

Nurturing Parenting Programs®

for the Treatment and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
and for the Development and Promotion of Empathic, Compassionate
Individuals, Families and Communities

Facilitator Training Workbook and Program Implementation Guide

19th Edition

January 1, 2018

Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D.

Denver, Colorado

Creating a Worldwide Culture of Nurturing



Family Development Resources, Inc.
NurturingParenting.com

Excerpt Chapter 15

Code: NPW-19

19th Edition January 2018

Copyright by Family Development Resources, Inc. ISBN # 1-57202-215-9

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved, including translation. No part of this curriculum covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced in any form of printing or by any other means, electronic or mechanical including, but not limited to, photocopying, audio-visual recording and transmission, and portrayal or duplication in any information storage and retrieval system.

For more information about the **Nurturing Parenting Programs**[®] contact:

Family Development Resources, Inc.

Sales & Customer Service

Phone: 800-688-5822 (Outside U.S. 011-435-649-5822)

Email: fdr@nurturingparenting.com

NurturingParenting.com

Family Nurturing Centers Int.[™]

Training & Consulting

Phone: 262-652-6501

Email: fnc@nurturingparenting.com

NurturingParenting.com

Assessment and Inventories

Valid and reliable inventories designed to assess parenting practices, beliefs, knowledge, and skills including the *Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2)* and the *Nurturing Skills Competency Scale (NSCS)*.

AssessingParenting.com

Research and Validation

Studies that support the effectiveness of the Nurturing Parenting Programs.

NurturingProgramResearch.com

Table of Contents

About the Author	1
Nurturing Parenting Programs Reference by Levels of Prevention	
Education-Prevention Programs (Primary Prevention)	2
Prevention-Intervention Programs (Secondary Prevention).....	4
Intervention-Treatment Programs (Tertiary Prevention).....	6
Comprehensive Programs 22 to 55 Sessions.....	8
Introduction: The Maltreatment of Children.....	9
Chapter 1: The History of Childhood: Examining Past Parenting Practices	11
Chapter 2: Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect.....	15
Chapter 3: Understanding Why Child Maltreatment Flourishes in the 21 st Century	17
Chapter 4: Identifying and Understanding Abusive & Neglecting Parenting Beliefs and Practices	21
Chapter 5: Identifying and Understanding Positive Nurturing Parenting Beliefs and Practices	25
Chapter 6: Identifying the Human Brain and the Human Mind	46
Chapter 7: Positive and Negative Nurturing and the Development of Four Distinct Personality Traits.....	50
Chapter 8: Principles of Nurturing Parenting.....	54
Chapter 9: Characteristics of the Nurturing Parenting Programs.....	56
Chapter 10: Chemistry of the Brain	59
Chapter 11: Adult Learning Strategies	62
Chapter 12: Nurturing Programs and the Six Protective Factors	65
Chapter 13: Professionals and Paraprofessionals Who Successfully Implement the Nurturing Parenting Programs	66
Chapter 14: Nurturing Program Models and Formats.....	69
<i>Chapter 15: Description of the Five Parenting Constructs</i>	<i>77</i>
Chapter 16: Development and Validation of the AAPI-2	84
Chapter 17: Children’s Component	86
Appendices	
Appendix A: Finding Your ACE Score.....	92
Appendix B: “Meeting Our Needs” Activity	94
Appendix C: Sample Lesson – Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers.....	97
Appendix D: Sample Lesson – Young Parents and Their Families	101
Appendix E: Sample Lesson – Parents & Adolescents	112

Chapter 15:

Description of the Five Parenting Constructs of the AAPI and Nurturing Parenting Program

The Nurturing Parenting Programs are developed from a strong philosophical basis that supports the growth and development of parents and children as caring people who treat themselves, others, and the environment including animals with respect and dignity. This philosophical basis of caring forms the underlying structure that constitutes the morals and values that are mirrored in the attitudes, beliefs, strategies, and skills taught in the Nurturing Programs. To be effective in changing the way people behave, the morals defined by a program must represent the standards and practices of behaviors known to contribute to the overall health and functioning of a society.

The goals, objectives, and educational lessons of the Nurturing Programs were developed from the previous research of Bavolek, Kline, and McLaughlin (1978) in identifying and assessing high-risk parenting behaviors. In assessing parenting attitudes for risk of child abuse and neglect, the initial step was to identify the known behaviors or constructs of abusive parenting. The identification of these constructs lead to the development of the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory, and to the foundation of the Nurturing Parenting Programs.

The following behaviors represent the known behaviors of Child Abuse and Neglect:

Construct A: Inappropriate Parental Expectations

A parenting practice that is very common among reported cases of child abuse and neglect is the inappropriate expectations parents have for their children. Beginning very early in the infant's life, abusive parents tend to inaccurately perceive the skills and abilities of their children. Inappropriate expectations of children are generally the result of three factors:

1. Parents simply don't know the needs and capabilities of children at various stages of growth and development. Ignorant of this knowledge, expectations are made that often exceed the skills and abilities of the child.
2. Many parents who abuse their children generally lack a positive view of themselves and consequently of their children. Inadequate perceptions of self as an adult generally stem from early childhood experiences of failure, ridicule, and disappointment. These patterns of childhood failure are repeated to yet another generation where demands are made for children to perform tasks that they are emotionally, physically, or intellectually incapable of performing.
3. Abusive parents generally lack the empathy that is required to determine what an appropriate expectation is for children at different stages of development. Lacking empathy, described in more detail in the following construct, is a major contributor to the inappropriate demands parents make of their children.

The effects of inappropriate parental expectations upon children are debilitating. Many children perceive themselves as being worthless, as failures, and as unacceptable and disappointing to adults.

Beginning very early in the infant's life, abusive parents tend to inaccurately perceive the skills and abilities of their children. Effects:

- Low regard for self (concept, esteem, worth)
- Feelings of failure
- Cannot please others
- Angry and anxious attachments

Construct B: Repeated Lack of Parental Empathy

Empathy is the ability to be aware of your own needs as well as the needs of others, and to take positive actions on the behalf of getting those needs met in healthy ways. Developing a sense of empathy is the cornerstone of the Nurturing Parenting Programs.

When parents lack empathy they:

- Are insensitive to their children's needs.
- Fail to create a caring environment that is conducive to promoting children's emotional, social, **intellectual, physical, spiritual, and creative** growth.
- Fail to a safe, close and trusting home.
- Fail to establish a positive attachment and bonding.

Parental Lack of Empathy results in:

- Diminished ability to trust
- Inability to form strong attachments
- Difficulty in taking care of one's self
- Develops clingy relationships
- Focus is on self
- Possessive and smothering relationships
- Fears of abandonment
- Easily led
- Difficulty in accepting positive recognition

Empathy is the ability of being aware of another person's needs, feelings, and state of being. It is the ability to place the needs of another as a priority. Empathic parents are sensitive to their children and create an environment that is conducive to promoting children's emotional, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, and creative growth. Empathic parents understand their children from the inside, not from the outside as some interested observer.

Many professionals are of the opinion that the trait of empathy exists in children at birth and is fostered through the manner in which they are treated during the process of growing up. Parents lacking sufficient levels of empathy find children's needs and wants as irritating and overwhelming. Everyday normal demands are perceived as unrealistic resulting in increased levels of stress. The needs of the child come into direct conflict with the needs of the parent, which are often similar in magnitude.

Lacking an empathic home life, children often fail to develop a solid moral code of conduct. Right and wrong, cooperation, and kindness are not important because they are not recognized as important values. Others are devalued as "self" takes center stage. The impact of one's negative

actions on another is muted as the ability to care about the needs or feelings of another is not important. Children with low levels of empathy are often labeled as troublemakers, disobedient, and often engage in acts of cruelty to themselves, others, and animals.

Construct C: Strong Belief in the Value of Corporal Punishment

Discipline comes from the Latin word *Discipulus* which means to guide and teach. The purpose of discipline is to teach children to be respectful, cooperative, and contributing members to a family and society. Harsh and abusive language, hurting touch, and punishment are viewed as disrespectful and undignified practices promoting rebellious and acting out behaviors. Parental practices of discipline must model the sought after behavior of the child.

Physical punishment is generally the preferred means of discipline used by abusive parents. Throughout history, the use of corporal punishment has been well documented. Rationale for the practice includes:

- to teach children right from wrong;
- as a parenting practice sanctioned by the proverbs of the Old Testament;
- as a cultural practice of discipline;
- to provide punishment for children's misbehavior in a loving way;
- just simply to punish misbehavior; and
- because it produces quick results.

Abusive parents often believe children should not be "given into" nor allowed to "get away with anything." They must periodically be shown "who is boss" and to respect authority so they will not become sassy or stubborn. Abusive parents not only consider physical punishment a proper disciplinary measure, but strongly defend their right to use physical force.

Physical attacks by the abusing parent are not often a haphazard, uncontrolled, impulsive discharge of aggression by the parent toward their children. To the contrary, studies appear to indicate that abusive parents utilize physical punishment as a parenting practice designed to punish and correct specific bad conduct or inadequacy. Much of what abusive parents find wrong with their children are the same things for which they were criticized and punished for as children, hence the punishment carries the approval of traditional family authority and an aura of righteousness.

The effects of physical abuse are demonstrated in the observed inadequate behavior of children. It is a common tendency for abused children to identify with the aggressive parent in an effort to gain some measure of self-protection and mastery. Abused children often develop a set pattern of discharging aggression against the outside world in order to manage their own insecurities. Additionally, children who see and experience recurrent serious expressions of violence in their own family learn that violence is a way to solve problems. Abused children, upon becoming parents, tend to punish their children more severely. As a result, abused children often become abusive parents.

Corporal Punishment: Why Parents Hit Their Children

1. **Definition of Corporal Punishment.** Corporal means body. Punishment means penalty. Corporal punishment is a penalty administered to the body by means of striking the body.

2. Reasons Why Parents Hit Their Children

- a. **Parents hit children to teach them right from wrong.** Parents often hit their children because they want their children to learn right from wrong. Using the theory, “When there’s pain, there’s gain,” parents feel a “good spanking” will teach children not to misbehave. The reality is that spanking communicates to children that they not only did something wrong, but also that they are bad people. In addition, hitting never teaches children what to do or what is the right thing to do. Instead, it only teaches children what is not acceptable. Until children are taught what to do instead, misbehavior will likely continue. In this instance, low self-concept and low self-esteem are the likely results from repeated spankings.
- b. **Parents hit children as a form of punishment.** For many parents, hitting is the only way they know to punish children for misbehaving. If they don’t use spanking, many parents are left with no form of punishment at all. Any mention of eliminating spanking as a form of punishment leaves parents with a basic fear that children will be allowed to do what they want and will be out of control. Punishment, when used with rewards, is an effective way for teaching right from wrong. Punishments such as time out, being grounded, loss of privilege, paying for something purposely broken, and parental disappointment are far more effective than hitting. In these instances, children learn that they are still loved even though they misbehaved.
- c. **Parents hit children based on religious writings.** “Spare the rod, spoil the child” is the single most misquoted and misunderstood phrase in religious literature. Many people hit their children based on the belief that God sanctions violence toward children. Interpreted literally, the rod to many people means a stick. The actual verse that appears in the Bible is Proverb 13:24: “He that spareth his rod, hateth his son; but he who loveth him, chasteneth him betimes.” The notion of “spoiling a child” by sparing the rod was suggested later by 16th Century authors. Notable among them was Samuel Butler who, in 1663 write in Hudibras, “Love is a boy by poets styled; then spare the rod, and spoil the child.”
- d. **Parents hit children as an “act of love.”** Many parents feel that hitting children is an act of “love” born out of deep concern for their child’s well-being. These parents tell their children how much they love them while they’re hitting them. Statements like, “If I didn’t love you, I wouldn’t be doing this,” “This hurts me more than it hurts you,” or “One day you’ll thank me for this,” or “I’m doing this for your own good” send confusing messages.
- e. **Parents hit children because it’s a cultural practice.** Many people believe that hitting children is a way for parents to express their cultural identity.
- f. **Parents hit children to prepare them for the real world.** Violence is so common that many parents believe they need to prepare their children for the violence-filled “real world” by “toughening them up.” So, parents hit children at home to prepare them for the violent world they live in.

Effects of Corporal Punishment

- Children identify with the spanking and spanker.
- Children develop an anxious and angry attachment.
- Children use violence as a way of solving problems and replicate the CP as parent.
- Children learn CP is normative.

Research Findings on the use of Corporal Punishment

- CP is related to time spent with the child: more time less likely to spank; less time more likely to spank.
- CP is negatively correlated with the cognitive stimulation the parents provided the child.
- Although parents of all races and ethnicities use CP, Black parents use CP at a higher rate.

Construct D: Reversing Parent-Child Family Roles

A fourth common parenting behavior among abusive parents is their need to reverse parent-child roles. Children are expected to be sensitive to and responsible for much of the happiness of their parents. Parent-child role reversal is an interchanging of traditional role behaviors between a parent and child, so that the child adopts some of the behaviors traditionally associated with parents. In role reversal, parents act like helpless, needy children looking to their own children for parental care and comfort.

Although the phenomenon of role reversal is often associated with an inability to be empathically aware of the children's needs, the two behaviors are markedly different. When abusive parents fail to show an empathic awareness of their children's needs, the children are often left to care for themselves. Carried to the extreme, children are emotionally and/or physically neglected or abused.

The emphasis is not placed on children assuming the role of the "nurturing parents" as in role reversal. In the latter situation, children are an integral part of the family functions often becoming a source of authority, control, and decision making.

The effects of role reversal on abused children are destructive. Assuming the role of the responsible parent, children fail to negotiate the developmental tasks that must be mastered at each stage of life if they are to achieve normal development and a healthy adjustment. Failure to perform any of the developmental tasks not only hampers development in succeeding stages, but also further reinforces feelings of inadequacy. Children in a role reversal situation have little sense of self and see themselves as existing only to meet the needs of their parents.

Parent-child role reversal is an interchanging of traditional role behaviors between a parent and child, so that the child adopts some of the behaviors traditionally associated with parents.

The Effects of Parent/Child Role Reversal

- Children fail to negotiate the developmental tasks of childhood.
- Develops feelings of inadequacy.
- Lag behind in social and emotional development.
- Parentified children often view themselves as existing to meet the needs of others.
- Develop a "role-based" identity.
- Have a limited sense of self.

Construct E: Oppressing Children's Power and Independence

Closely aligned with the value of physical punishment and the lack of an empathic awareness of children's needs is the belief that children's independence and power need to be oppressed. The age-old phrase "the terrible twos" most adequately describes this construct. Parents fear that if children are permitted to use their power to explore their environment, or ask questions, or challenge parental authority, they will become "acting-out" and disrespectful. Hence, obedience and complete compliance to parental authority is demanded. When children's power and independence are oppressed, they are not allowed to challenge, to voice opinions, or to have choices, but rather are told to "do what they are told to do" without question. This demand for compliance to parental authority has many limitations:

1. Obedience breeds powerlessness

When independence is not fostered as a state of growth, the feeling of dependence becomes a dominant personality trait. Independence fosters power - a sense of self in comparison to others and one's environment. The young child who explores is learning about cause and effect relationships between concepts: the "if — then" law of logic and nature. For young children, the ability to say "no" is a way of establishing boundaries and developing a sense of power, both necessary for success in life. Obedience to parental rule, however, breeds a sense of helplessness and dependence at a time when learning to be a separate being is critical.

2. Obedience breeds inadequacy

Inadequacy is the perception that self or others are "less than, incapable, or inferior." By demanding obedience, parents model that power is something to be used on others to get them to do what you want. Power is equated to control and the more power you have, the more control you can exert on others. The sense of powerlessness described earlier fosters a personal sense of inadequacy. Being a decision maker for your own life is not an option. Powerlessness, excessive dependence, and a sense of personal inadequacy are common traits of many obedient children.

3. Obedience also breeds rebelliousness

History teaches us over and over again that the oppressed will rise up to be recognized. It's inevitable. The human spirit cannot be denied its existence. Power struggles, acting out behavior, disobedience are all common behaviors resulting from years of obedience and complete yield to parental rule.

4. Obedience breeds compliance — to all.

Doing only what one is told to do often teaches children a generalized learned response of compliance. When those in perceived power make a demand, like a child's peer group, once again, the learned response is to comply. In the experimental world of teenagers, common sense to stay away from drugs and alcohol, vandalism, and crimes against the community are overwhelmed with the compliance to peer pressure. Simply, children who have been raised as obedient to authority often struggle with their ability to withstand peer pressure. Saying "no" to drugs and other inappropriate behaviors is difficult to practice.

5. **Finally, obedience breeds followers, not leaders.**

Doing what you're told to do is not nearly enough to succeed in the world. Businesses look for energetic, creative employees who have visions for the future. Thinkers, problem solvers, visionaries, and leaders are made from early home environments that foster these traits. Obedience as a dominant parenting practice designed to oppress children's power and independence often has long lasting devastating consequences as observed in children and adults who are unable to make wise choices, or take initiative, or provide the leadership critical to nurturing parenting.

Notes: