

# PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY (PCIT)

## Common things PCIT can help with:

- Youth behavior problems
- Problematic parent-child relationships
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Children who consistently refuse/defy adult requests
- Parent management of children's behavior

## What is PCIT?

- A well-researched parent-training intervention that helps at risk youth and their families.
- Lasts about 12 to 16 weeks.
- Counseling that is done in parents' homes or at a clinic location.
- Includes parents and children in session *together*.

## Who Benefits From PCIT?

- Youth ages 2-8, and their families, who are having a hard time with disruptive behavior, oppositional defiant disorder, or conduct disorder.
- Families that face many challenges and may be working with more than one state agency. For example, working with Child Protective Services (CPS) and mental health services.

## PCIT is for:

- Natural parents
- Foster parents
- Kinship caregivers
- Single and two-parent families
- Guardians

## PCIT consists of 2 parts

**Child-Directed Interaction:** This first phase of PCIT aims to restructure the parent-child relationship and foster a warm and secure connection between the parent and child. Parents learn to selectively attend to good behavior and reinforce pro-social interactions using play therapy skills.

**Parent-Directed Interaction:** The second phase of PCIT directly addresses behavior problems by establishing consistent expectations for child behavior and introducing effective disciplinary techniques.

Both phases of PCIT involve *live coaching* in which parents are coached by the therapist through an earpiece while the therapist observes their interactions. If in an office setting, this is done through a one-way mirror.

[www.pcit.org](http://www.pcit.org)