (Nelsen, 1987).

Although children can be trying at times, they do not need parents to keep pointing out what's wrong with their behavior (Dinkmeyer et al., 1997). Instead, parents should use encouragement to help children appreciate their own special qualities. Encouragement, according to Dinkmeyer, is different from praise in that it focuses on how a child has performed but does so without judgment. Dreikurs (1964) believed that "a child needs encouragement like a plant needs water" (p. 36). When children know that their parents believe in them, they know that they are loved. When children can turn to their parents for help or advice no matter what the situation, they know that they are loved. When parents have the courage to be imperfect and admit it, their children know they are loved.

Gillogly (1997) supported the notion that the antithesis of hitting children is hugging them. He challenged the educational and religious beliefs that have supported corporal

punishment and claimed that you have to experience love before you can really give it back. Most importantly, he suggested that the process of hugging is an affirmation of the need to be understood and nurtured, affirmed by the voice of kindness, confirmed by human touch, and comforted by human embrace. Curwin and Mendler (1977) emphasized that warmth and a caring attitude are essential to encouraging acceptable behavior and for setting the tone for responsible learning in a classroom. Bronstein et al. (1996) suggested that supportive parenting includes demonstrations of approval, affection, attentiveness, responsiveness, involvement, reassurance, equalitarianism, and the use of reasoning. Rockwell's (1994) guidelines for parenting resilient children included the declaration that "I will use words of affection and encouragement often. They need to hear words of love, acceptance, and approval" (p. 12)

Time-out

Time-out is an aversive consequence that is one of the most effective and best researched methods of controlling aggressive behavior in children (Neilsen, 1974). In this technique, the child is physically removed from a situation as a result of his/her misbehavior and placed in a separate room to spend a predetermined amount of time "cooling off", or thinking about his/her inappropriate behavior. Although this method is best used for destructive or dangerous behaviors (Brooks, 1994), it can also be very effective in eliminating misbehavior such as: hitting, temper tantrums, sassy back talk, angry screaming, throwing and/or destroying toys, hurting others, physical attacks, bad language, purposefully damaging others' belongings, name calling or teasing, persistently interrupting and deliberately disobeying (Clark, 1989). Some researchers suggested that the child should be told why s/he is being sent to time-out and should be reassured that it is the behavior that is unacceptable, not the child (Barbuto, 1994). Hyman (1997)

suggested that time-out is only effective if the child is removed from a desired activity or place to an undesired place. He also offered some clear guidelines for the effective use of time-out:

- establish clear procedures and time limits for going to and remaining in time-out
- tell the child what rules have been broken, and calmly request that s/he go to time-out
- use a timer - show the child how much time s/he must remain in time-out
- the child can leave time-out when the time is up
- if the child refuses to go to time out, you may choose to physically take him/her there
- if you find it impossible to physically enforce the time-out rule, you may impose more severe consequences such as no television or removal of other privileges
- never yell, scream, or threaten your child when you send him/her to time out - use a very calm, matter-of-fact tone
- do not start the timer until the child is quiet (Hyman, 1997)

Although time-out is a very important part of the 1-2-3 Magic program, it must be emphasized that time-out should be considered just a small part of the total plan to improve a child's behavior (Severe, 1997). It is critical to emphasize the positive aspects of a child's behavior by using positive reinforcement, active listening, encouragement, affection and a sense of humor.

Although not all parenting experts agree, from my research it was clear that the strategies suggested in this program are fundamental to many discipline programs. However, even though 1-2-3 Magic is considered by some to be an *authoritarian* approach, I believe that this program incorporates many positive aspects of other parenting programs. Phelan emphasized many of the strategies used in positive parenting programs such as: sloppy positive verbal reinforcement,

natural consequences, charting, self-esteem building, and active listening. He suggested that parents take opportunities to have fun with their children, but concluded that disciplined children are easier to have fun with! As a matter of fact, Phelan's whole premise was that raising and educating children requires both disciplining and nurturing which requires a firm hand but a warm heart. He concluded that:

Adults need to know how to handle difficult behavior, encourage good behavior, and manage the inevitable frustrations in a way that is fair, clear, and not abusive. Although this may be a difficult task, it is critical to peaceful coexistence and to each child's ability to enjoy life and maintain healthy self-esteem. (p.)

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

After making the final decision to do a study of the efficacy of the 1-2-3 Magic program, the first step was to solicit participants. I started by placing an ad in the local newspaper. The ad offered free participation in a study of the discipline program 1-2-3 Magic (Phelan, 1995). In return for participation, I offered to provide the materials and weekly sessions free of charge. In addition to the advertisement, I approached the parent group at the school where I teach and asked for volunteers from that group. News about the project spread through the community, and I was approached by several members of a local church group who were interested in participating.

From these sources, I received 20 calls from interested parents. Since I was interested in working only with parents who were motivated and committed to making changes in their parenting style, I conducted a simple interview over the telephone with each caller. Some of the callers had children who were much too old for this particular program, or they were not interested once I described the format and theoretical basis of the program. After this informal screening process, I had 14 individuals who agreed to participate in the program. The sessions were set to begin April 26th.

At the first session, I introduced myself and explained in detail my purpose in conducting this study. I gave a brief overview of the program, emphasizing the “authoritarian” nature of the program, and fielded questions from the 13 participants present. One parent of 8 young children

requested that I arrange for her to participate in the study by meeting with her weekly to review the week's session. Since this was a parent who appeared very committed to improving her parenting skills, I agreed. After thorough discussion, I distributed the "Consent and Release" forms and the "Family Information" forms to be completed and returned next session. I then spent a few minutes discussing the Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1995). Participants were asked to complete the PSI with a focus on one of their children. They were asked to use that child for the focus of both PSI tests, and to comment in their journal on the effects of the program on that particular child.

After all Parenting Stress Indexes (Abidin, 1995) were completed and turned in, I distributed a copy of 1-2-3 Magic (Phelan, 1995) and a small notebook to be used as a journal during the course of the study. I described the journaling process I wanted them to use including the modified SUDS (Subjective Units of Discomfort Scale). The SUDS process involved having the participant write a word describing their emotion during the incident, and to assign a number between 1-10 to describe the intensity of the emotion. I asked them to use their journal to describe each incident in behavioral terms - What happened? What did you do? What did you say? What did your child do? Once participants were clear about this process, I used overheads to assist in describing the 1-2-3 counting process. I suggested that the parents have a family meeting with their children to explain the new process, and to talk about the kinds of behaviors that would be considered "STOP" behaviors. Then the parents went home armed with a new strategy for dealing with their children's misbehavior.

During each of the subsequent 5 sessions, I presented the critical components of the program, providing supplementary information such as "100 Ways to Praise", and "Reinforcers

for Children” (see Appendices H, I, J, K). The parents were asked to read sections from the book between sessions and to implement the program at their own rate. Time was reserved during each session for the parents to discuss and compare their experiences in implementing the program. Attendance at the sessions was inconsistent since most of these parents were involved in evening activities with their children such as soccer, baseball and church groups. However, those individuals who were unable to attend sessions contacted me by telephone to get an update on what they had missed. One of the parents was unable to attend any of the sessions because of scheduling problems, and therefore completed the entire program with individual coaching in her home once a week. Two of the parents who were experiencing divorce (two different families) continued to participate in spite of their personal difficulties, commenting that the program was helping them maintain discipline and dignity in the home.

In order to assist the participants in recognizing the ease of implementation for the strategies suggested in 1-2-3 Magic, during the second session I showed selected segments from the video tape version of the program. This also gave them an opportunity to see the author at work and to experience the sense of humor which had caused some parents concern after reading the book. Their concern about Dr. Phelan referring to children as “wild animals” was alleviated when they realized that this expression was simply his light hearted way of describing children’s behavior.

After showing a short segment of the video, I reviewed the purpose of the PSI and once again explained that the results would be kept confidential until after the post-test had been completed. All the subjects were comfortable with that decision and were eager to get on this the details of the program.. I was, however, concerned about the results of some of the pre-tests, and

contacted Donnie Scott in Lethbridge to assist me in determining the significance of some of the results. She cautioned that some of the subjects had crisis profiles, and that if the profiles did not moderate after the post-test, that I needed to make referrals as indicated.

It became apparent during this session that some of the parents were having difficulty with the journaling process. Many of them felt that they did not have the time necessary to record events as they happened, and they were uncomfortable with the SUDS process. Since this was not a critical aspect of the study and was intended mainly to provide me with anecdotal evidence, I modified my original request. They were asked to write at least once a day in the journal, but it could be done at the end of the day, after the children had gone to bed. This seemed to work better for the majority.

The majority of time during Session Two was spent discussing the six kinds of testing and manipulation and how to use the counting process to eliminate these behaviors. Badgering involves many of the unacceptable behaviors discussed previously such as arguing, whining, interrupting, and demanding. These behaviors are considered "STOP" behaviors and are counted. Intimidation is also a STOP behavior, which can be dealt with using the counting process. However, if the intimidation is extreme, time-out can be an automatic consequence. Threats are considered serious enough to result in automatic time-out as well. Battering up is a manipulative tactic that can be counted if it is blatantly obvious; however, some battering up can be ignored or acknowledged with gentle humor. Any physical aggression requires immediate time-out attention. Depending on the seriousness of the physical aggression, counseling may be indicated.

It was important for parents to recognize that not all behaviors need to result in discipline. Part of our discussion involved helping parents determine which behaviors should be considered major issues, medium issues and minor issues. Major issues should result in immediate and firm consequences, medium issues would be those issues which result in a count of “1”, reminding the child that what s/he is doing is unacceptable. Minor issues, while not resulting in time-out, may be those irritating behaviors that can either be ignored or resolved without counting. During these discussions, it was clear that the parents felt strongly that communication is the key. Parents must be able to have a relationship with their children that allows for warm and natural interaction. They must not behave as enforcers, constantly vigilant against misbehavior.

Session Three started with a review of the basics of the 1-2-3- Magic program. The group then was invited to discuss the behavior and characteristics that they wanted to encourage in their children. This discussion involved helping the participants recognize the importance of letting their children know exactly what kinds of behaviors they expect. Then the group spent time learning how to speak to their children in BEHAVIORAL terms, so that they could explain exactly what it is that they do or do not want. I provided the parents with a list of age appropriate responsibilities that could assist them in assigning daily and weekly chores to their children (see Appendix L). This list was intended to be a guide only. During this session, we examined the words to the poem Children Learn what they Live by Dorothy L. Nolte (1999):

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to be shy.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with tolerance, they learn to be patient.

If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If children live with praise, they learn to appreciate.

If children live with fairness, they learn justice.

If children live with security, they learn to have faith.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with acceptance and friendship, they learn to find love in the world.

This poem emphasizes the importance of modeling in the teaching and learning of behavior and values. It is important to recognize the value of specific language in dealing with children. If it is our job as parents to teach our children, then we must be sure that they know exactly what we expect of them.

Session Four began with a discussion about the difficulties inherent in childhood, based on the poem “It’s Tough To Be A Kid” (Anonymous, n. d.):

They always make you wipe your feet.

They tell you what you shouldn’t eat.

They laugh at stuff you think is neat.

It’s tough to be a kid.

Can’t pick a scab or pick your toes.

Can’t pick your favorite TV shows.

Can’t even pick your own darn clothes.

It’s tough to be a kid.

You always have to be polite.

You mustn’t yell. You mustn’t fight.

You're always wrong. They're always right.

It's tough to be a kid.

And yet they tell you all the time

These years are best, you're in your prime.

If growing up is worse, then I'm

Just going to stay a kid!

Since Phelan (1995) suggested that, “Realistic and positive self-esteem is essential throughout life to maintain a good mood, assert oneself with confidence, get along with others, and even keep physically healthy” (p. 153). I chose to devote Session Five entirely to this topic.

We spent time discussing the 10 Steps for Building Self Esteem as described by Phelan:

1. Be realistic - set achievable goals
2. Avoid negative thinking and angry self talk
3. Be consistent - erratic discipline leads to erratic behavior
4. Treat any physical problems immediately
5. Ensure lots of positive reinforcement - focus on specific positives
6. Share activities together - spend some “fun” time with children
7. Lots of plain old affection
8. Help children build expertise
9. Choose your battles - notice “good” things and punish the behavior not the child
10. Active listening.

We also spent considerable time discussing some basic principles about building self-esteem in children. Since children begin to form beliefs about their self-worth starting at birth, it

is critical to treat children with respect and expect children to treat everyone with respect. Parents need to remember that encouragement helps children develop self-esteem. However, praise and encouragement are NOT the same thing. Praise rewards a child by making him/her feel accepted or valued because he/she has performed well. Encouragement boosts a child's confidence by supporting their efforts and encouraging new endeavors. Encouragement lets children decide for themselves if they are pleased with their efforts. It doesn't demand perfection or make comparisons. Parents need to place value on their children's efforts and not solely on the outcome of those efforts. Parents need to recognize the dangers of pushing their children. It is important to set reasonable goals but be sure to accept reasonable effort and acceptable improvements. Parents need to show their children that they love them by: telling them so, showing appreciation, touching them, spending time with them, respecting them, encouraging them. If possible, parents should ensure that babysitters, grandparents, and daycare providers know and respect their philosophy on child rearing.

Session Five focused on teaching the active listening skills of openers, nonjudgmental questions, reflection of feelings, perception checks and attending. Openers can include open and closed questions, brief comments, declarative probes, reflection of content and feeling. Nonjudgmental questions are open questions that require a full sentence answer. They are questions that do not contain negative language, questions that reflect appropriate emotion, and the use of a calm, concerned tone of voice. Reflection of feelings is accomplished by using descriptive words that describe the emotions displayed. Feelings can be reflected in questions, declarative probes and paraphrases. Perception checks involve paraphrasing and reflection of feelings and content, and they are important to ensure that the parent is able to capture the

essence of what the child is saying. Attending is the skill of deliberately focusing on the person to whom you're speaking. This can involve close physical distance, eye contact, "engaged" body language, and a relaxed manner. The use of attending skills can create opportunities for more relaxed communication between parents and their children.

The last session was well attended since I had contacted each participant by telephone to remind them. I wanted all participants available to complete the PSI post-test and the anecdotal evaluation, which is included as part of this project. Two subjects completed their evaluation at home and returned them to me later. During the final session, participants were enthusiastic in their praise of the 1-2-3 Magic program and credited the program with improved relationships with their children.

CHAPTER 5

Results and Conclusions

Results

Of the fifteen parents who started the program, thirteen attended all the sessions and completed the pre- and post-tests on the PSI, the program evaluation, and the daily journal. Of the thirteen subjects, eight were from two parent families and both spouses attended the sessions, three were from two parent families but only the mother attended the sessions, and two were single parent and/or separated mothers. One mother participated in the program but was unable to attend the weekly sessions. Instead, I met with her weekly in her home to present the program. In total, thirty seven children were represented ranging in age from eleven weeks to fourteen years old. Five of the children were described by their parents in a pre-program questionnaire as “difficult” children. Of the two parent families represented, four couples indicated that the parenting styles of the two parents were significantly different, one parent being mainly authoritarian and the other mainly permissive or democratic. One of the couples decided to divorce prior to the end of the study, and the mother then completed the study as single parent with a difficult child. The conclusions represented here reflect the opinions of the majority of participants in the study, although two of the parents clearly did not like the authoritarian nature of the program and chose not to implement the strategies with their children.

Several themes emerged as a result of the implementation of the strategies suggested in the 1-2-3 Magic program. A significant change reported by a majority of the parents in conversations and/or in writing was that the program helped them feel more in control of their

children and less stressed during conflict. Most of the parents felt that the No -Talking/No Emotion rule was the most helpful aspect of the program. Another positive aspect of the program was that it reduced inappropriate behavior and attempts at manipulation almost immediately. All the parents agreed that the program was clear and easy to implement, and most importantly, provided parents with common language and common skills necessary in dealing with all aspects of children's behavior.

Most parents reported that participation in the 1-2-3 Magic program helped them feel less stressed about parenting and discipline in general. When asked to describe what they liked best about the program they wrote comments such as:

I liked the no-emotion bit and that the program gave solid help about what to do as far as enforcing discipline was concerned. I feel I have more of a handle in different situations with the children...stress level has gone down. It is a simple tool to remember when disciplining. I think it helps me to be more consistent. The children know what to expect and it helps me focus on staying calm (parent questionnaires, June 7, 1999).

They suggested that the No-Talking/No-Emotion rule helped them stay focused and calm when dealing with their children's misbehavior. Because the program began with a family meeting during which both expectations and consequences were discussed, all family members were aware of the process and everyone knew what to expect. The parents felt that they were in charge, not the children: "I am much more assertive and have to explain and talk less" (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Even some of those parents who were concerned about the authoritarian nature of the program

at the outset of the study felt that the program allowed them to become more democratic as everyone gradually learned to obey the rules and accept the consequences of their actions: “Most definitely! This program is very positive, non judgmental and easy for children to understand” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Several parents indicated that the program worked for them because it reduced/eliminated arguing - like a no-nonsense rule for discipline. They suggested that although the rules and consequences suggested in the program are very clear, the words are not “fighting” words: “...The words are not fighting words. They (the words) are not intimidating or embarrassing or do not attack the child’s self-esteem or emotionally. The layout of this program is sensible and easy to understand” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Many parents felt that the program offered excellent information about how to build self-esteem while maintaining discipline, and they particularly liked the section of the program that described active listening skills: “I like the fact that I don’t have to argue with my kids anymore, it’s like a no nonsense rule...Also the active listening - it’s so important” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999)!

These parents reported that they liked the 1-2-3 Magic program because it offered concrete solutions, and it was easy to learn and use. Most importantly, it gave parents common language and common skills so that they were able to deal more consistently with their children’s behaviors. Parent comments include:

Overall our children’s behavior is better, and we seem to have more control over the family as a whole. I don’t have the ‘losing it’ feeling anymore.

They are not nearly as cranky and they stop when they are counted! Will stop

whining, inappropriate behavior and start to talk (communicate feelings and desires) more effectively (parent questionnaires, June 7, 1999).

Although eleven of the thirteen parents reported satisfaction with strategies suggested in the 1-2-3 Magic program, they were able to offer several suggestions for improvement. Some found that the writing tone of the author was negative and sarcastic at times, particularly when he described children as “wild animals” and their parents as “wild animal trainers” (Phelan, 1995). The introduction of the program focuses on STOP behaviors and makes it sound like you count and consequence everything. Some parents felt that it was necessary to spend a bit more time explaining the importance of talking with your children before this program is implemented. Also, some of the parents suggested that it was important to them to talk with their children AFTER each time-out to reinforce what behaviors were punished and what they could have done to change things.

There was some dissension about the age limits for implementation of this program.

Some of the parents felt that two years old is a bit too young, and twelve a bit too old:

I think it's only effective up to age nine or ten, at least with our children. I've started reading the adolescent version. I really didn't dislike anything except that I thought two years old was a bit too young and twelve years old a bit too old to do this program with (parent questionnaires, June 7, 1999).

However, one mother of two teenage girls reported tremendous success with the program in her home. She commented that:

They take notice when I say 'That's one'. They stop the behavior and think about what's going on. If and when I get to three, they need a break as well as

myself. Arguments come to a quicker stop than before. The war rarely erupts.... calmer household (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Two mothers of children under three years old reported that although their little ones were not able to understand the basics of the program, they responded well to the counting process and the time-out consequence: "...The four year old and two year old aren't able to comprehend the concept, but it's nice to have the program in effect for when they're older" (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999). It was clear from discussion around this topic that the success of the program depended on the parent's ability to adapt the program to the needs of their children.

Those parents who implemented this program reported immediate and positive results! They indicated that whining, crying and inappropriate behavior stopped almost immediately with the 'one' count: "Instead of continuing with crying, whining, etc., when I count it usually stops immediately with number one. Children's behavior much better" (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Those children who needed to be counted often at the beginning of the program respond more quickly now and seem to take notice when the counting starts:

My son's behavior changed very noticeably. However, if I do not pay attention and be ready to follow through with time out right away it is as if he can sense it and he tests again, which I think is normal, it just surprises me how fast it happens (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

With older children, parents reported not nearly as much arguing, although the older children would sometimes just stomp off to their room when the counting started: "_____ doesn't argue near as much, although he gets real mad and stomps to his room when I say 'That's

one” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Those parents with younger children describe fewer temper tantrums and a decrease in swearing: “Dramatic change in _____. Temper tantrums are less, swearing hardly at all. Listens much more” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Many parents suggested that if the count made it to three that both child and parent probably needed a break from each other so that they could all take a time-out. Most of the children involved in this study responded extremely well to the program, however one of the children described by the parent as difficult continues to be challenging:

The eldest child is still our tyrant, but I think he has responded somewhat to the approach. Things seem much happier, and although we are still having problems with our eldest son, everyone else seems more respectful of the program and of our authority (parent questionnaires, June 7, 1999).

The single parent of the other difficult child reports that her child has responded amazingly well. When asked to describe the changes (if any) in family dynamics this parent commented: “Off the scale!!... Not so much talk-talk” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Most parents reported that they feel much more in control within the family as a whole, and that everyone in the family seems better able to communicate feelings and desires more appropriately: “I feel much more in control of what is happening as well as more in control of myself and can usually stick to the no emotion rule” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Overall, parents reported significant changes in family dynamics. They described a lot less commotion such as yelling and arguing between parents and their children, and between siblings: “Things are quieter, I would say only about 30 percent quieter. However, this is a

drastic improvement because the other 70 percent of the noise is mostly regular kid/house playing noise” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

When arguments erupt, which is less often than before, they stop almost immediately when the counting starts. Parents reported that their children are more obedient but still willing and able to talk about things at appropriate times. The children seem respectful of the program and more respectful of parental authority. The parents reported that, in general, their families seem calmer and happier because EVERYONE is better behaved.

Most parents described the No-Talking/No-Emotion rule as the most significant change in their parenting style. They felt that this rule gave them the power to be more assertive, calmer and more in control. Most importantly, it allowed the parents to avoid the escalation of emotions which often can accompany parent/child interactions:

This is where I feel that there has been the biggest change. When I follow the No Talking/No Emotion rule things go so much more smoothly...Because NOW I am in control. My mouth doesn't have to go on and on and get louder and louder! I learned and relearned some things that I knew - but just didn't know how to change. This program gave me the 'power' within myself to make the changes I was wishing for yet didn't know where to go next (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Some parents suggested that the program reinforced the importance of teaching children that they have a responsibility to control their behavior, and that their behavior and its consequences have an impact on the whole family. Two parents reported that since the program helped them control their temper, their relationships with both children and spouse was better.

When asked to describe the changes (if any) in personal parenting style, one parent reported: “Don’t let emotion take over so soon. Stay calm and utilize counting” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999). Another parent reported that: “I don’t lose my temper near as much. I feel ... children and my relationships with them is better” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

The participants in this program overwhelmingly agreed that they would recommend 1-2-3 Magic to other parents. When asked whether they would recommend the program, some parents said:

Yes, I feel this is a good way to discipline your kids. You get better and more positive results. It makes your family more loving and patient. Yes, yes, yes, and yes!!!! I have already - some friends are interested and some seem to think they don’t need anything else right now. These people are the complacent ones and don’t want to make/take effort to change (parent questionnaires, June 7, 1999).

Some indicated that their friends had already seen the counting process in action and had asked about it. Others suggested that they would recommend the program to other parents but only if they were asked: “Yes, but I don’t want to offend them. I think maybe if they see me use it properly, they may ask about it” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999).

Many parents felt that this program had application for all situations within a family - if not the whole program, then at least parts of the program: “Yes - application for all situations (ages of children, behavior, etc.) - if not the whole program, at least parts” (parent questionnaire, June 7, 1999). These parents suggested that they were very happy with the positive results within their families. They reported that this program helped make their family more loving and patient, by being positive, nonjudgmental, and easy for children to understand.

Overall, the composite PSI Profile did not reflect the significant changes noticed in the individual profiles. This may be a result of the small sample of parents participating in the study or it may reflect the averaging of the extreme range of scores for individual subjects. For example, extreme high pre-test subscale scores noted for Subjects 1A, 3, 4, 5B, 6A, 6B, 7, 8 and 9 may have been moderated by the extreme low pre-test subscale scores for Subjects 1B, 2A, 2B and 5A. All 99+ scores were entered as 99.9. However, individual profiles did suggest significant changes for a majority of the participants in many of the subscales in both the Child Domain (CD) and the PD (Parent Domain).

In the Child Domain (CD) high scores are generally associated with children who display qualities that make it difficult for parents to fulfill their parenting roles (Abidin, 1995). A Distractibility/Hyperactivity (DI) score above the 85th percentile suggests that the child displays many of the characteristics associated with Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity. Of the thirteen parents participating in this study, only two suggested that their child(ren) had symptoms such as overactivity, restlessness, distractibility, short attention span, inability to listen, failure to finish things they start and difficulty concentrating. Of these two, post-test results revealed significant change in the behavior of one child and virtually no change in the behavior of the other. Since both of these children were described by their parents as difficult children, this might suggest that the 1-2-3 Magic parenting program can reduce behaviors commonly associated with ADHD children, but some children may require more intense intervention.

The Adaptability (AD) score describes the child's ability to adjust to changes in his or her physical or social environment. Six of the thirteen children described in the pre-test displayed extreme (above 85th percentile) behaviors in the area of Adaptability such as inability to change

from one task to another without emotional upset, overreaction to change, and difficulty in calming down after an upset. Three of these six children showed significantly improved Adaptability after the parenting study. Those three subjects whose scores did not modify after the six parenting sessions had PSI profiles which suggested critical stress levels. These three parents were referred for professional counseling.

High scores in the Reinforces Parent (RE) subscale suggest that the parent does not experience his or her child as a source of positive reinforcement. In the pre-test, seven of the thirteen parents described their children as having qualities which failed to produce good feelings by the parent about himself or herself. This suggests that either the child is somewhat defective in his/her ability to respond to the parent, or the parent is misinterpreting the child, or the parent is depressed and unable to relate to the child. Three of the seven post-test scores indicated that the RE score moved significantly into the normal range. Four of the seven post-test scores did not moderate to within normal range, suggesting that the parenting sessions did not significantly affect the opinion of the parent. Of the four profiles with extreme (over 85th percentile) post-test scores, three described subjects with critical stress levels and those three parents have been referred for professional counseling.

High scores in the Mood (MO) subscale are associated with children who are unhappy and depressed, frequently cry, and do not display signs of happiness.. Seven of the thirteen parents described their child(ren) as demonstrating affective dysfunction. Of these, four remained above the 85th percentile after the parenting sessions, and three of these were subscales of the crisis profiles. Although the MO subscale for one subject remained high, other scores for this subject were within normal limits.

High scores in the subscale for Acceptability (AC) are produced when the child possesses physical, intellectual and emotional characteristics that do not match the expectations the parents had for their child. Six of the thirteen participants reported extreme (above 85th percentile) pre-test scores in AC. This suggested that some parent/child problems may have been related to poor attachment, rejection, or both. Four of these extreme scores moderated to within normal range after the parenting sessions.

High scores in the Parent Domain (PD) suggest that the sources of stress within the family system may be related to dimensions of the parent's functioning. Within the PD, a high score on the Competence (CO) subscale may indicate that the parents are lacking in practical child development knowledge or possess a limited range of child management skills. Only four of the thirteen subjects scored above the 85th percentile in the CO subscale, and of these, two showed significant improvement on the post-test. Of the two post-test scores which remained extreme (above 85th percentile) after the parenting sessions, both parents were referred for professional counseling.

The Isolation (IS) score measures social and emotional support systems. An extreme score (above 85th percentile) in this area indicates that the parent is under considerable stress and requires immediate intervention. Only one subject scored in the critical range in this area, and that subject's crisis profile ensured that this parent was referred for immediate professional counseling.

A high Attachment (AT) score suggests that the parent may not feel a sense of emotional closeness to the child, or that the parent does not perceive himself or herself able to observe and understand the child's feelings accurately. Pre-test results indicated extreme scores for seven

parents in the area of Attachment. Although all the post-test scores showed some improvement in AT, only two profiles reflected significant improvement in parent/child relationships to within normal levels.

Only two of the pre-test profiles suggested that Health (HE) was of concern to the participants. High scores in this subscale suggest parenting stress as a result of health issues, or stress in the parent/child system. Both subjects indicated factors outside the parent/child relationship which contributed to their high levels of stress. Although four other subjects showed HE scores at the 85th percentile, these scores either moderated or remained stable, suggesting that the health concerns were not contributing excessively to parental stress.

High scores on Role Restriction (RO) suggest that the parent experiences the parental role as restrictive and frustrating, and that the parent may demonstrate resentment and anger toward either the child or the spouse. Only one parent scored above the 85th percentile in RO, and this parent also scored 99+ on the subscale for Spouse (SP), which suggests that this parent required assistance in dealing with feelings of anger and guilt. This parent's profile reflected a crisis situation, and this subject was referred for professional counseling.

The Depression (DP) subscale measures the amount of depression in the parent. A high score in this area suggests significant depression requiring therapy or counseling aimed at enhancing self-esteem. Two of the profiles indicated significant depression in the pre-test which was somewhat modified on post-test results. However, the profile for one individual suggests an INCREASE in the DP score after the parenting sessions which indicated that this subject required immediate professional assistance in dealing with the causes and symptoms of depression.

Parents who earn high scores in the Spouse (SP) subscale are generally lacking the emotional and active support of the other parent in the area of child management. Only three parents scored above the 85th percentile in the pre-test on the SP subscale and since two of those parents were in the process of divorce, these results remained high in the post-test. The extreme pre-test score for subject 1A was significantly moderated in the post-test results suggesting some improvement in this area.

Conclusions

Although the composite profile shows that all pre-test and post-test scores fall within the 15th to 80th percentiles and below the high score level of the 85th percentile, I believe that the individual profiles more clearly reflect the actual results of the study. The pre-test and post-test data on the individual profiles supports the anecdotal comments of the participants. Therefore, my conclusions are based on the individual profiles and anecdotal comments noted in journals and on evaluation forms submitted after the completion of the six week study.

Ten of the participants had scores above the 85th percentile in two or more subscales. In examining individual profiles, it was clear that each participant showed improvement in several subscales, although some subjects remained in a crisis profile even after the parenting sessions. Based on the significant improvements noted in many subscale and domain scores, and the anecdotal comments of the participants, I conclude that the parenting program 1-2-3 Magic resulted in overall improved child behavior and family dynamics within the sample group.

It was clear that the majority of the parents involved in this study were supportive of a parenting style which involves mutual respect, but in which the parent is in charge. These parents found that the strategies suggested by the 1-2-3 Magic program were clear, easily implemented, and very effective in reducing misbehavior in children between the ages of 2 and 12. It was evident that the No Talking/No Emotion rule was very helpful in reducing parent stress which often occurs when parents allow their children to argue with rules and/or consequences. Most parents felt that time-out was an appropriate and very effective consequence and although several parents suggested that it would be easier to implement this program with young children, they agreed that the approach was effective in improving family dynamics.

Probably the best liked feature of the 1-2-3 Magic (Phelan, 1995) reported by the parents in this study was its straight forward, common sense approach to discipline and consequences.

CHAPTER 6

Implications and Recommendations

Implications

Based on the fact that the majority of participants in this study were parents who appeared to be well equipped physically, emotionally, and financially, it is clear that parenting can be a challenging undertaking for everyone. Since each parent comes to the task with differing degrees of talent, knowledge, and temperamental disposition, it is difficult to suggest that one parenting program can address the needs of all families. As a matter of fact, First & Way (1995) suggest that participation in any program to improve parenting is more important than the actual type of program attended. However, the evidence suggests that six weeks of parenting discussions that offer concrete ideas for handling misbehavior in children, and reasonable consequences, can result in significant improvement in child(ren)'s behavior, parenting stress levels, and family dynamics. Most parents involved in this study reported wholeheartedly that they were happy with the results of the 1-2-3 Magic program.

If a six week program can result in significant changes within the families who participated in this program, it seems reasonable to conclude that a similar program offered to all parents might be beneficial in all stressful parent-child systems. Although this particular study focused on the use of the 1-2-3 Magic program, each parent adapted the suggested strategies to fit with their individual family dynamics. This suggests that successful parents can use a wide variety of management strategies, so long as the parenting process results in positive interactions between parent and child. An important factor in this relationship appears to be the ability to control emotion during family conflict. First & Way suggest that significant changes in the lives

of participants in parenting programs can occur through the process of transformative learning which involves a paradigm shift in the parents' way of thinking, in addition to the enhancement of specific parenting skills.

It also appears that many parents suffer from excess anxiety and tension related to their roles as parents and to negative interactions with their children. The participants liked the 1-2-3 Magic program because it emphasized parental authority, reassurance, direct suggestions, information giving, concrete ideas, active listening, and self-esteem enhancement. This program suggests that it is possible to eliminate parental anxiety and tension by teaching parents to handle discipline in a reasonable, unemotional manner. This includes the No-Talking/No-Emotion rule which many of the participants cited as one of the most useful aspects of the program.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study involved 13 parents of 37 children. These parents volunteered for the study because of their desire to become better parents. Several of these parents were not experiencing any significant behavior problems with their children and consequently did not find some of the information relevant to their family situation. In a future study, I would request referrals from schools, family centers, or day care centers in order to ensure that the families involved in the study were in need of this type of intervention.

Most of the children involved in the study were demonstrating typical behaviors for children their age. Although this program demonstrated improved behavior and family dynamics in these typical families, it is not clear if the program is effective with those children described by Turecki as difficult. Of the two children described by their parents as “extremely difficult,” one showed improvement with this program and one did not. To more closely examine the efficacy of the program for difficult children, it would be best to select a sample of children who have been diagnosed by psychologists as displaying characteristics commonly associated with children with behavior problems. These children would need to be referred from a professional source such as Family Services or Mental Health Services.

This study was limited to six one-hour sessions over a seven week period. The purpose of the weekly meetings was to mainly to encourage and reinforce implementation of the program. During each session, I reviewed specific strategies and/or concepts discussed in the book and then opened the session up for discussion. The participants suggested that the open discussion time was very valuable, and that the sessions should include more time for group interaction since all necessary information was clearly presented in the book.

Since part of the attraction of the program is its ease of implementation, it may not be necessary to supplement a future study with formal presentations on specific elements in the

program. Instead, it may be more useful to arrange a “support group” in which participants are given the program to read on their own and then meet weekly to discuss problems, concerns, and/or successes. Such a group could meet informally in each other’s homes.

The post-test measure (PSI) was given after only seven weeks of using the 1-2-3 Magic program. It would be interesting to do the PSI after 3 months to determine if this program had a long term effect on children’s behavior, parent stress and family dynamics.

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APPENDICES

Pre & Post-test Data																	
	DI	AD	RE	DE	MO	AC	CD	CO	IS	AT	HE	RO	DP	SP	PD	TS	LS
Pre-test 1a	35	55	96	85	85	80	78	70	60	97	50	80	30	80	74	77	55
Post-test 1a	25	50	97	65	60	80	68	65	60	95	65	45	50	80	72	70	35
Pre-test 1b	15	55	30	87	50	15	33	30	25	65	35	3	45	93	35	33	70
Post-test 1b	10	40	30	25	50	70	25	35	25	50	50	20	35	75	33	27	50
Pre-test 2a	25	50	55	7	35	15	18	2	60	15	20	15	10	20	8	8	96
Post-test 2a	4	10	30	8	1	30	4	4	80	25	35	20	45	50	20	8	96
Pre-test 2b	10	5	45	5	25	15	6	15	60	10	35	5	2	8	6	2	97
Post-test 2b	15	35	65	55	50	20	25	30	35	50	75	45	35	50	38	30	90
Pre-test 3	55	85	90	96	97	98	94	95	50	90	90	55	99+	80	94	95	70
Post-test 3	55	70	80	70	60	50	63	70	70	85	80	55	98	85	88	83	35
Pre-test 4	99	99	99+	99+	99+	99	99+	99+	70	99	85	90	85	99+	97	99+	92
Post-test 4	20	98	87	99+	99	85	96	96	85	97	85	65	95	99+	96	97	97
Pre-test 5a	55	35	5	65	50	60	38	20	10	1	65	15	35	20	12	18	80
Post-test 5a	35	50	55	45	75	60	43	30	35	10	70	20	30	35	20	28	60
Pre-test 5b	55	50	96	88	60	96	85	98	75	99+	85	40	96	35	92	92	85
Post-test 5b	25	85	96	75	85	90	68	95	85	97	80	30	85	65	90	86	80
Pre-test 6a	60	99+	96	96	97	95	98	65	50	90	50	85	35	55	68	94	96
Post-test 6a	92	96	85	87	96	60	91	60	35	97	75	65	50	50	68	83	87
Pre-test 6b	60	92	96	97	97	60	94	60	10	95	65	55	50	35	50	78	96
Post-test 6b	65	99+	99+	99	99	85	99+	65	15	75	50	55	20	40	40	87	50
Pre-test 7	99+	90	95	98	90	99+	99+	93	50	98	93	70	70	92	93	97	99+
Post-test 7	91	95	65	99+	93	99+	99+	65	25	96	95	45	35	99+	85	96	99+
Pre-test 8	25	12	45	95	50	99+	65	70	60	35	85	20	45	65	55	56	99+
Post-test 8	25	65	65	65	90	95	68	65	35	50	35	15	30	55	33	47	98
Pre-test 9	55	96	80	55	97	40	33	15	35	10	85	70	4	75	28	28	83
Post-test 9	15	25	80	20	35	50	23	9	25	10	50	40	1	40	9	12	70

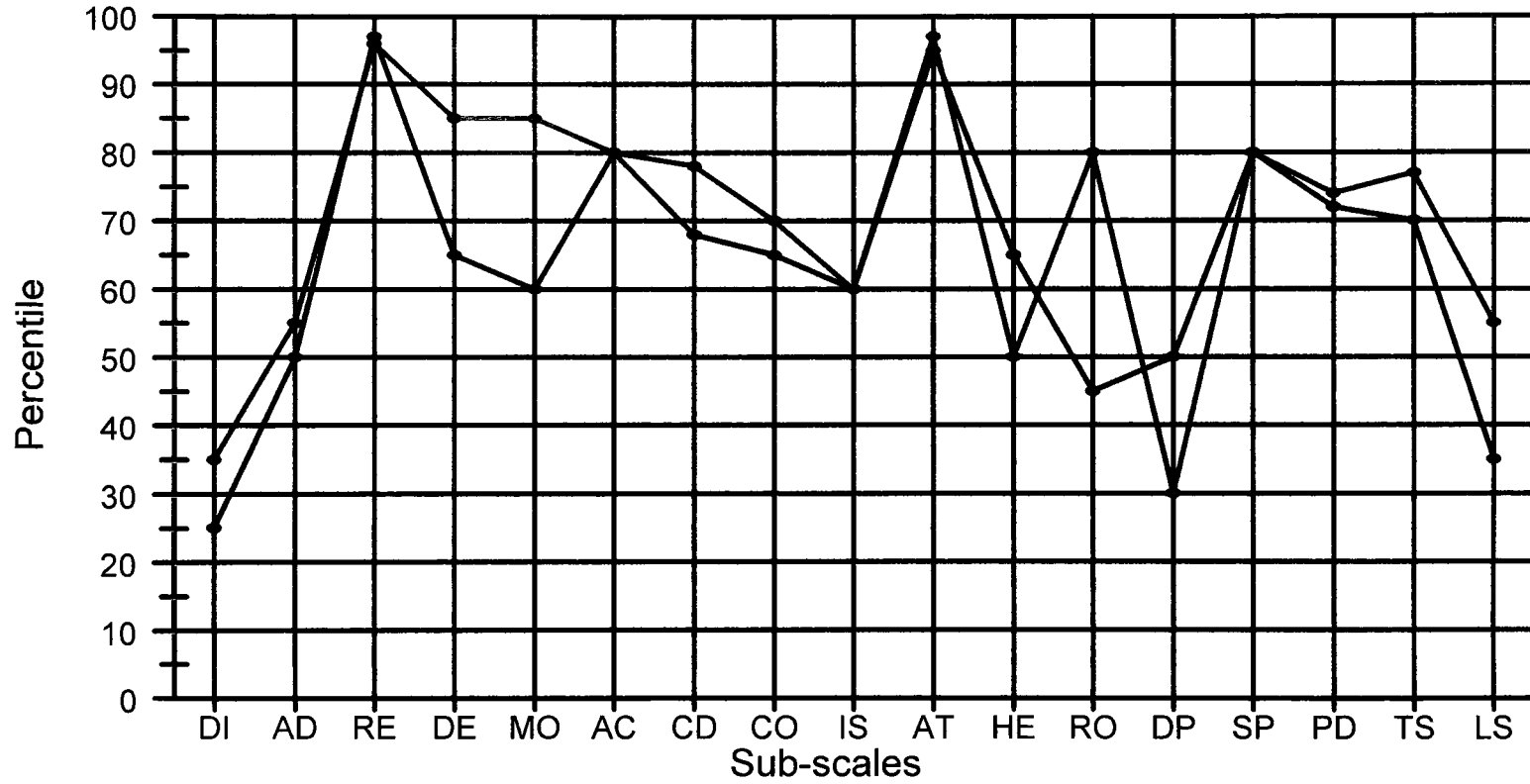
APPENDIX B

PSI Profiles

Subject 1a to Subject 9

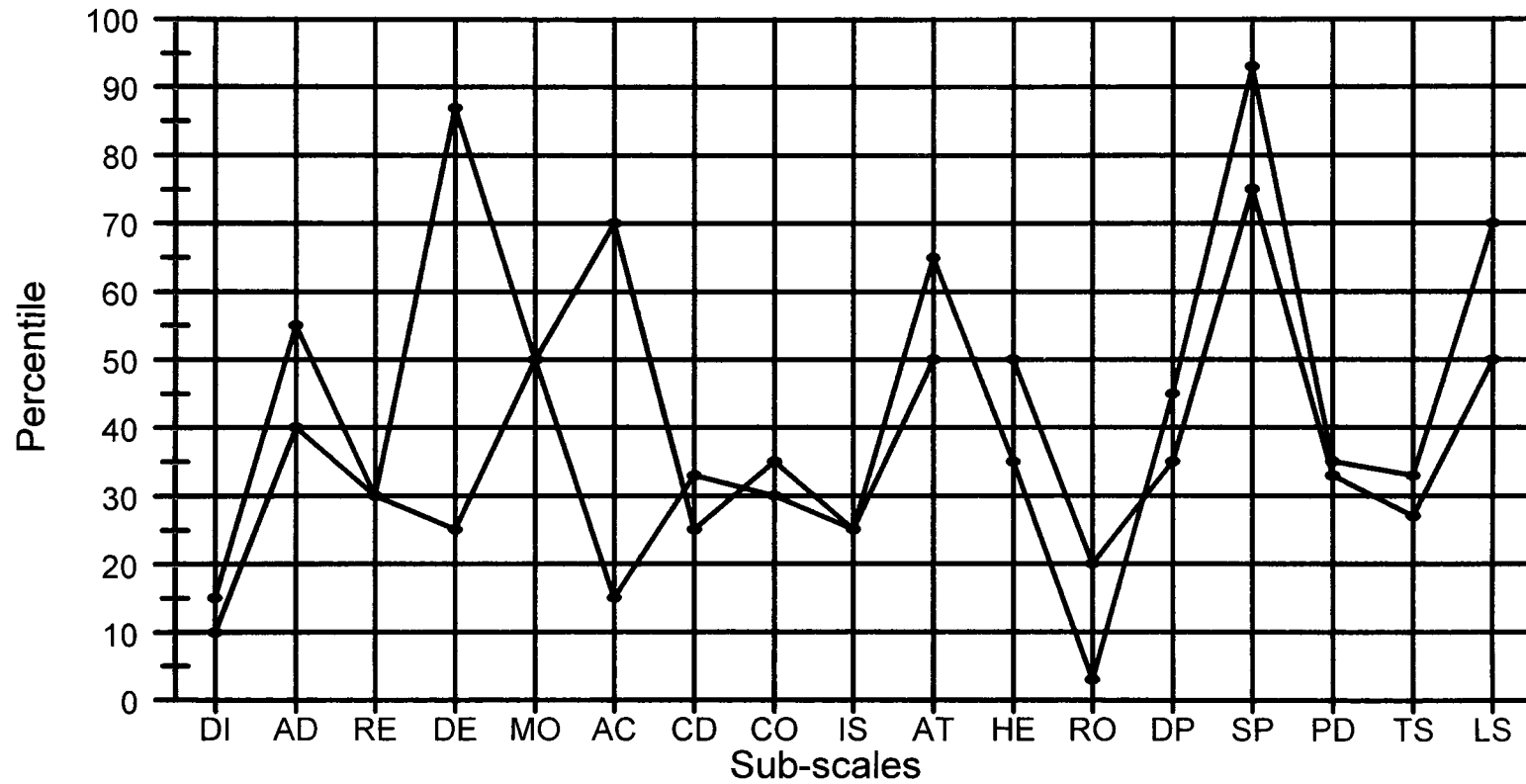
PSI PROFILE

Subject 1a



PSI PROFILE

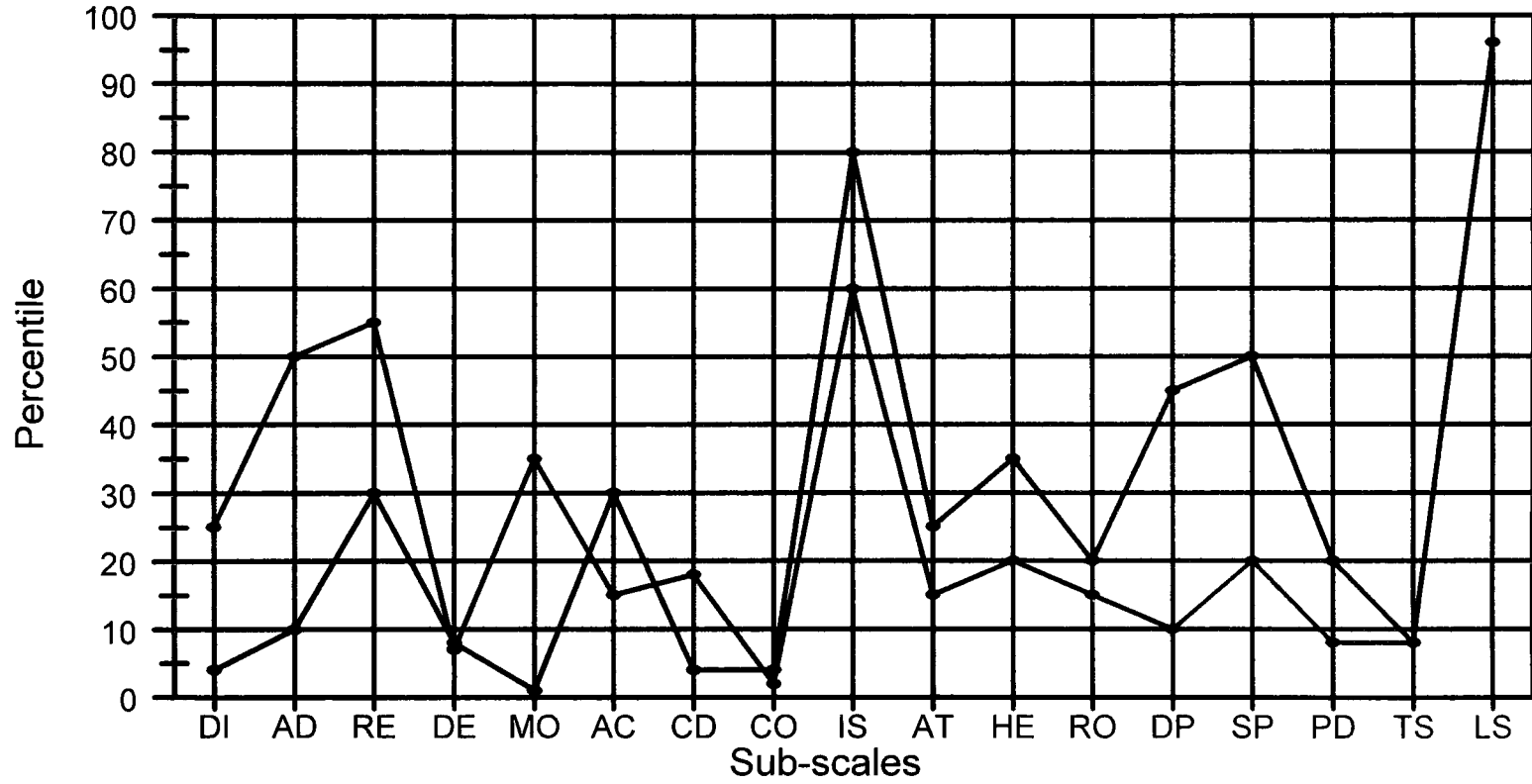
Subject 1b



—●— Pre-test 1b —●— Post-test 1b

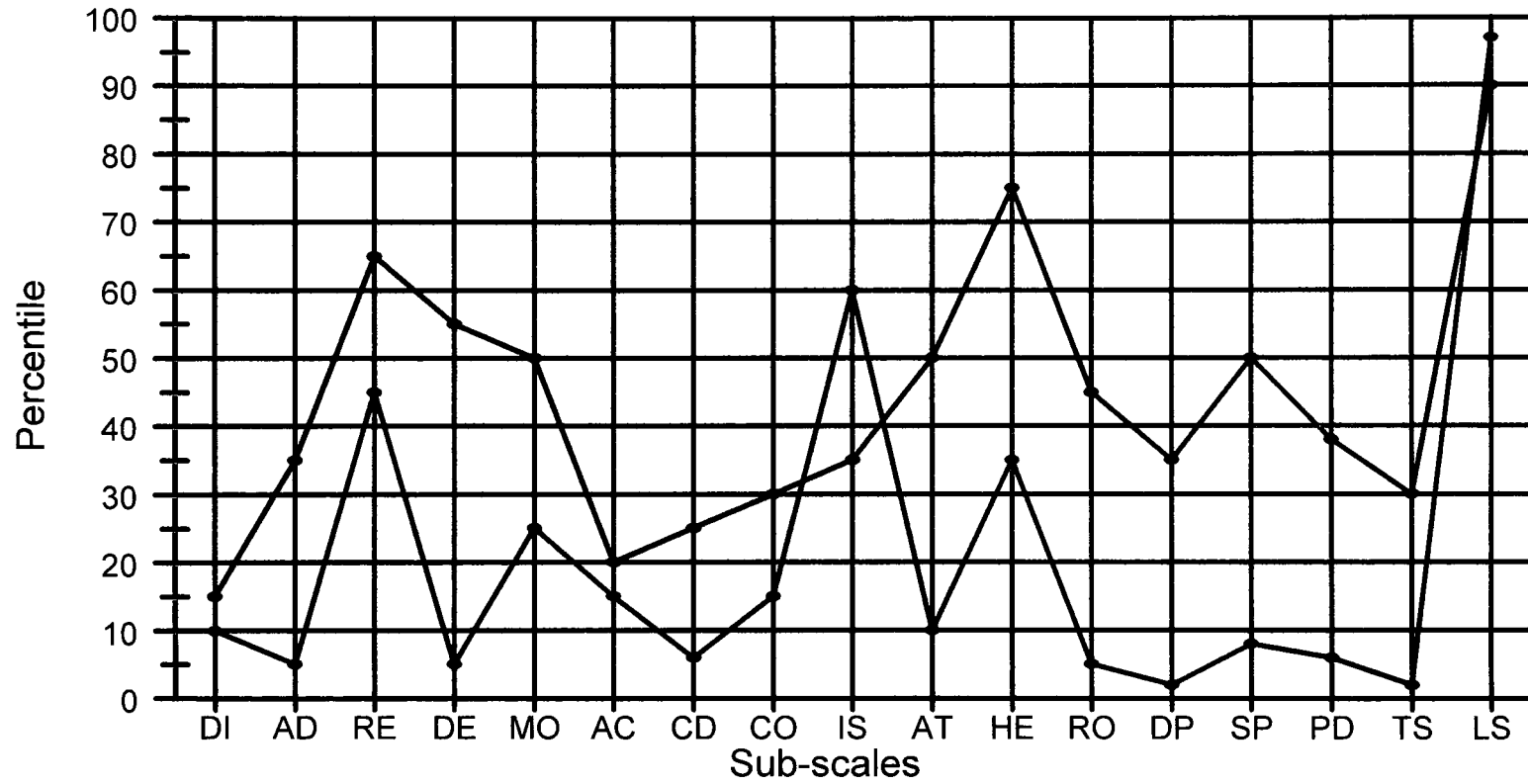
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Subject 2a



PSI PROFILE

Subject 2b

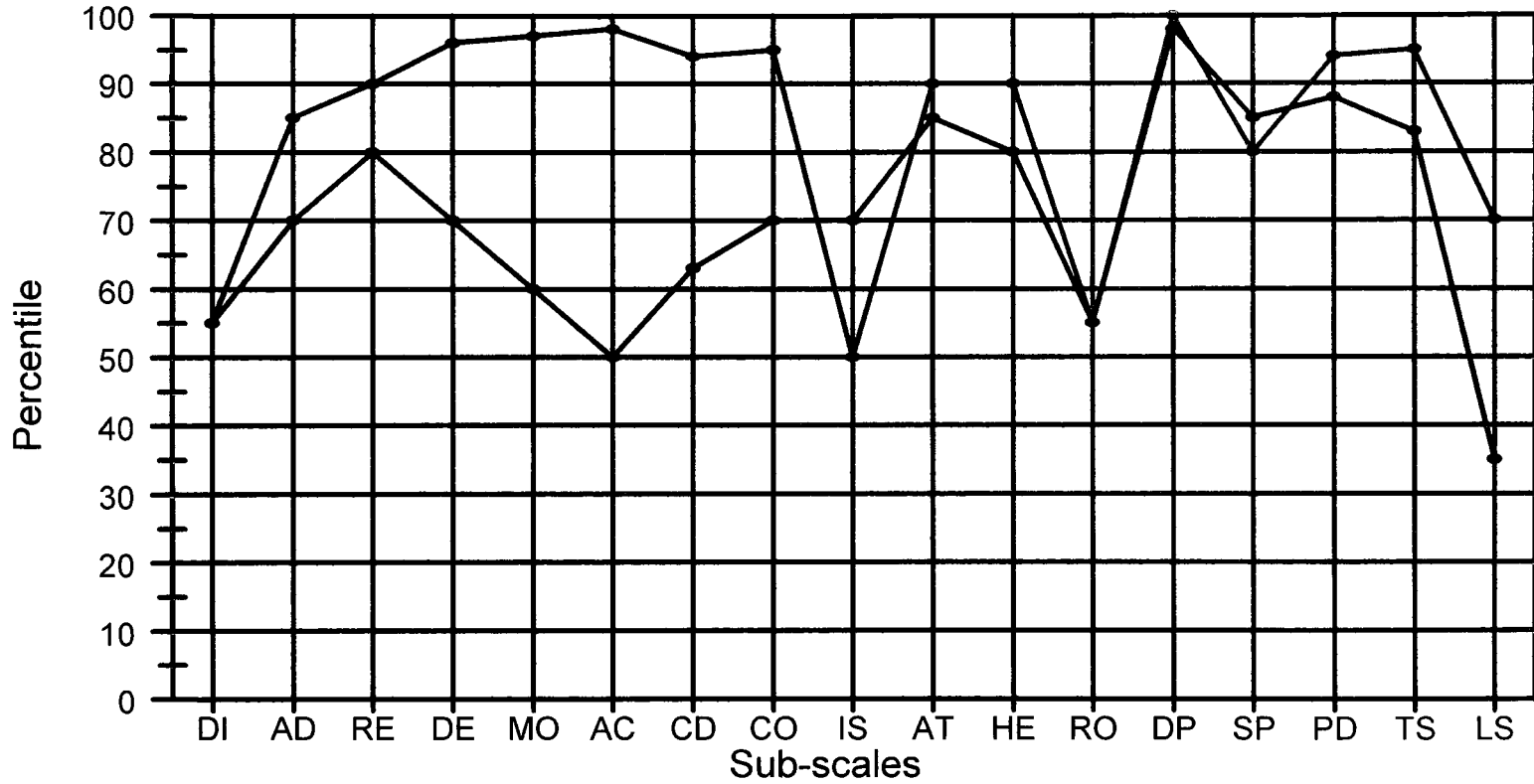


—●— Pre-test 2b

—●— Post-test 2b

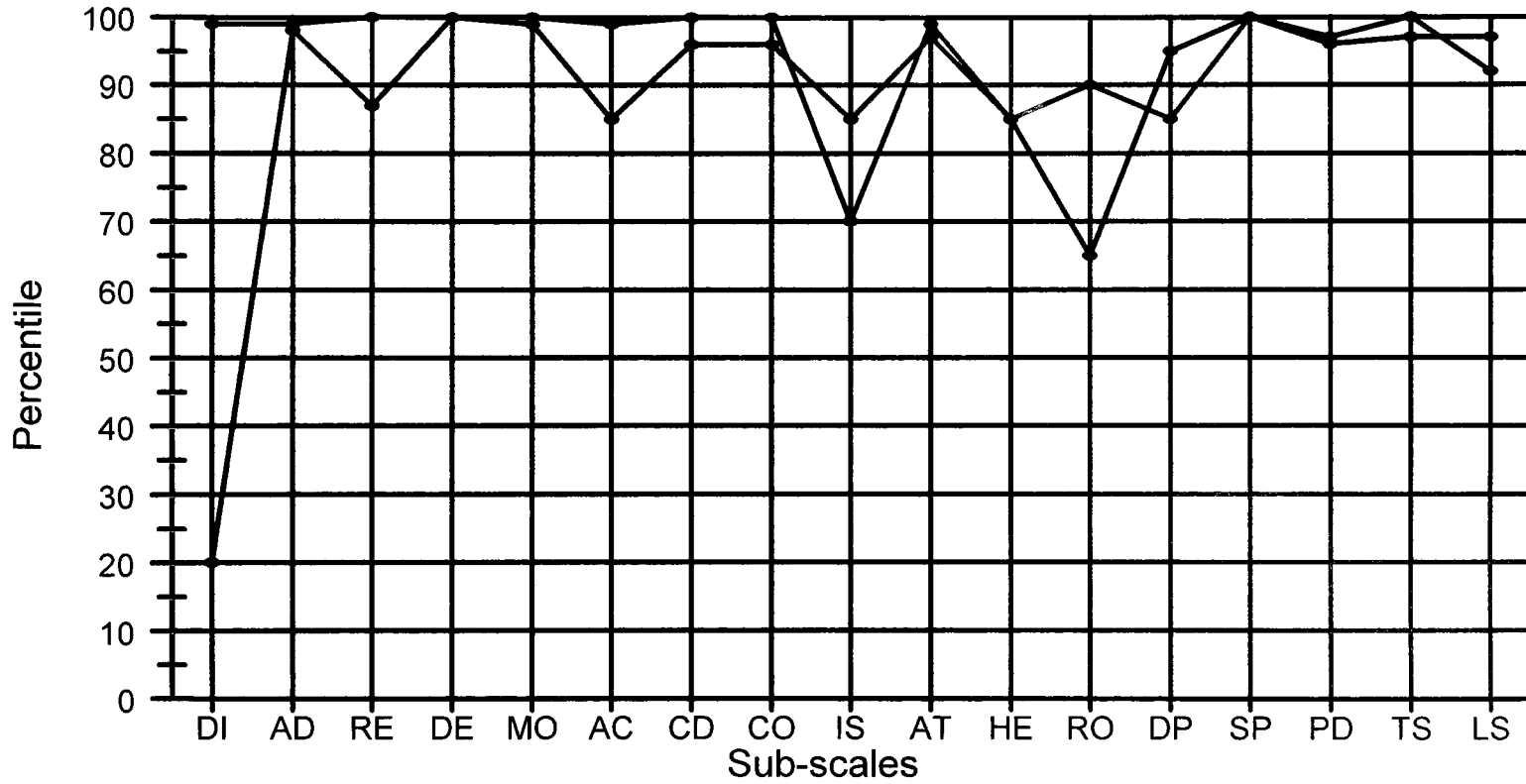
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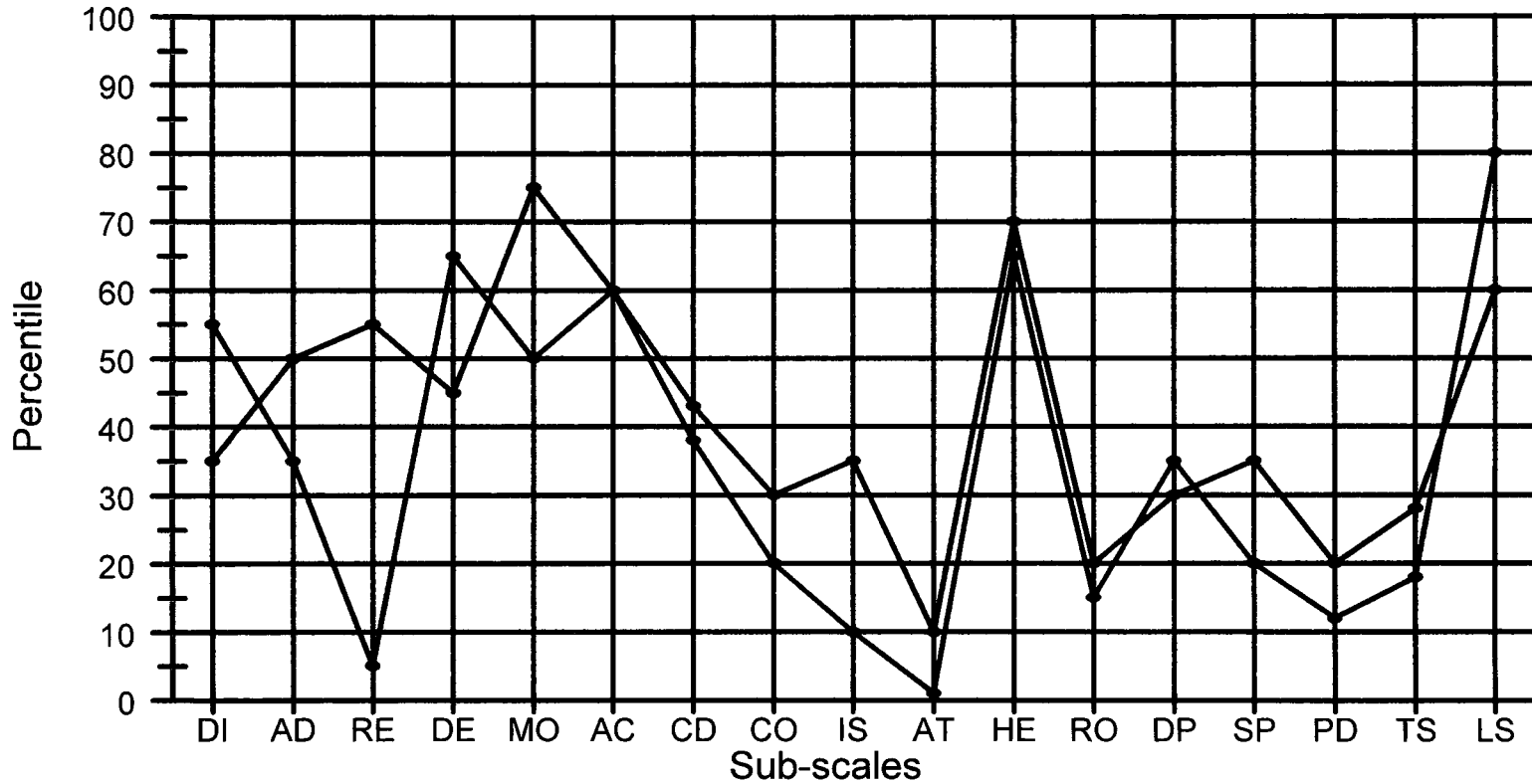
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Subject 4



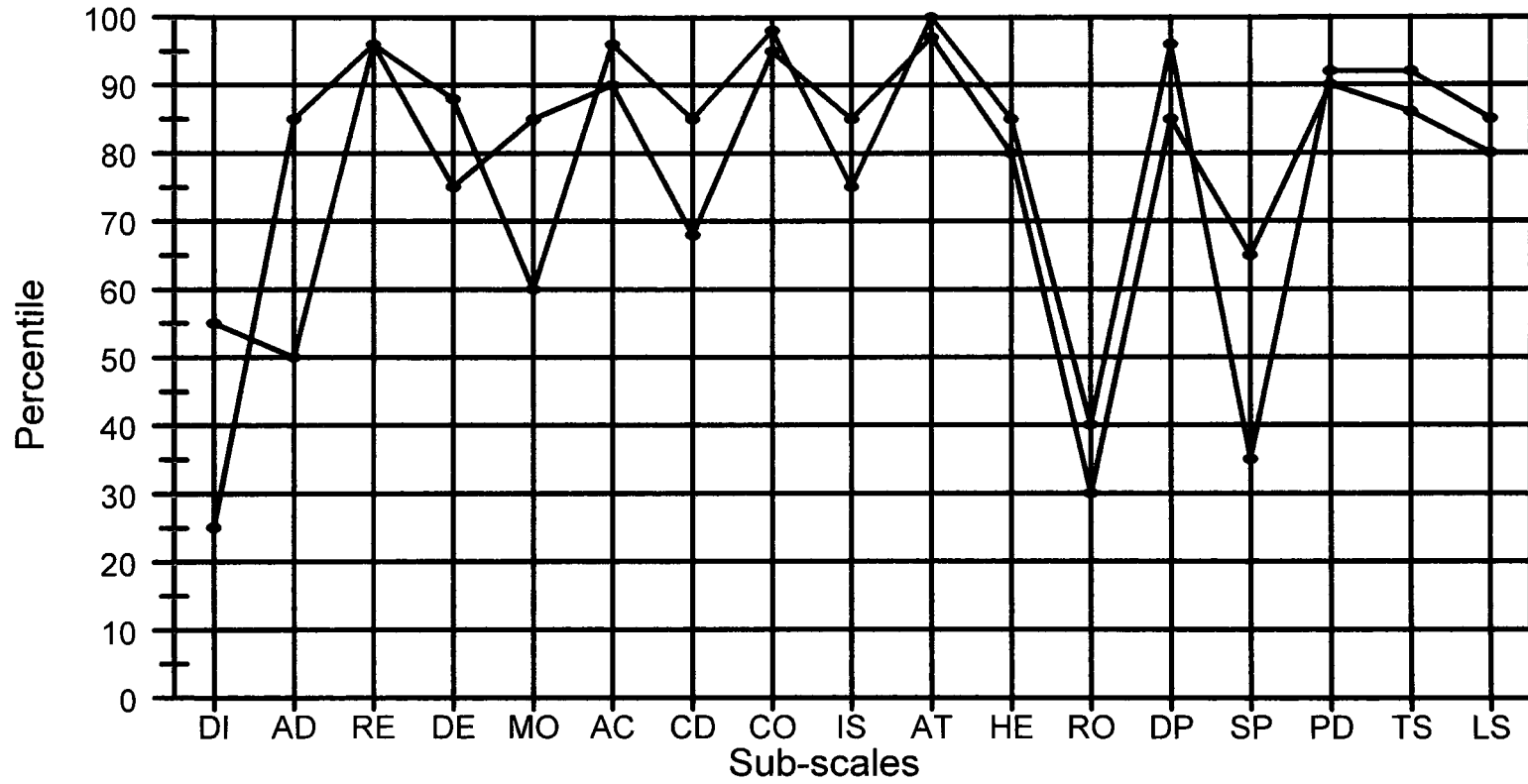
PSI PROFILE

Subject 5a



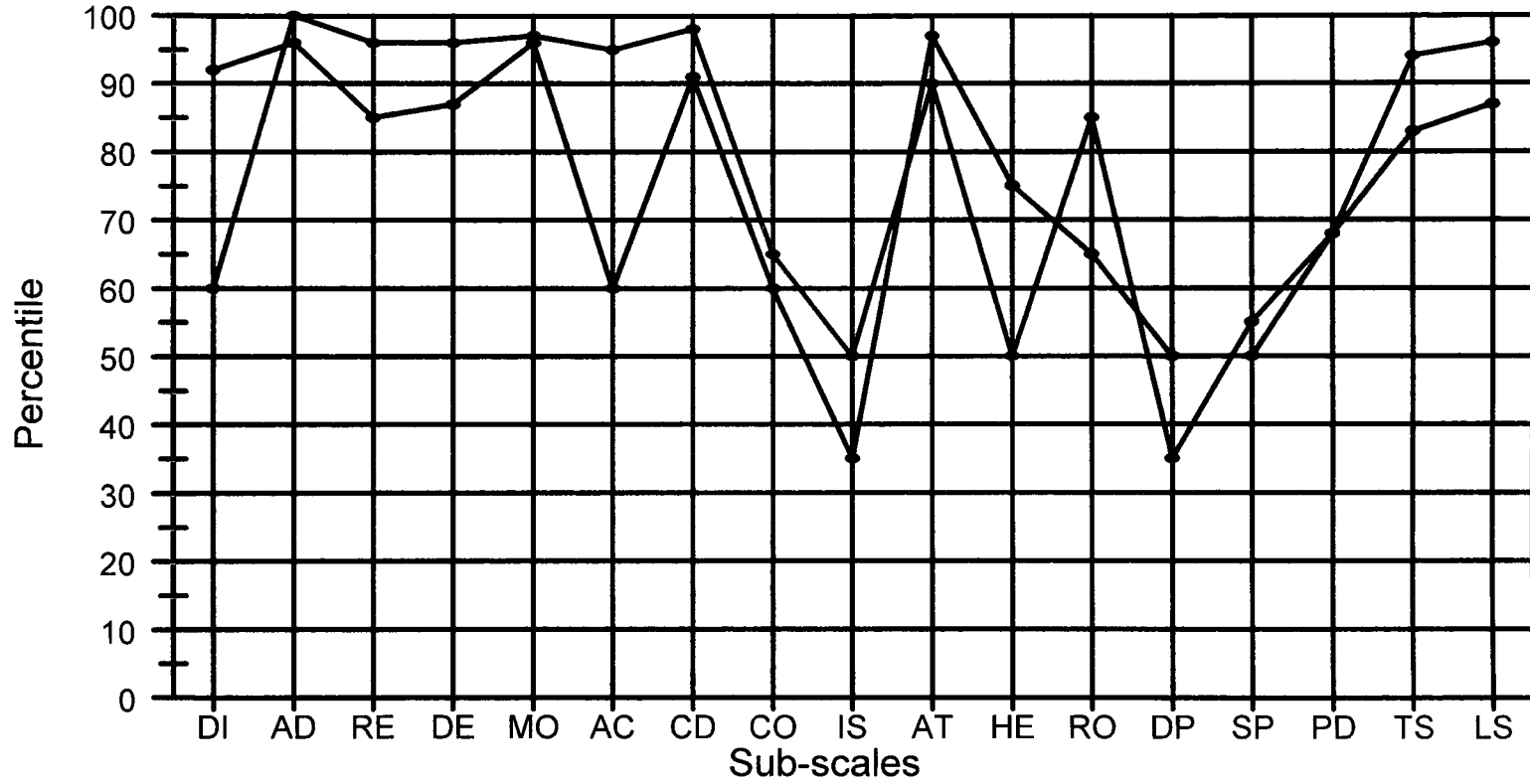
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Subject 5b



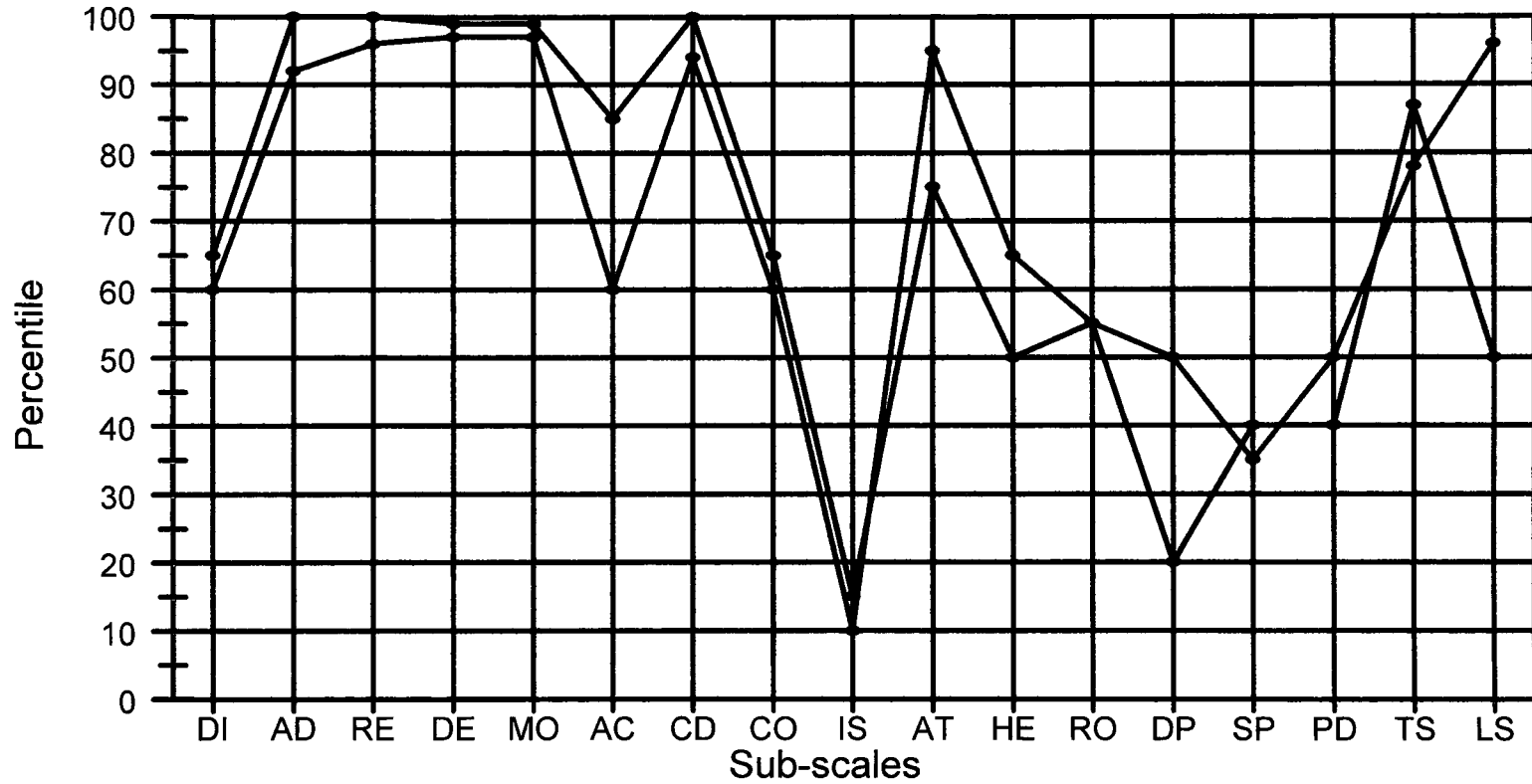
PSI PROFILE

Subject 6a



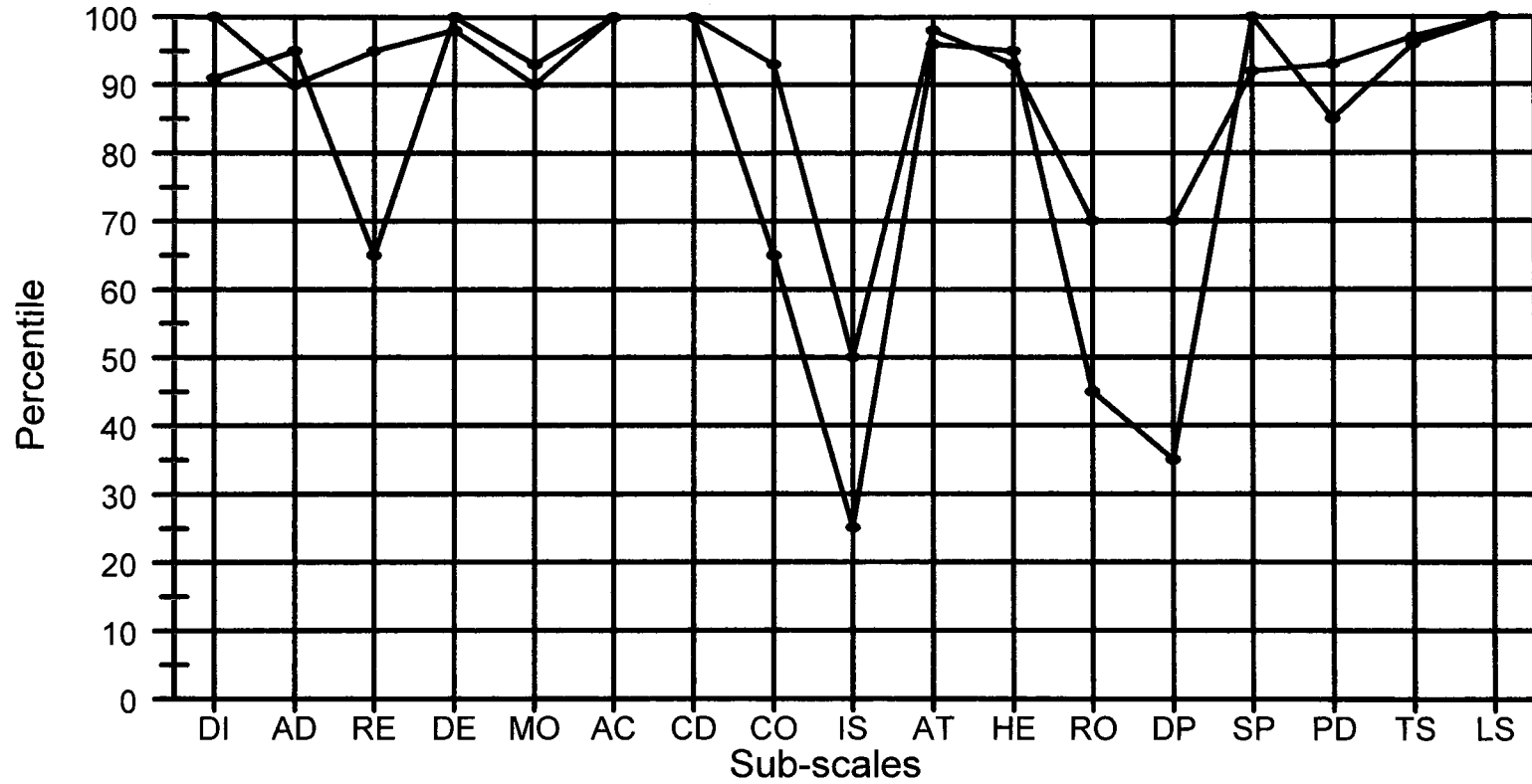
PSI PROFILE

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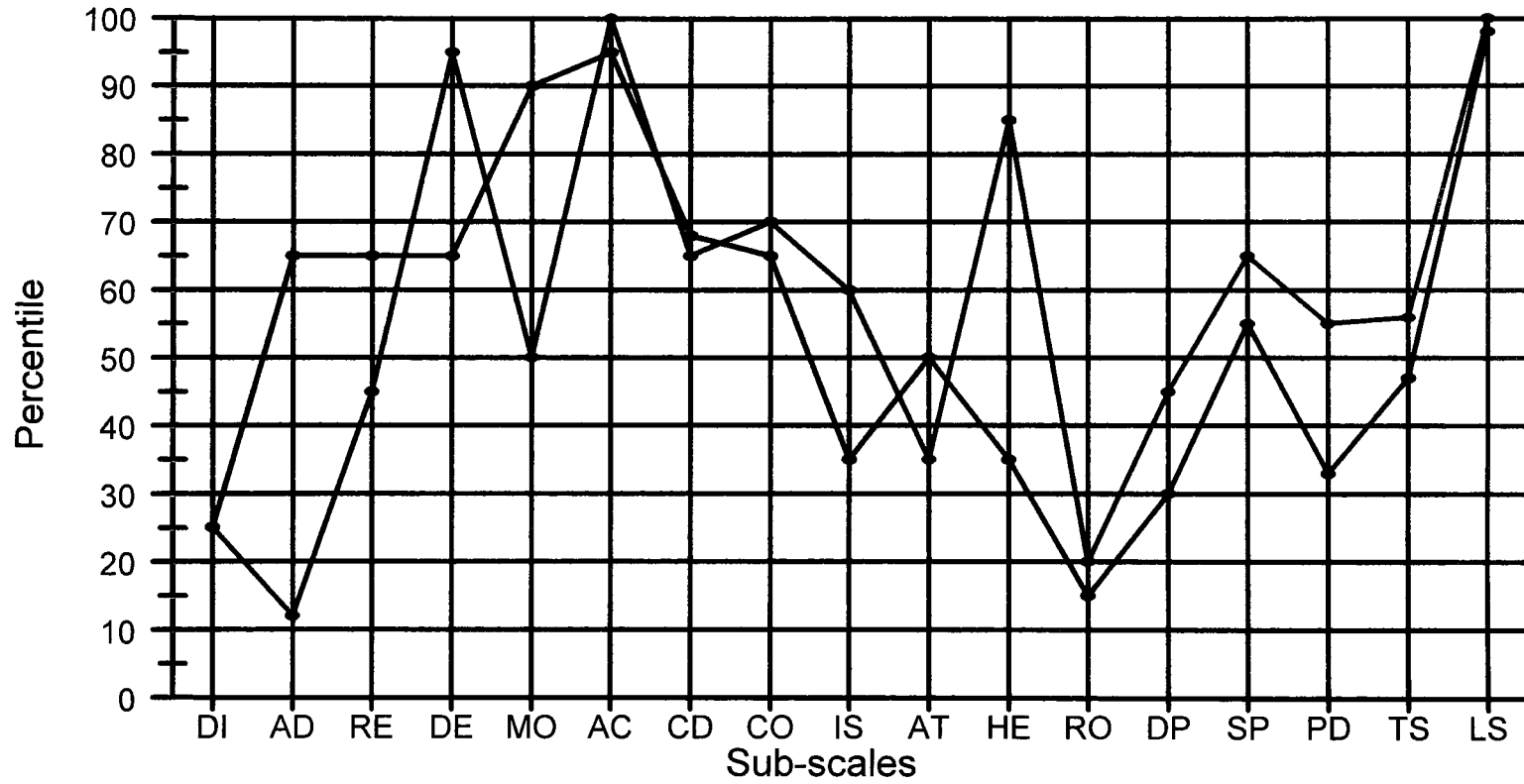
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Subject 7



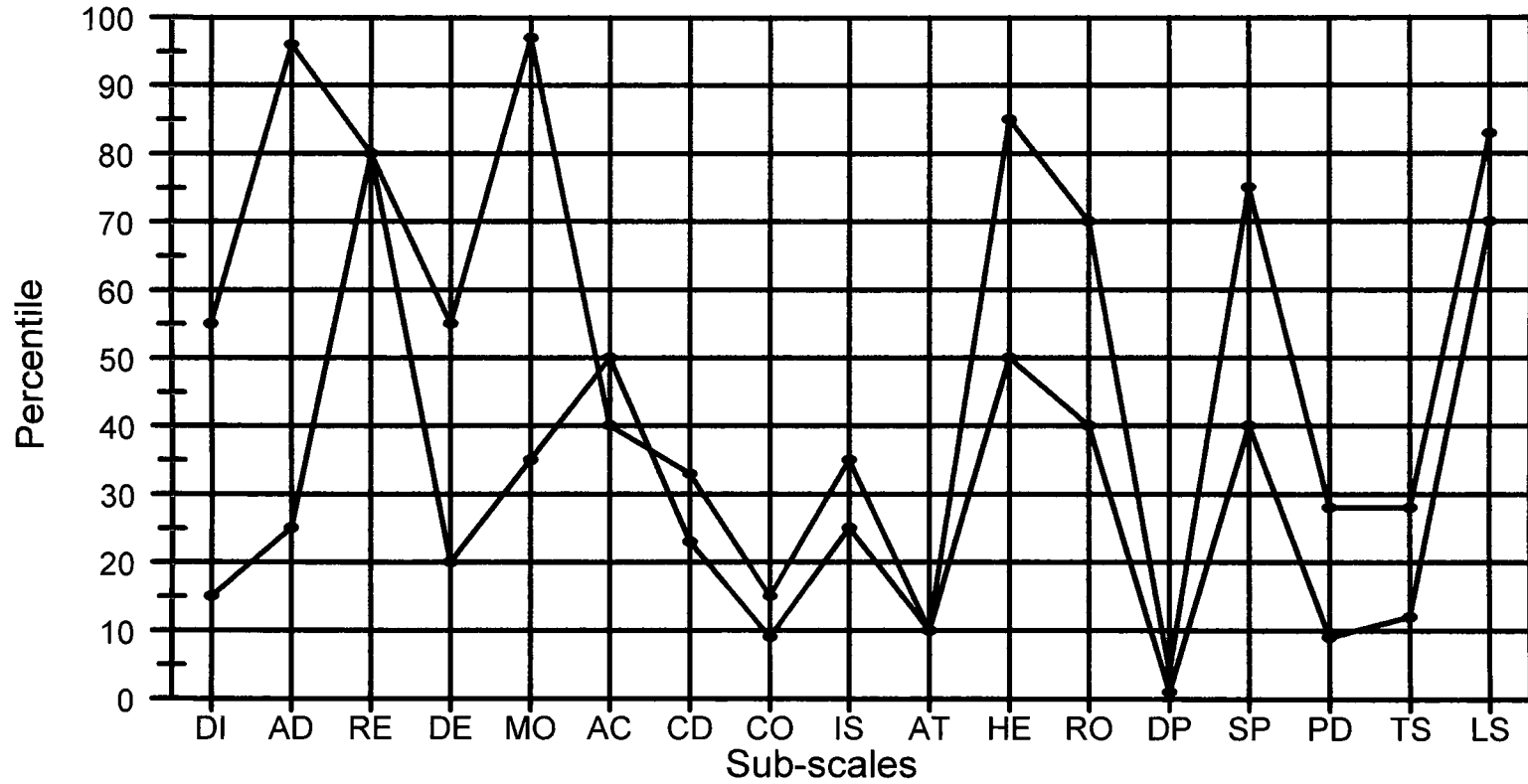
PSI PROFILE

Subject 8



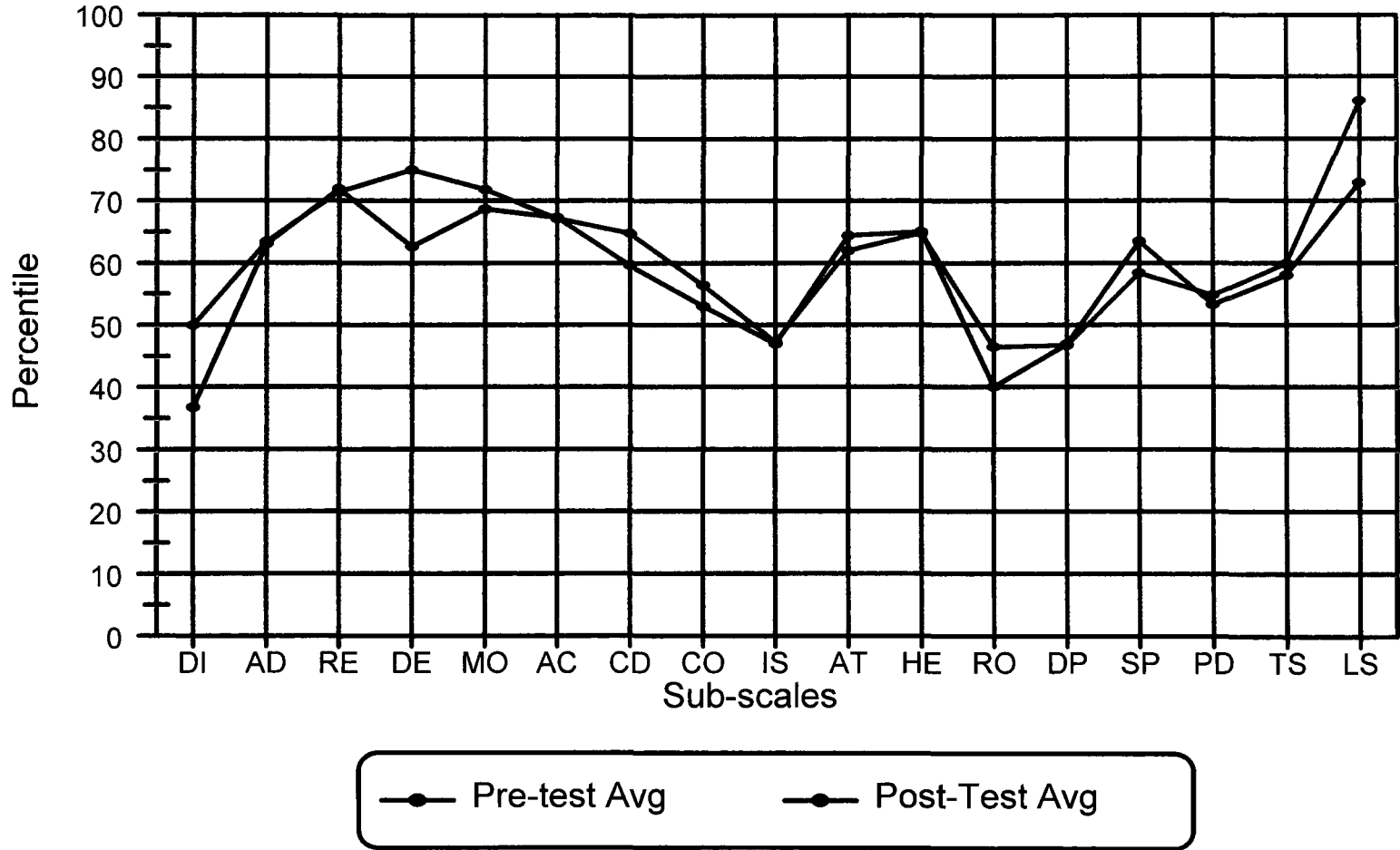
PSI PROFILE

Subject 9



PSI PROFILE

Composite



APPENDIX D

PSI Profile - Interpretation Sheets

Subject 1a to Subject 9

of file

PSI Profile - Interpretation - Subject 1A**Distractibility (DI)****Adaptability (AD)****Reinforces Parent (RE)****Demandingness (DE)****Mood (MO)****Acceptability (AC)****Child Domain (CD)****Competence (CO)****Isolation (IS)****Attachment (AT)****Health (HE)****Role Restriction (RO)****Depression (DE)****Spouse (SP)****Parent Domain (PD)****Total Stress (TS)****Life Stress (LS)**

The DI and AD scores are within normal range suggesting that this child does not have characteristics associated with ADHD. Both pre and post test RE scores are high suggesting that this parent does not experience this child as a source of positive reinforcement.

Both DE and MO scores moved from high to normal levels suggesting that this child is not seen as a source of stress by the parent.

The CD scores are both within normal limits suggesting that this child's ~~child~~ behavior is ~~within normal~~ does not significantly contribute to parent stress.

This parent's ~~low~~ scores in CO, IS and RO suggest that the parent is able to deal effectively with their child's behavior.

However, elevated scores in ~~RE~~ ~~AT~~ suggest that the parent is not particularly attached to this child.

Both pre and post test scores are within normal range.

Both pre and post test scores are within normal range.

Post test scores on RE, DE ~~and RO~~ moved from above ~~average~~ normal to within normal limits.

PSI Profile - Interpretation - Subject

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)Total Stress (TS)Life Stress (LS)

Below norm DI score suggests that this parent views the child as ~~extra~~ well behaved. Elevated DE score in pretest may be in error since other CD scores do not indicate this child as a source of stress.

Low/Normal scores in CD suggest that this child is not considered a source of stress by parent.

Normal range scores in PD suggest that this parent views ~~themselves~~ himself as competent and well adjusted.

Elevated pretest scores in SP suggest that this parent may feel a lack of emotional and active support of the other parent in the area of child management. ~~SP scores in post test suggest some moderation in~~

Most of the subscales fall within normal range suggesting no significant problems except for spousal involvement in child rearing.

Total Stress and Life Stress scores are within normal range.

Above normal scores for DE and SP moved into normal range. Below normal scores for AC and RO moved into normal range.

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)

Total Stress (TS)

Life Stress (LS)

Below normal range scores in DI, AD, DE, MO this subject does not experience this child as a source of stress.

Extremely low CD scores suggest that this child displays qualities that the parent finds reinforcing. Since the AT score is ~~high~~ within normal range in ~~the~~ both pre/post tests, this parent feels a solid emotional bond with this child.

Extremely low TS score suggests this subject is experiencing low level of stress in the parent/child relationship.

low ~~Demandingness~~ Defensive Responding score suggests either defensive responding or that this parent is competent and a solid parent/child relationship exists.

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)Total Stress (TS)Life Stress (LS)

Extremely low CD and PD scores in pretest ~~test~~ combined with normal range post test scores suggests that the parent/child relationship is supportive and emotionally reinforcing.

Extremely low CD score ~~and~~ suggests that ~~the parent~~ ^{the} parent/child relationship exists in a supportive social environment.

Post test scores moved from below normal to normal range in most subscales suggesting the high life stress scores indicate the parent is experiencing stressful circumstances ~~PD score~~ outside the parent/child relationship. However the TS score suggests that the ~~TS score~~ parent/child relationship is unaffected by these outside stressors.

Distractibility (DI)
 Adaptability (AD)
 Reinforces Parent (RE)
 Demandingness (DE)
 Mood (MO)
 Acceptability (AC)
Child Domain (CD)
 Competence (CO)
 Isolation (IS)
 Attachment (AT)
 Health (HE)
 Role Restriction (RO)
 Depression (DE)
 Spouse (SP)
Parent Domain (PD)
Total Stress (TS)
Life Stress (LS)

Highly elevated pretest scores in both ~~CD~~ and PARENT DOMAIN were significantly lowered after parenting sessions.

Post test scores on all subscales except for DP are well within normal range.

~~DP score moved from 99th to 99th~~

Although DP score remains high at 99th percentile, it moved ~~from~~

High DP score combined with high SP suggests significant depression in this subject, possibly related to ~~from spouse~~ lack of emotional and active support in the area of child management.

Post test scores suggest that the parenting sessions may have contributed to moderating the child's behavior so that this parent is finding it easier to fulfill the parenting role. This subject's high score (99th percentile) on ~~This subject may be experiencing~~

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)

Total Stress (TS)

Life Stress (LS)

Extreme scores on both pre and post tests.

On pretest, only 5 scores were within graphic range - other scores placed this client off the top of the scale.

Post test scores, though still extreme, were significant in that the majority fell within the parameters of the PSI profile.

This ~~client~~ subject has been referred for professional counseling.

However, this subject's scores suggest stress in the critical range in both ~~domains~~ child and parent domain and in all subscales except RO.

- Distractibility (DI)
- Adaptability (AD)
- Reinforces Parent (RE)
- Demandingness (DE)
- Mood (MO)
- Acceptability (AC)
- Child Domain (CD)
- Competence (CO)
- Isolation (IS)
- Attachment (AT)
- Health (HE)
- Role Restriction (RO)
- Depression (DE)
- Spouse (SP)
- Parent Domain (PD)
- Total Stress (TS)
- Life Stress (LS)

Pretest scores in Child Domain subtests of RE and AT fall below normal range, but all scores moderate to within normal limits on Post Test.

Below normal subscale scores of RE and AT move to within normal limits on Post Test.

None of this subjects scores fall above the 85th percentile which is in the normal range.

Extremely low RE and AT scores

Distractibility (DI)
 Adaptability (AD)
 Reinforces Parent (RE)
 Demandingness (DE)
 Mood (MO)
 Acceptability (AC)
Child Domain (CD)
 Competence (CO)
 Isolation (IS)
 Attachment (AT)
 Health (HE)
 Role Restriction (RO)
 Depression (DE)
 Spouse (SP)
Parent Domain (PD)
 Total Stress (TS)
 Life Stress (LS)

Child Domain score moved from an elevated score ~~at~~ ^{at} 85th percentile to a ~~new~~ score of 65 - well within normal range. However, ^{high 95th percentile} RE, DE ~~and AC~~ ^{and AC} scores ~~and AC~~ ^{and AC} scores.

~~DEL score~~
 suggest that this ~~child~~ ^{parent} experiences the child as ~~being~~ ^{being} very demanding, and may not experience the child as a source of positive reinforcement.

~~At the~~ High score at 90th percentile in post test suggests ~~some~~ ~~score~~ that some stress may be related to the parent's functioning.

High RE score at 95th percentile and extreme AT score suggest that this parent may not feel a sense of emotional closeness to the child.

This subject has been referred for professional counseling to assist in examining ~~up to~~ possible problem areas, particularly RE, AC, CO, AT, RO, DP, PD and TS.

Distractibility (DI)
 Adaptability (AD)
 Reinforces Parent (RE)
 Demandingness (DE)
 Mood (MO)
 Acceptability (AC)
Child Domain (CD)
 Competence (CO)
 Isolation (IS)
 Attachment (AT)
 Health (HE)
 Role Restriction (RO)
 Depression (DE)
 Spouse (SP)
Parent Domain (PD)
Total Stress (TS)
Life Stress (LS)

Extreme scores in this subject's pretest were ~~the~~ somewhat modified after parenting sessions so that all post test scores fell at or below 98th of file

Child Domain score of 91% file score remains critical however, ~~with~~ ~~AD~~ ~~score~~ ~~of~~ ~~98~~ ~~score~~ suggesting ~~that~~ suggesting that the parent ~~into this~~ experiences this child as unwilling or unable to move from one task to another without emotional upset. The subject ^{mainly} perceives this child as unhappy depressed and/or angry.

High AT score of 99 and elevated RE score of 85 ~~suggests~~ indicate that this parent ~~has~~ experiences a real or perceived inability to understand this child with a resultant dysfunction in emotional closeness.

~~Low~~ DI scores in both Pre test and post test suggest that this child does not exhibit symptoms of ADHD.

Parenting Domain scores within normal range, and correspondingly average score in PD subscales suggest that this parent is coping with this child's behavior.

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)

Total Stress (TS)

Life Stress (LS)

Extreme score in CD suggests that this parent is dealing with a child who has behaviors that make parenting difficult. However, DI subscale score indicates that the child does not exhibit symptoms of ADHD.

Parent Domain scores within normal range suggest that this subject is coping well with this child's behaviors.

Extreme RE ^{subscale} score combined with elevated AT score suggest that this parent ~~is~~ does not understand their child's behavior, with resultant dysfunction in emotional closeness.

This parent has been referred to seek professional counseling for their child.

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)Total Stress (TS)Life Stress (LS)

Extreme scores in both pretest and post test suggest that this parent is in crisis.

Although CO score at 65th of 100 suggest that this parent perceives himself/herself as possessing appropriate child management skills, ~~the~~ extreme Child Domain scores indicate that this parent ~~is~~ is in critical need of professional assistance.

Extreme DI score in Child Domain indicate strong characteristics of ADHD.

~~Since~~ This subject has been referred for professional counselling ~~for both himself and the child~~ and medical attention for this child.

Distractibility (DI)
 Adaptability (AD)
 Reinforces Parent (RE)
 Demandingness (DE)
 Mood (MO)
 Acceptability (AC)
Child Domain (CD)
 Competence (CO)
 Isolation (IS)
 Attachment (AT)
 Health (HE)
 Role Restriction (RO)
 Depression (DE)
 Spouse (SP)
Parent Domain (PD)
 Total Stress (TS)
 Life Stress (LS)

Elevated pretest scores ~~in~~ ~~at~~ at 95% tile for DE and ~~99+%~~ tile for AC suggest that this child has placed excessive demands on the parent. ~~Extreme~~ AC ~~test~~ scores at 95% tile suggest that the child ~~exhibits~~ exhibits characteristic or behaviors that do not match this parent's expectations.

~~However~~ CD and PD scores fall within normal range suggesting that the parent is able to cope with the child's behaviors, and that the child/parent relationship is solid in spite of ~~high~~ high life stress.

Distractibility (DI)

Adaptability (AD)

Reinforces Parent (RE)

Demandingness (DE)

Mood (MO)

Acceptability (AC)

Child Domain (CD)

Competence (CO)

Isolation (IS)

Attachment (AT)

Health (HE)

Role Restriction (RO)

Depression (DE)

Spouse (SP)

Parent Domain (PD)Total Stress (TS)Life Stress (LS)

Although this subject recorded high scores in AD and MO subscales in pretest, ~~and~~ both ~~CD~~ CD and PD scores fell within normal range on Post Test.

Extremely low DP score at ~~17~~ 20 ~~file~~ suggests that this subject that

Defensive Responding score of 20 in the Post Test ~~suggests~~.

Post test subscale scores suggest that this parent's stress levels fall within or below normal range. Defensive responding score of 20 could indicate that the parent is very competent and that the parent/child relationship exists in a supportive social context.

Evaluation Forms

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

I liked the no-emotion bit, and that the program gave solid help about what to do as far as enforcing discipline was concerned. It gave me more incentive to carry through with my disciplining.

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

I really didn't dislike anything, except that I thought 2 yrs old was a bit young and 12 yrs old too old to do this program with.

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

Overall our children's behavior is better, and we seem to have more control over the family as a whole. I don't have the "losing it" feeling anymore.

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

Things seem much happier, and although we still are having problems with our eldest son, everyone else seems more respectful of the program and of our authority.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

I feel much more in control of what is happening, as well as more in control of myself and can usually stick to the no emotion rule.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Definitely, but I would say to use the program from ages 4 - 10 or so.

1-2-3 Magic – Evaluation

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

THIS IS NOT APPLICABLE AS WE DID NOT LIKE THE FORMAT OR PROFILE OF THIS PROGRAM. DID NOT USE IT.

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

No, Didn't like it.

1-2-3 Magic – Evaluation

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

well organized book. A building block program which starts out simple enough then lets you add onto it as the children respond positively to it.

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

I think it's only effective up to ~ age 9 or 10, at least with our children. I've started reading the adolescent version.

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

Our son, Alex (turns 6 in June) has responded well to it. Also our 8yr old daughter. The 4 yr old & 2yr old aren't able to comprehend the concept, but it's nice to have the program in effect for when they're older.

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

The eldest child (2 yrs) is still our tyrant, but I think he has responded somewhat to the approach.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

Don't let emotion take over so soon. Staying calm and ~~not~~ utilize ~~counting~~ counting.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Yes, straight forward approach. Easy to read & understand.

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- no emotion - so important when disciplining.
- clear outcomes - all parties know what events take place 1,2,3 etc.
- parents are in charge - not kids dictator → democracy

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- at first comes across too strong - makes it sound like you count everything - should spend a bit more time explaining that you discuss behaviors/consequences etc before counting.

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

- look more at my own parenting style - control emotions when talking to kids

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Yes I think it's an excellent program and would be really effective if started when kids are young.

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

I like the fact that I don't have to argue with my kids anymore, its like a no nonsense rule. Also the active listening - its so important!

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

The only thing I can think of, is the parts where the kids are "animals".

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

Kevin doesn't argue near as much, although he get real mad + stomps to his room when I say "that's one"! Dramatic change in Stephanie. Temper tantrums are less, swearing hardly at all. Listens much more!!

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

Right now its hard to say. So many changes have occurred lately, I think we are all still adjusting.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

My parenting style hasn't changed much, but I am so much calmer. I think just ~~know~~ having someone say that you're doing a good thing, helps.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Yes. Just for the change in Stephanie I would recommend the program.

very senseable, and easy to understand,
to be able to put it into practise.

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

This program is a very calming way to have unappropriate behavior to stop. The words are not fighting words. They (the words) are not intimidating or embarrassing or do not attack the child self esteem or emotionally. The layout of this program is →

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

That this program is not offered to the public. Single parent's can't compare to married couples as we don't know how it feels to parent children with two bosses. (Trainers of these wild animals we call our children.).

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

They take notice when I say "That's one." They stop the behavior and think about what is going on. If and when I get to three they need a break as well as myself.

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

Arguments come to a quiet stop then before. They war rarely erupts. Calmer household.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

I am much more assertive and less I have to explain and talk.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Most definitely this program is a very positive, non judgemental easy for children to understand.

1-2-3 Magic – Evaluation

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- the simplicity of the system

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- class time was slightly redundant after reading assigned material however that was due to participants

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

Audrey is still testing
Barry likes it

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

off the scale!

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

- not so much talk - talk

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Yes. Judy's style is warm & welcoming

1-2-3 Magic – Evaluation

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?
I FEEL I HAVE MORE OF A HANDLE IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS WITH THE CHILDREN. STRESS LEVEL HAS GONE DOWN.
2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?
I FEEL THE TIME THE CHILDREN SPEND IN THESE ROOMS SHOULD BE LONGER.
3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.
INSTEAD OF CONTINUING, WITH CRYING, WHINING ETC. WHEN I COUNT IT USUALLY STOPS IMMEDIATELY WITH NUMBER #1. CHILDRENS BEHAVIOR MUCH BETTER.
4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.
I FEEL THERE IS MORE RESPECT AND WE ARE ALL BETTER BEHAVED.
5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.
I DON'T LOSE MY TEMPER NEAR AS MUCH, I FEEL CHILDREN AND MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM IS BETTER.
6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.
YES. I FEEL THIS IS A GOOD WAY TO DISCIPLINE YOUR KIDS. YOU GET BETTER AND ^{MORE} POSITIVE RESULTS.
IT ~~MAKES~~ YOUR FAMILY MORE LOVING AND PATIENT.

The video was also very helpful.

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- it was so easy to learn + use!
- The book was really easy reading and enjoyable too. I learned some new "perspectives" on life and life with children. However by reading the book many of the things I already knew were brought into a new light and I re-learned many things I already knew - My ~~own~~ perspective changed.

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- at this particular time in our life - I found the "Start" behavior harder to get going and I'm still struggling with it.
- I think under different circumstances i.e. - a stable income etc. (my income) will ^{help} make things different.
- Other than this personal problem/hurdle - there is nothing I don't like about the program.

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

- less apt to whine + cry + carry on + on + on!
- They ~~are~~ are not nearly as cranky and they stop when they are counted!

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

- There is basically a lot LESS commotion. Like yelling + arguing ^{sp} going on.
- Things are quieter. I would say only about 30% quieter. However this is a drastic improvement. Because the other 70% of noise is mostly regular kid/house/playing noise. I can handle this kind of noise.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

This is where I feel there has been the biggest change. ~~I~~ When I follow the NO Talking / NO Emotion rules things go so much more smoothly. Because, NOW I am in control. My mouth doesn't have to go on + on, + get louder + louder! I learned + re-learned things that I knew - but just didn't know how to change. This program gave me the "power" within myself to

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

↳ Yes, yes, yes + yes!!!!

I have already - some friends are interested + some seem to think they don't need anything else right now. These people are the complacent ones and don't want to make/take any effort to change.

make the changes I was wishing for yet I didn't know where to go next!

1-2-3 Magic – Evaluation

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

no talking, no emotion

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

?

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

Will stop whining, inappropriate behaviour (when counted) and start to talk (communicate feelings and desires) more effectively

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

children more obedient, but ^{we} still talk about things at appropriate times.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

calmer, more consistent

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Yes. - application for all situations. (uses of children, behaviour, etc) - if not whole program, at least parts.

1-2-3 Magic – Evaluation

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

N/A

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

I did not like the way it tells you to deal with your children. Time out is a last resort in our home, we try to talk through problems one on one.

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

N/A

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

N/A

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

~~no~~

I try to be more aware of how serious a problem is before I intervene, rather than just fixing everything when a problem arises.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

No, My husband & I enjoy Barbara Colorosa & How to talk so kids will listen & listen so kids will talk. I don't believe in training my children as animals, they are individuals who need to learn how to make appropriate choices & sometimes making mistakes are the best ways to learn.

1. What did you like best about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

It is a simple tool to remember when disciplining. I think it ~~helped~~^{helps} me to be more consistent, the children know what to expect and it helps me focus on staying calm.

2. What did you like least about the 1-2-3 Magic program?

- If it is not used properly (ie. ~~counting~~ counting without following through with time out) it can be frustrating on the children and other people who have to listen to the counting. (this can give the program a bad name)
- Thought his writing tone was too negative + sarcastic at times.

3. Describe the changes (if any) in your children's behavior.

- My son's behaviour changed very noticeably. However, if I do not pay attention + be ready to follow through with time out right away, it is as if he can sense it + he tests again, which I think is normal, it just surprises me how fast it happens.

4. Describe the changes (if any) in your family dynamics.

- ~~Again~~ Again, when we use it properly, everyone is calmer and happier.

5. Describe the changes (if any) in your personal parenting style.

- If I focus on using it, I am calmer and everyone is happier.

6. Would you recommend the 1-2-3 Magic program for other parents? Explain.

Yes, but I don't want to offend them. I think maybe if they see me use it properly, they may ask about it.

EmPoWeReD!
(Parenting with Respect and Dignity)

Consent and Release Form

I am engaged in studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge, leading towards a graduate degree in counseling. I am currently undertaking my culminating project entitled EmPoWeReD! (Parenting with Respect and Dignity). This culminating project is part of the requirements of the Master's Degree.

The project undertakes to study the effects of the parenting program 1-2-3 Magic on children's behavior and family dynamics. The program will run for six sessions starting April 26 at 7:00 p.m. in the Amy Woodland School library (excluding Monday, May 24). I will be required to prepare a written paper describing the project and documenting the results.

As part of this project, I will provide a copy of the book 1-2-3 Magic by Dr. Thomas Phelan, a small notebook to use as a journal, and six group sessions to assist you in implementing this program in your family. In return, I would ask for a commitment to the program which includes attendance at all of the weekly sessions, reading the book provided, implementation of the methods suggested, and daily journaling as described. As well, I request that you complete an assessment entitled Parenting Stress Index as a pre and post measure for the purposes of comparison. Should this study raise questions or issues that require further attention, I will be available for private discussion. In some cases, family issues and discipline concerns may be outside the realm of this program to address. In those situations, it may be best for you to seek private counseling. However, should you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact myself, Judi Watson at 426-7487, Michael Pollard (Dean of Graduate Studies) at 403-329-2424, or Richard Butt (Research Coordinator) at 403-329-2434.

To protect your identity, your name and the names of your children will not be used at any time in the written summary of this study. Furthermore, you will have an opportunity to examine both pre and post results of the Parenting Stress Index and have that information interpreted if necessary. You will have full access to the final paper (although if you would like your own copy, please inform me prior to the end of the study).

(Participant's Name)

I give permission for Judi Watson to use the results of the parenting study emPoWeReD! in a written format for submission to the University of Lethbridge to fulfill requirements for a Master's Degree in Counseling. I understand that my name and the names of my children will NOT be used at any time in the reporting process.

(Participant's Signature)

(Date)



Memorandum

The
University of
Lethbridge

Faculty of Education

TO: Judi Watson

FROM: Richard L. Butt, Research Co-ordinator

DATE: June 24, 1999

RE: **Research Proposal**

Dear Judi:

I am happy to inform you that the Human Subject Research Committee has given ethical approval to your research project entitled: emPoWeReD (Parenting With Respect and Dignity), on condition that you add a paragraph to your consent letter informing participants that they can contact you (telephone number), your faculty supervisor (telephone number) or Dr. Richard Butt (403-329-2434), Chair of the Human Subjects Research Committee at The University of Lethbridge.

We assume you have sought permission to conduct this study from other agencies involved (e.g. your school district, etc.)

Enclosed please find a Certificate of Ethical Approval.

Best of luck with your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard L. Butt", is written over a horizontal line.

Richard L. Butt, Ph.D.

RB/jm

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH CHECKLIST**

Title of Study: emPoWeReD (Parenting With Respect and Dignity)

Principal Investigator: Judi Watson

Instructor (if student): _____

Check to indicate that each of the following has been attended to within the attached proposal.

1. The proposal contains a clear statement of the nature, intent and duration of the research.
2. The proposal includes adequate information about instrumentation and/or testing procedures to be used.
3. Participants have been apprised of their rights to inquire about the research.
4. If necessary, participants can direct inquiries to a resource person outside the research group.
5. Provision has been made for obtaining the informed consent of all participants, and in the case of minors, also that of their parents or guardians. (Unless otherwise stated, this consent should be in writing).
6. There will be no coercion, constraints or undue inducement.
7. All participants (including the parents or guardians of minors) have been informed of their right to withdraw without prejudice at any time.
8. Provision has been made to inform participants of the degree of confidentiality that will be maintained in the study.
9. In those special cases where the research procedure requires that essential information be withheld and/or the participants are to be intentionally misled until after the conclusion of the research, the proposal clearly details the need for this approach.
10. The research being proposed is not potentially threatening or harmful to any participant.
11. (If student) A letter from the appropriate instructor, project supervisor or thesis committee chair is appended indicating proposal has been reviewed and approved.

Office use only		
Committee Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve	Date: <u>25/6/99</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmit	Date: _____
Signature of Chairperson:	<u>[Signature]</u>	

100 Ways to Praise

*Wow! *Way to go! *Super! *You're special! * Outstanding! Excellent! * Great!
 *Good! * Neat! * Well done! * Remarkable! * I knew you could do it! * I'm proud of you!
 * Fantastic! * Super Star! * Nice Work! * Looking good! * You're on top of it! *
 Beautiful! * Now you're flying! * You're catching on! * Now you've got it! * You're
 incredible! * Bravo! *You're fantastic! * Hooray for you! * You're right on target! *
 You're on your way! * How nice! * You're so smart! * Good job! * That's incredible! *
 Hot dog! * Dynamite! * You're beautiful! * You're unique! * I like what you do! *
 Beautiful! * Beautiful work! * Good for you! * Much better! * Nothing can stop you now!
 * Spectacular! * You're precious! * You're a darling! * You're terrific! * Atta boy! *
 Atta Girl! * Congratulations! * You've discovered the secret! * You figured it out! * Hip,
 Hip, Hooray! * I appreciate your help! * You're getting better! * Yeah! * Magnificent! *
 Marvelous! * Terrific! * You're important! * Phenomenal! * You're sensational! * Super
 work! * You're very creative! * You're a real trooper! * You are so fun! * You did good! *
 What an imagination! * I like the way you listen! * I like how you're growing! * I enjoy you!
 * You tried so hard! * You care! * You are so thoughtful! * Beautiful sharing! *
 Outstanding performance! * You're a good friend! * I trust you! * You're important! * You
 mean a lot to me! * That's correct! * You're right again! * You're a joy! * You're a
 treasure! * You're wonderful! * Awesome! * You did your very best! * You're A-Okay! *
 My buddy! * You made my day! * I'm glad you're my kid! * Thanks for being you! * I love
 you! * You're the best! * I think you're special! * I like how you did that! * You're my
 angel! *

Also: A pat on the back, a big hug, a kiss, a thumbs up sign, a warm smile, a blown kiss, their picture on your fridge, special times together

(adapted from Dr. Louise Hart, 1990)

Incentives for Children Who are Under Twelve Years Old

Playing video games	Hugs and kisses/Praise and encouragement
Using the telephone	Complimenting your child in front of others
Marble jar	Using the computer
Making popcorn	One-on-one time with a parent
Staying up late on weekends	Brother's Day/Sister's Day
Spending time at a friend's house	A special day with a parent
Spending the night at a friend's house	Roughhousing with a parent
Having a friend come to the house	Surprises
Having a slumber party	Back rubs
Making a blanket tent	Thank you notes in the lunch box
Camp-out in the backyard	Thank you notes through the mail
Singing songs/Playing music	Having lunch at school
Special trips	Books/Reading a story
Going to a relative's house	Posters
Kite flying	Science kits
Going swimming, fishing/skating, bowling	Working on models, building kits
Playing miniature golf	Gardening
Going to the movies	Playing games/Board games/puzzles
Going to the zoo, park, museum, library	Magic tricks
Going out to eat	Painting/drawing/supplies
Allowing child to choose the restaurant	Using a calculator
Having a pizza delivered	Playing outside/Playing catch
Bubble baths/toys in tub	Sporting events
Brushing hair	Baseball cards
Helping prepare a meal/dessert	Going for a walk/Going on a family bike ride
Helping clean up	Going for a drive in the car
Helping mom or dad with projects	Going on a mystery ride
Treats/Ice cream	Sitting in the front seat
Stickers/sticker books/happy faces	New clothes
Stars/points on a chart	Watching television
Money/allowance/savings account	Using the VCR/renting a movie
Mystery jar with awards inside	

Incentives for Children Twelve and Older

(Many of the items listed above)

Compliments
Activities with friends/Going to the Mall/Shopping
Computer time/On-line account
New clothes
Cosmetics/Hair Styled
Snacks
Money/allowance/Doing work for money
Having a weekly goal
Projects/hobby supplies
Having a friend over for lunch/dinner
Going out with a friend for lunch/dinner
Choosing an activity for the family
Time alone/Being allowed to do things alone/Choice time
Staying up later than younger siblings
Music/stereo time/Tapes, CD's
School materials
Pets/pet supplies
Special trips with school, church, clubs
Dances/Parties/Evening events/Dating
Telephone time/own phone line
Skateboarding
Sporting events
Playing cards
Driving lessons/Using the car/Chauffeur privileges
Working on cars/Using tools
Extended Curfew
Concerts
Cooking
Decorating their room
Pick their own time to do chores
Going on a business trip with parent

Reinforcers for Children**Activities**

Television
 Movies
 Sports Events
 Parties
 Sleep-overs
 Camping trips
 Fairs
 Picnics
 Help in kitchen
 Have story read to him/her
 Eat out

Things

New toys
 Food
 Candy
 Bicycle
 Sports equipment
 Money/allowance
 CD's/Tapes
 Comic books
 Stickers

People Privileges

Time with Mom, Dad
 Time with friends
 Hour, ½ hour, ¼ hour of parent's time
 Trips to Mom's or Dad's work
 Hugs, kisses, squeezes

Circuses
 Going to friend's house
 Having a friend over
 Staying up late
 Choosing TV shows
 Horseback riding
 Musical instrument lessons
 Trips to museum, zoo
 Go to park, store
 Play with friends

New clothes
 Pets, fish, birds, cats, dogs
 Musical instrument
 Jewelry
 A watch
 Books, magazines
 New furniture for room
 Rides to somewhere
 Stars on chart

 Chores done by brother, sister
 Trips shopping with Mom, Dad
 Trips with adults on recreation trips
 Specific praise
 Being praised in front of someone

Reinforcers for Teenagers**Activities**

Television
 Movies
 Dates
 Nights out of house
 Use of car
 Sports events
 Trips of choosing
 Time at friend's house
 Time on telephone

Things

Clothes
 Money
 Gas for car
 CD's/ tapes
 CD player
 Walkman
 Jewelry
 Special meals

People Privileges

Time with friends
 Time with girlfriend/boyfriend
 Having someone else do chores

Sleep-overs
 Dances
 Extended hours
 Making dinner
 Choice of dinner or desserts
 Trips to hairdresser, beauty parlor
 After school activities
 Going out for dinner
 Music lessons, riding lessons

Books
 Magazines
 Pens
 Study aids such as new lamp, chair
 Camera, film
 Cosmetics
 Money in savings account
 Musical instruments

Hour, ½ hour, ¼ hour of father's
 brother's, sister's or mother's time

(adapted from Hersey & Blanchard, 1978 and Osborne, 1989)

Age Appropriate Responsibilities

3 to 4-year-olds

Brushing teeth
Put dirty clothes in the laundry
Match socks
Put clean clothes away with assistance
Help pick up room and toys

4 to 5-year-olds

Help set or clear table of unbreakables
Water plants
Feeding pets
Get the mail or newspaper with parent watching
Wash and dry plastic dishes
Help load dishwasher with safe items

6 to 8-year-olds

Clean own room
Take care of most personal hygiene
Help fold and sort laundry
Make beds
Put away groceries
Set and clear table
Wash and dry dishes (not sharp objects)
Take out garbage
Sweep floors

9 to 12-years-olds

All personal hygiene
Polish furniture
Prepare parts of meals
Do some laundry
Help with yard work
Help cleaning pool

Vacuum carpet
Mop floors
Prepare own snacks
Help with grocery shopping
Purchase clothing with assistance
Clean the garage
Washing the car

13 to 15-year-olds

Baby-sitting
Mowing lawns
Clean windows
Help with heavy cleaning
Do own laundry
Do some ironing
Budget own money
Shop for own clothing
Do neighborhood jobs
Do small repairs
Prepare some meals

16 years plus

Do outside jobs for money
Plan and prepare meals
Travel with supervision
Take care of all clothing needs
Help care for the automobiles
Plan higher education goals