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Introduction

Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT) is an adaptation of Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), an empirically supported parent training program designed to address behavioral and emotional problems in children 2-4 years of age (e.g., Elry-McElduff, 2002; Zelkowitz-Keenan & M. E. M., 1995; McElroy, 1986). As challenging behaviors are not limited to the home but often extend into the school setting, TCIT has been adapted for use in the classroom (e.g., Sh莆得i, Meisel, & AI, 2008; McElroy et al., 2008). Studies have shown significant improvements in compliance and fewer instances of disruptive behaviors in the classrooms following TCIT (e.g., McElroy, 1986; AI, 2008). In this study, we extend the findings of prior research to a larger sample of preschool children within the classroom setting. TCIT was implemented as a four-phase intervention, including: (i) Phase 1: Understanding the Child, Phase 2: Directing, Coaching, Phase 3: Child-Adult Interaction, and Phase 4: Maintaining the Behavior. The intervention was adapted to include a separate focus on social-emotional skills and communication, as well as the use of a classroom behavior checklist. The results of this study extend the findings of prior research to a larger sample of preschool children within the classroom setting. TCIT was implemented as a four-phase intervention, including: (i) Phase 1: Understanding the Child, Phase 2: Directing, Coaching, Phase 3: Child-Adult Interaction, and Phase 4: Maintaining the Behavior. The intervention was adapted to include a separate focus on social-emotional skills and communication, as well as the use of a classroom behavior checklist.

Method

Participants in the study included 60 preschool classrooms from six Head Start classrooms. Classrooms were divided into three groups: intervention, control, and baseline. The intervention group received TCIT training for four sessions, with each session focusing on a different phase of the intervention. The control group received baseline observations, while the baseline group received baseline observations only.

Results of Classroom Observations

Although data collected on classroom child behavior problems consisted of 11 different challenging behaviors, for this study, we focused on three main behavior problems: hitting, screaming, and crying. For this study, the analysis of CDI skills was divided into three phases: baseline, Phase 1, and Phase 2. The overall goal of the present study was to extend the findings of Cronch et al. (2006) using a larger sample of children and teachers in multiple preschool classrooms. The results of the study demonstrated the effectiveness of the four-phase TCIT intervention for reducing significant behavior problems, but preventing them from developing.

Discussion and Future Directions

The overall goal of the present study was to extend the findings of Cronch et al. (2006) using a larger sample of children and teachers in multiple preschool classrooms. The results of the study demonstrated the effectiveness of the four-phase TCIT intervention for reducing significant behavior problems, but preventing them from developing. This intervention has been shown to be effective in reducing challenging behaviors in preschool classrooms, but further research is needed to determine the long-term effects of this intervention.

Figure 1

Results of Training Sessions

An overview of the training sessions for TCIT is presented in Figure 1. As shown, the phase-by-phase training protocol for TCIT was implemented in four phases: (i) Phase 1: Understanding the Child, Phase 2: Directing, Coaching, Phase 3: Child-Adult Interaction, and Phase 4: Maintaining the Behavior. The intervention was adapted to include a separate focus on social-emotional skills and communication, as well as the use of a classroom behavior checklist. The results of this study extend the findings of prior research to a larger sample of preschool children within the classroom setting. TCIT was implemented as a four-phase intervention, including: (i) Phase 1: Understanding the Child, Phase 2: Directing, Coaching, Phase 3: Child-Adult Interaction, and Phase 4: Maintaining the Behavior. The intervention was adapted to include a separate focus on social-emotional skills and communication, as well as the use of a classroom behavior checklist.