

## Active Parenting (4th Edition)

Active Parenting (4th Edition) is a video-based education program targeted to parents of 2- to 12-year-olds who want to improve their parenting skills. It is based on the application of Adlerian parenting theory, which is defined by mutual respect among family members within an authoritatively run family. The program teaches parents how to raise a child by using encouragement, building the child's self-esteem, and creating a relationship with the child based upon active listening, effective communication, and problem solving. It also teaches parents to use natural and logical consequences and other positive discipline skills to reduce irresponsible and unacceptable behaviors.

Active Parenting (4th Edition) is conducted in one 2-hour class per week for 6 weeks. The program features a video that contains vignettes of a variety of typical family situations depicted by professional actors. Each scene provides an example of how an autocratic or permissive parenting technique fails to handle a situation and then models the alternative authoritative (or "active") skills. The Leader's Guide aids the leader, a professional facilitator, in organizing the sessions. The guide contains session organizers, questions and answers to help parents process the video, instructions for all group activities, brief explanations to be made by the leader, and home activity assignments. The Parent's Guide contains all the information covered in Active Parenting (4th Edition), giving parents their first exposure to the information and skills they will be learning. It also includes additional reading material, practice activities, and homework assignments that provide information and opportunities to practice using the skills.

### Descriptive Information

<b>Areas of Interest</b>	Mental health promotion
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Review Date: May 2008</b> 1: Parental perceptions of child behavior 2: Parental attitudes and beliefs 3: Parent-child relationship problems 4: Positive and negative child behaviors
<b>Outcome Categories</b>	Family/relationships Social functioning
<b>Ages</b>	0-5 (Early childhood) 6-12 (Childhood) 26-55 (Adult)
<b>Genders</b>	Male Female
<b>Races/Ethnicities</b>	Asian Black or African American Hispanic or Latino White Race/ethnicity unspecified
<b>Settings</b>	Home School Other community settings
<b>Geographic Locations</b>	Urban Suburban Rural and/or frontier
<b>Implementation History</b>	The first Active Parenting program, initiated in 1983, was the Active Parenting Discussion Program, which targeted parents of 2- to 17-year-olds. Following revisions of the program in 1993 and 2003 and name changes to Active Parenting Today and Active Parenting Now, respectively, the program was revised again in

	2014 and renamed Active Parenting (4th Edition). Approximately 20,000 sites have implemented these Active Parenting programs, and tens of thousands of leaders have used the programs to train an estimated 2.5 million parents. Internationally, the program has been used in Canada, Japan, Korea, and Sweden.
<b>NIH Funding/CER Studies</b>	Partially/fully funded by National Institutes of Health: No Evaluated in comparative effectiveness research studies: No
<b>Adaptations</b>	<p>The video, Parent's Guide, Leader's Guide, and other items have undergone several translations. For the Spanish-language version of the program, Padres Activos de Hoy, the materials were translated into Spanish and the video was filmed with Spanish-speaking actors. Program materials also have been translated into Arabic, Japanese, Korean, and Swedish, with videos using dubbed voices or subtitles. Also available is a Chinese version of the video, which is dubbed in Cantonese and subtitled in traditional Chinese.</p> <p>The first version of Active Parenting (4th Edition), called the Active Parenting Discussion Program, also served as the basis for Active Parenting of Teens, which was developed for parents who wanted a video-based parenting education program that focused solely on teen issues. Active Parenting of Teens was reviewed by NREPP as a component of Active Parenting of Teens: Families in Action.</p>
<b>Adverse Effects</b>	In the Fashimpar (2000) study (see Quality of Research Studies), attitudes toward child development became significantly less appropriate among parents with above-average pretest scores on the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory, which measures attitudes and beliefs regarding four parenting constructs (parental expectations, empathy, value of physical punishment, and parent-child roles). Since the intervention did not teach parents about child development, it is unclear why this effect occurred. Fashimpar suggests that since both the treatment and control groups' scores worsened on developmental expectations, this outcome may have been an effect of testing.
<b>IOM Prevention Categories</b>	Universal Selective Indicated

## Quality of Research

**Review Date: May 2008**

### Documents Reviewed

The documents below were reviewed for Quality of Research. The research point of contact can provide information regarding the studies reviewed and the availability of additional materials, including those from more recent studies that may have been conducted.

#### Study 1

Chen, M. (2006). Active Parenting Now and Active Parenting of Teens: An evaluation of two parenting programs. Unpublished manuscript.

#### Study 2

Fashimpar, G. A. (2000). Problems of parenting: Solutions of science. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 5(2), 67-80.

#### Study 3

Pindar, C. (1994). Effects of the Active Parenting program on the interpersonal behavior of children in a playroom setting. Unpublished manuscript.

### Outcomes

#### Outcome 1: Parental perceptions of child behavior

<b>Description of Measures</b>	Parents completed the 70-item Active Parenting Now Survey, which consists of three scales: parent observation of child behavior, parent attitudes and beliefs, and parent behaviors. Parents were asked to select the child about whom they were most concerned and to consider that child when rating statements using a Likert-type scale from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always).
<b>Key Findings</b>	In a study of parents of elementary school-aged children, parental ratings of children's behaviors significantly improved from pre- to posttest among parents who participated in the intervention ( $p = .05$ ) but did not change significantly among parents in a no-treatment control group.
<b>Studies Measuring Outcome</b>	Study 1
<b>Study Designs</b>	Quasi-experimental

Quality of Research Rating

3.1 (0.0-4.0 scale)

### Outcome 2: Parental attitudes and beliefs

#### Description of Measures

In one study, parents completed the 70-item Active Parenting Now Survey, which consists of three scales: parent observation of child behavior, parent attitudes and beliefs, and parent behaviors. Items related to parental attitudes and beliefs included "It is better to 'give' a little on smaller, less important things than to always stand firm and provoke a fight" and "Children need discipline that hurts a little so that they will remember the lesson later." Parents were asked to select the child about whom they were most concerned and to consider that child when rating statements using a Likert-type scale from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). Higher results on the scale indicate that the parent is applying best parenting practices.

In another study, parents completed the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory, which measures attitudes and beliefs regarding four parenting constructs: parental expectations, empathy, value of physical punishment, and parent-child roles.

#### Key Findings

In a study of parents of elementary school-aged children, ratings of parental attitudes and beliefs significantly improved from pre- to posttest among parents who participated in the intervention ( $p = .038$ ) but did not change significantly among parents in a no-treatment control group.

In another study, from pre- to posttest, reported attitudes toward physical punishment significantly improved among parents who participated in the intervention ( $p = .01$ ) but were unchanged among parents in a wait-list control group.

#### Studies Measuring Outcome

Study 1, Study 2

#### Study Designs

Quasi-experimental

#### Quality of Research Rating

3.1 (0.0-4.0 scale)

### Outcome 3: Parent-child relationship problems

#### Description of Measures

Parents completed the Index of Parental Attitudes, a 25-item standardized instrument designed to assess the degree of contentment or dissatisfaction in the parent-child relationship. Scores range from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating greater problems with the relationship.

#### Key Findings

From pre-to posttest, reported parent-child problems decreased significantly for parents who participated in the intervention ( $p = .001$ ) but were unchanged for parents in a wait-list control group.

#### Studies Measuring Outcome

Study 2

#### Study Designs

Quasi-experimental

#### Quality of Research Rating

3.3 (0.0-4.0 scale)

### Outcome 4: Positive and negative child behaviors

#### Description of Measures

Children were observed in a playroom setting for 2-2.5 hours on 1 day per week over the course of 12 weeks while their parents attended either an intervention class or an ongoing parent support group offered upon completion of the intervention. Throughout each session, the person providing child care made behavioral observations of the children and recorded behaviors by placing a check mark next to the specified behavior on a preprinted sheet. The observer measured negative behaviors, such as biting, hitting, bossing, shoving, and arguing, and positive behaviors, such as expressing and owning feelings, problem solving, independence, and sharing and taking turns.

#### Key Findings

Children whose parents had completed the intervention demonstrated fewer occurrences of negative behaviors and more occurrences of positive behaviors than children whose parents had not completed the intervention. Specifically, of the 142 recorded behaviors of the children of program graduates, 8% were coded as negative and 92% were coded as positive. In contrast, of the 301 observed behaviors of the children whose parents were currently enrolled in the class, 84% were

coded as negative and 16% were coded as positive ( $p < .01$ ).

<b>Studies Measuring Outcome</b>	Study 3
<b>Study Designs</b>	Quasi-experimental
<b>Quality of Research Rating</b>	2.2 (0.0-4.0 scale)

### Study Populations

The following populations were identified in the studies reviewed for Quality of Research.

Study	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
<b>Study 1</b>	26-55 (Adult)	70% Female 30% Male	75% White 12% Hispanic or Latino 5% Black or African American 4.5% Race/ethnicity unspecified 3.5% Asian
<b>Study 2</b>	26-55 (Adult)	75% Female 25% Male	Data not reported/available
<b>Study 3</b>	0-5 (Early childhood) 6-12 (Childhood)	Data not reported/available	Data not reported/available

### Quality of Research Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

External reviewers independently evaluate the Quality of Research for an intervention's reported results using six criteria:

1. Reliability of measures
2. Validity of measures
3. Intervention fidelity
4. Missing data and attrition
5. Potential confounding variables
6. Appropriateness of analysis

For more information about these criteria and the meaning of the ratings, see [Quality of Research](#).

Outcome	Reliability of Measures	Validity of Measures	Fidelity	Missing Data/Attrition	Confounding Variables	Data Analysis	Overall Rating
<b>1: Parental perceptions of child behavior</b>	3.5	3.0	2.5	3.5	2.5	3.5	<b>3.1</b>
<b>2: Parental attitudes and beliefs</b>	3.8	3.3	3.0	2.8	2.8	3.0	<b>3.1</b>
<b>3: Parent-child relationship problems</b>	4.0	3.5	3.5	2.5	3.5	3.0	<b>3.3</b>
<b>4: Positive and negative child behaviors</b>	0.0	1.5	3.0	2.5	2.5	3.5	<b>2.2</b>

### Study Strengths

Some of the instruments used to measure outcomes are well cited in the research literature as having sufficient reliability and validity. Implementation fidelity was incorporated through the video delivery system and the structured Leader's Guide. Attrition rates were low in one of the three studies. In the study that used observation to assess child behaviors, parents were not aware of the experimenter's intent until completion of the study. Control groups were adequately used via a wait-list approach. Randomization to groups was not used, but in one study, the intervention and control group were equivalent on all measured demographic and assessment variables at pretest. The data analyses conducted were appropriate.

### Study Weaknesses

In the observational study, reliability and validity were weak; there was no evidence of interrater reliability efforts prior to the actual observation, nor was an expert panel or parental feedback used to help establish and/or confirm validity of the measure. Program fidelity was sometimes lacking or not consistently documented: There was inconsistency in the training of program leaders, there was no evidence of any other means to ensure that the leaders followed the structured Leader's Guide (e.g., intervention assessment checklist), and there was no direct observation of trainers. One study had a considerable dropout rate in a small sample. While missing data and attrition were accounted for in this study, the small sample size warranted other adjustments. None of the studies used random assignment to treatment and control conditions. In the observational study, the rater appears to have known which children were in which group. Power analyses were lacking, and one study was probably underpowered, particularly for conducting subgroup analyses.

## Readiness for Dissemination

**Review Date: May 2008**

### Materials Reviewed

The materials below were reviewed for Readiness for Dissemination. The implementation point of contact can provide information regarding implementation of the intervention and the availability of additional, updated, or new materials.

Active Parenting Publishers. (2002). Active Parenting Now program kit. Atlanta, GA: Author.

Active Parenting Publishers. (2002). Active Parenting Now training PowerPoint presentation [CD-ROM]. Atlanta, GA: Author.

Active Parenting Publishers. (n.d.). Active Parenting Now leader training workshop agenda. Atlanta, GA: Author.

Active Parenting Publishers. (n.d.). Training of trainers seminar. Atlanta, GA: Author.

Popkin, M. H. (2002). Leader training workshop participant's guide for Active Parenting Now and Active Parenting of Teens. Atlanta, GA: Active Parenting Publishers.

Program Web site, <http://www.activeparenting.com>

### Readiness for Dissemination Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

External reviewers independently evaluate the intervention's Readiness for Dissemination using three criteria:

1. Availability of implementation materials
2. Availability of training and support resources
3. Availability of quality assurance procedures

For more information about these criteria and the meaning of the ratings, see [Readiness for Dissemination](#).

Implementation Materials	Training and Support Resources	Quality Assurance Procedures	Overall Rating
3.5	3.3	2.9	<b>3.2</b>

### Dissemination Strengths

The implementation video is well developed and includes vignettes exhibiting key ideas, and the Leader's Guide is thoughtfully organized and detailed. Implementation materials use clear, nonacademic language. Training for leaders and trainers of leaders is available to potential implementers. A leader certification process and the video-based implementation contribute to quality assurance.

### Dissemination Weaknesses

While separate trainings are provided for leaders and trainers of leaders, the training content does not clearly reflect the specific skills required for each role. Little guidance is provided for identifying suitable leaders and delivery sites. The parent survey provided online assesses the quality of the parent sessions but reveals little about whether the information learned translates to later outcomes.

## Costs

The cost information below was provided by the developer. Although this cost information may have been updated by the developer since the time of review, it may not reflect the current costs or availability of items (including newly developed or discontinued items). The implementation point of contact can provide current information and discuss implementation requirements.

Item Description	Cost	Required by Developer
Standard program kit	\$499 each	Yes

Parent's guide	\$19.95 each, one per participating family	Yes
PowerPoint slides	\$49 each	No
1-day, on- or off-site leader training workshop	\$159 per person; 12 or more participants required for on-site training	No
3-day, off-site train-the-trainer workshop	\$449 per person for 6 or more participants	No
Online leader training workshop	\$159 per person	No
Telephone and online support	Free	No
Pre- and posttest materials	Free	No

### Additional Information

Bulk purchasing is available.

## Replications

Selected citations are presented below. An asterisk indicates that the document was reviewed for Quality of Research.

Boccella, E. (1987). Effects of the Active Parenting program on attitudinal change of parents, parent perceived behavioral change of children, and parent perceived change in family environment. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Temple University.

Brown, D. L. (1988). Implementing the Active Parenting program in the Baltimore County Public Schools: A final report.

Ciurczak & Co. (2003). The Business Training Institute, Inc., Active Parenting final program evaluation report.

CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services) Review. (2001). Padres Activos de Hoy, CLAS #CL03985. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Leonardson, G. (1991). Draft report on Active Parenting of Teens project. Watertown, SD: Northeastern Drug and Alcohol Prevention Resource Center.

Mullis, F. (1999). Active Parenting: An evaluation of two Adlerian parent education programs. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 55(2), 225-232.

Popkin, M. H. (1989). Active Parenting: A video-based program. In M. Fine (Ed.), *The Second Handbook of Parent Education: Contemporary Perspectives* (pp. 77-98). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Redwine, S. M. (1997). A descriptive study of parenting styles and behaviors of 4-year-old children when parents participate in a parenting education program. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas.

Sprague, J. (1990). The impact of the Active Parenting program on the moral development and parenting skills of parents. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, North Carolina State University.

Urban, T. A. (1991). A case study of the effects of an Adlerian parent education program on parental attitudes and child rearing techniques (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas, 1991). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 52, 4218A.

## Contact Information

### To learn more about implementation, contact:

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### To learn more about research, contact:

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Consider these [Questions to Ask](#) (PDF, 54KB) as you explore the possible use of this intervention.

### Web Site(s):

- <http://www.activeparenting.com>

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