

Parenting Wisely News

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Family Works Inc proudly presents:

***Parenting Wisely* ONLINE!**

With the new Parenting Wisely Online: American Teens, (PWO: AT) users and administrators receive all the benefits of the original CD-ROM program combined with the accessibility and convenience of the internet. Parents can now complete the program at their leisure, use it continuously throughout the life of their subscription, and what's more, agencies can now reach far more families for far less investment. The program is intuitive, and requires no previous experience navigating online programs other than knowing how to click the mouse! Like the original CDROM it is designed for use by those who need it most and at a price that is accessible for all.

Agencies can purchase subscriptions for any number of users, or individuals can even sign up themselves (rates decrease per quantity of subscribers and vary from \$22 per user to \$7 per user for large subscriptions). Agency subscribers receive login permissions which along with the website address, can be passed on to parents. Parents can then access the program from the comfort of their own home, at work, or at the nearest community high speed internet site*. Parents can now complete the program as their time permits. Parents can start and stop as needed and the program will highlight which problem scenarios were already completed and where the parent left off!

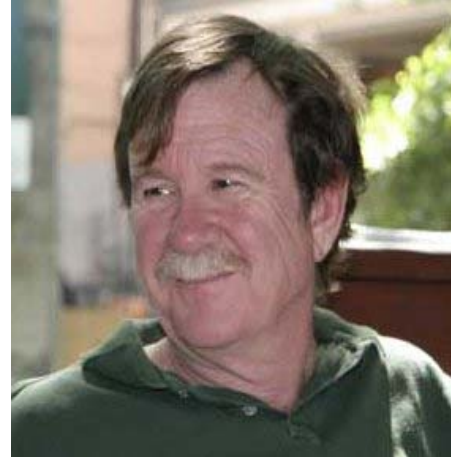
Current website features allow agencies to get detailed information on client compliance (dates logged on, portions of program completed, performance on quiz questions, etc.). And coming soon, to simplify outcome evaluations which are required by most grants, agencies will be able to have parents complete evaluation forms online. In the near future, subscribing agencies will be able to choose from a menu of effective evaluation measures (those currently supplied with the PW CD-ROM kits), and if desired, make completion of these forms a prerequisite for accessing the online PW program. Agencies can then choose a follow-up or post-test interval (1, 3, 6, or 12 months), and the program will automatically send users an email with a link to the evaluation form. Using this feature allows agencies to conveniently collect the data needed to measure and compare parents' skills before and after program completion.

Check out these new developments at <http://www.familyworksinc.com/parentingwisely/> and experience the ease and convenience of ***Parenting Wisely*** Online. Currently the PWO: American Teen program is available, with PW: Young Child, PW: Foster & Residential Care, and Spanish language versions to come!

**National Guard armories and public libraries have high speed internet access which is usually available at no cost to the community. Check with your local facilities for their internet use policies.*

Message from Dr. Gordon

I am very pleased to see the increase in use of evidence-based interventions, not only for the attention it brings to the Parenting Wisely program, but mostly for the impact on families in need of effective services. I work with many clinicians who see low income families, and these families have little time to spend on ineffective interventions. Failure usually leads to the family's reluctance to engage in later interventions, and could mean losing any hope of reaching these families. To ensure positive results, a growing number of states (like Oregon) are requiring that agencies use model programs (evidence-based and rated by scientific panels) in order to be eligible for state funding.



While many treatment and prevention programs are currently in use which are not evidence-based, they are often very expensive and have rigid demands for training and certification. I have heard from many agencies that have discontinued their prevention programs as a result of these very factors. To avoid these barriers, we developed the PW program to be implemented easily by staff at any organization—with no special training necessary. Not only has this kept the cost lower than any other effective parenting or family-strengthening program, it has allowed continued use of the program after grant-supported purchase and start-up funds expire. Our goal is to increase low cost access to this program through continued development efforts and refinements, like the new online version!

With a costly war appropriating government funds for social services and rising energy costs effecting prices at every level, I am afraid that public funding for disadvantaged families will continue to decline. We will all have to do more with less, which is why we continue to emphasize cost-effectiveness and innovation. I am proud to work together with you to improve the parenting skills of families who often desperately need this type of help.

My sincere thanks,
Don Gordon, President of Family Works Inc.

Brief treatment manuals now available !

Dr. Gordon has created a treatment manual for use by therapists and case managers to help families of moderate risk—those for whom using PW alone is not enough. This “Brief Treatment” approach is a six session program, combining individual use of the PW program with facilitated learning. For the first two sessions, parents explore the program unassisted. For the next four sessions, a clinician aids the parents as they tackle the remaining scenarios. The manual spells out very specifically the clinician's role for each of the six sessions, including assigning homework and facilitating skill practice with the parents.

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PW Research Update: What's more effective? Group vs. Individual Implementation

Individual use of PW:

In the most well-designed study to date of PW, Josie Chetcuti Cefai completed a dissertation comparing the effectiveness of using PW individually and using PW in a group format (2-3 group sessions), against a no-treatment control group. As expected, both the individual and group formats showed improvements in family relations and child problem behavior relative to the control group. These gains were even maintained at a three month follow-up, she reported. The real finding of interest, however, is that parents in the individual group reported greater improvements in their children's problem behavior than did parents in the group sessions.

Based on this study, (which we expect to be published in a top-notch journal soon), **we recommend individual use** over brief group use. Individual use requires more participation and involvement. Parents cannot rely on the group to make decisions when using the program alone; we hypothesize that they may feel more comfortable, and more relaxed, with individual use, and as a result, greater mastery occurs.

Group use of PW:

Contrarily, Bob Pushak has reported greater gains for group use than individual use with his 10 session curricula. Using group curricula*, which he developed for Family Works, Inc, Bob has had great success with PW: Teen programs, PW: Young Child, and PW: Foster and Residential Care version.

With group implementation, Bob found that the more classes parents attended the better their mastery of parenting skills. Where individuals can lose interest after several sessions, the classroom dynamic and effective facilitation of group learning seems to keep participants engaged. If interested in administering a 10 session group, please utilize Bob's group curricula for proven results.

His 100 page group manuals include homework assignments, lots of useful handouts, a detailed explanation of session content and an informed discussion of the methods and tips necessary to facilitate effective group sessions. Any or all of the three manuals are available by email free for the asking! Bob also provides a Family Works Inc approved certification training (fee-based) for group facilitators; contact Dr. Gordon by email gordon@ohio.edu for details.

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The treatment manual suggests a psycho-educational approach, not a psychotherapeutic approach, so the skill level of facilitators does not have to be as advanced as that of a licensed therapist. The idea is to keep the cost of intervention low, while adding the benefits of staff assistance. With this new addition to PW, Dr. Gordon hopes to extend the reach and effectiveness of everyone's efforts.

Dr. Gordon has also created a Brief Treatment Manual for use with the PW: Young Child. This program is completed in five sessions. **Purchasers of either PW CD-ROM kit can receive a copy of the appropriate Brief Treatment Manual, and those who already are using the PW programs can email Dr. Gordon for a free copy of these manuals (specify Teen or Young Child versions):** gordon@ohio.edu.

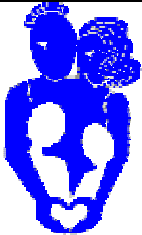
Dr. Gordon is especially interested in any agency willing to conduct outcome evaluations using these manuals. We believe that this brief treatment approach is easier to implement and as effective as family therapy for many families. Only research will tell if this belief is justified.

Children in the Middle (CIM) on CD-ROM

Spurred by the successful outcomes of PW's interactive CD-ROM format, we are converting the Children in the Middle (CIM) program for divorcing parents, (also a SAMHSA Model Program) created by Dr. Gordon, to a similar design. Future plans also include positioning the program online by this winter. Together these developments will effectively bring the program to a larger audience in a more effective package. See www.divorce-education.com for a sample of the new interactive program.

Traditionally, agencies teach the CIM program to a class of divorcing parents, with some discussion and interaction taking place. This method has proven effective, but through the new methods we wish to switch the focus to highlight user participation. Those too shy or uncomfortable to speak out in groups, can now get the full benefits of actual practice and interaction without the reservations and constraints created by a group setting. The new interactive CIM CD-ROM and online programs require continuous user interaction, periodically quizzing users and offering feedback. Participants now learn by doing, as they are constantly involved in the decision-making process.

We expect these new CIM formats to be every bit as powerful as the PW program, serving to reduce parental conflict, improve family communication, stimulate parental empathy, and improve children's day-to-day functioning. The effectiveness and practicality of these interactive methods can no longer be ignored as the program continues to develop and gain support. The online CIM program may even become the subject of a joint BBC/Discovery Channel TV show, or series of shows, focusing on divorcing couples. If the show is filmed (We will know more this winter) it will be a tremendous boost for divorce education and family skills development. Regardless, we continue to strive in that direction and remain devoted to ongoing improvement.



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