Identifying the effective ingredients of family support

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Eurofam

Exercise 1

Think of a family support program.
What are the *ingredients* of this program?

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Family support programs as drug cocktails





Essential elements?

Superfluous elements?

Harmful elements?

Twin value

Scientific value: Understanding how children's development is shaped by family dynamics

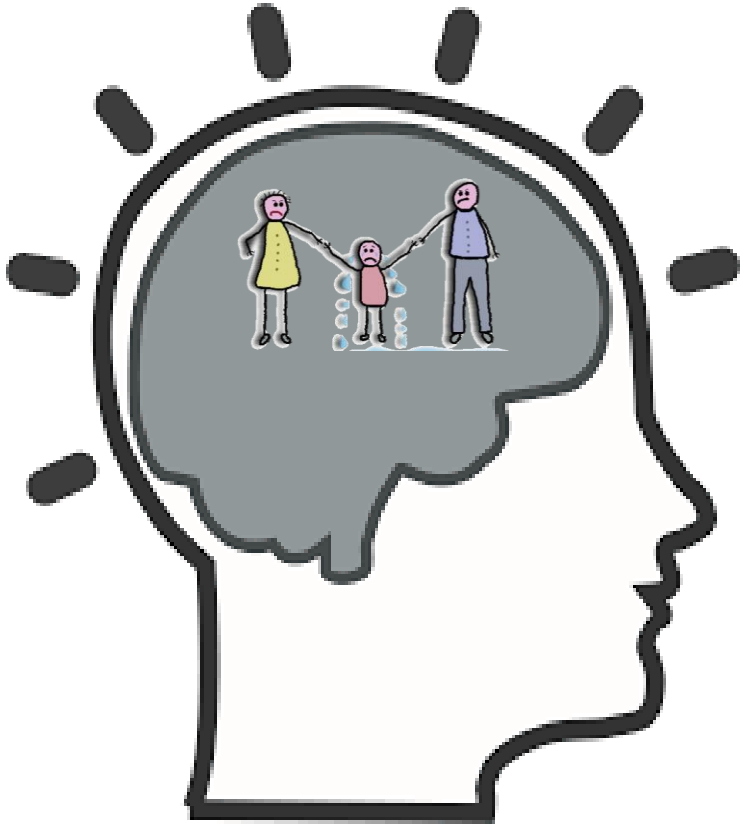
Applied value: Improving family support

- To improve the **efficacy** of programmes
- To improve the **efficiency** of programmes
- To improve the **scalability** of programmes
- To improve **evidence-based tailoring** of programmes

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The Incredible Years





Triple P
Positive Parenting Program
for every parent®



Exercise 2

Try to come up with 2 ways to identify *effective ingredients* of a family support program

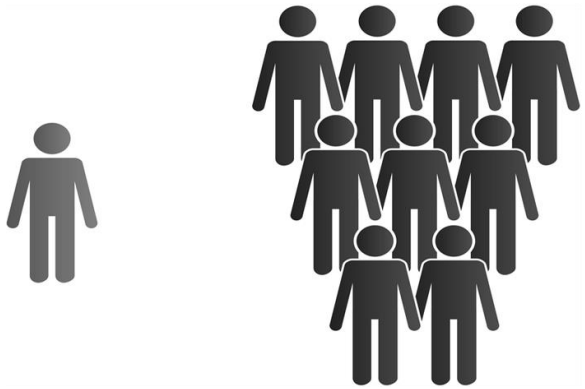
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Exercise 3
Evaluate my strategies



Feasibility
(time and resources)



Generalizability
(real world application)



Causal inference
(exclude alternative explanations)

Strategy #1:
Expert opinion

What do experts (e.g., support providers and families) perceive as most effective ingredients?

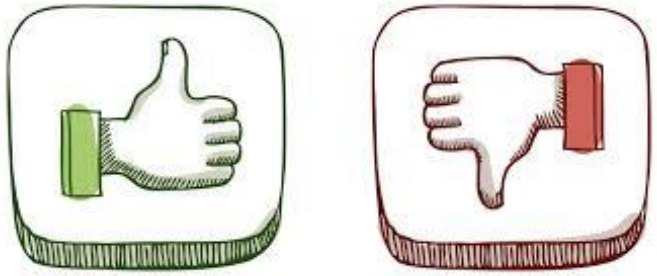
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Strategy #1:
Expert opinion



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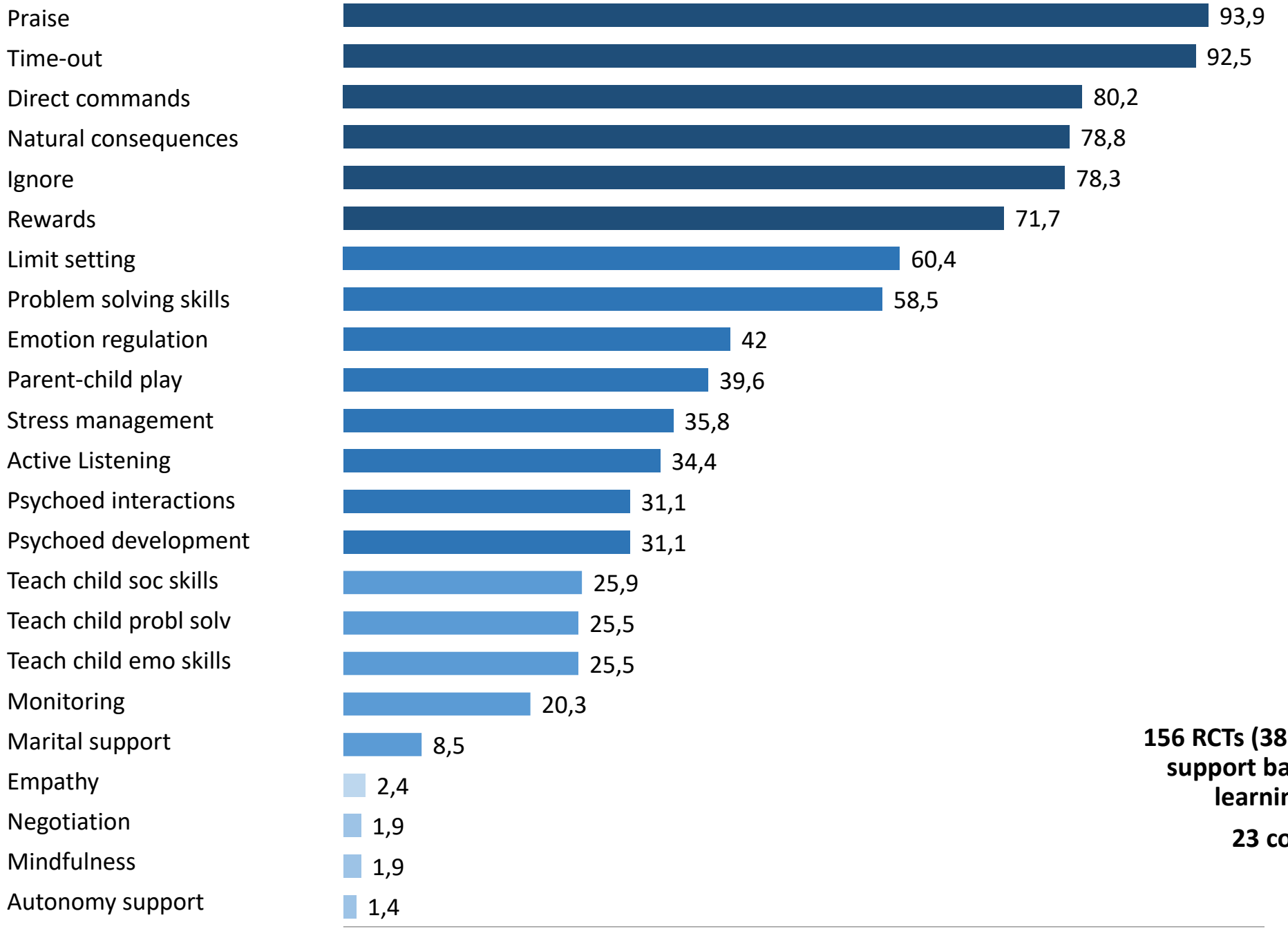
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Strategy #2:
Common ingredients

What ingredients do effective family support programs have in common?

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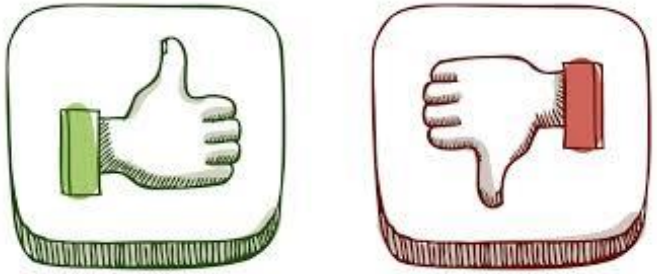
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156 RCTs (386 ESs) of family support based on social learning theory

23 countries

Strategy #2
Common ingredients



Strategy #3
Ingredients associated with effectiveness

Are interventions with component X more effective than interventions without component X?

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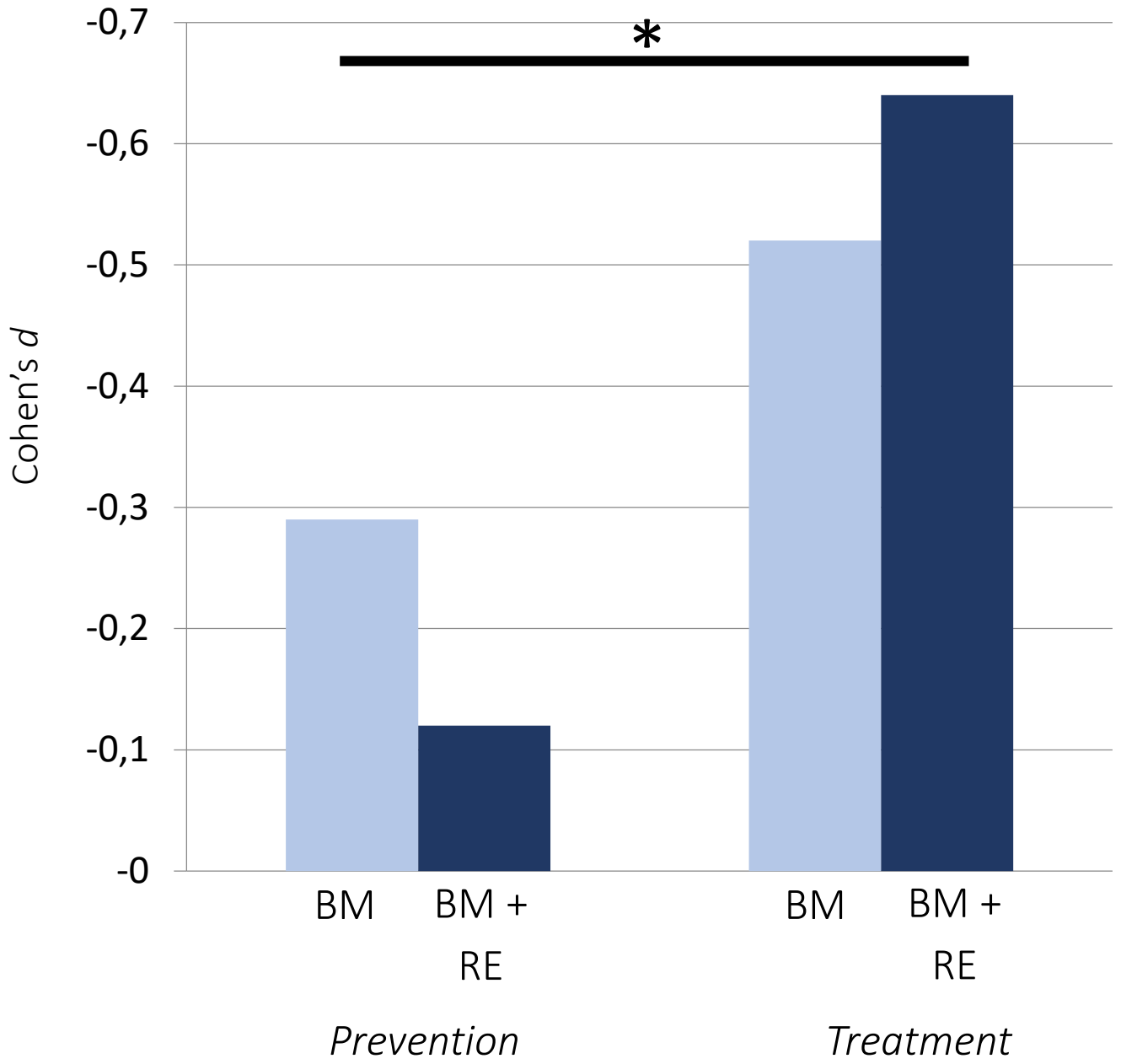
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Learning theory perspectives



Relationship perspectives





156 RCTs (386 ESs)

23 countries

BM = behavior modification (praise, rewards, ignore, time-out)

RE = relationship enhancement (child-led play, empathy)

Leijten et al., 2018. *Child Dev*

Strategy #4
Microtrials

Experimental test of the causal individual effects of an ingredient.

Example

Effects of labeled praise on child compliance



Leijten, Thomaes, Orobio de Castro, Dishion, & Matthys (2016). *Beh Res Therapy.*

Microtrial design

Random allocation to one of three conditions:
(labeled praise, unlabeled praise, no praise)

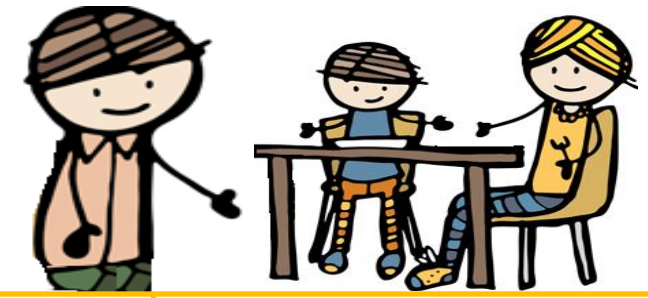


At families' homes
Parents as confederates

149 children 4–8 yr (*M* = 5.71; 55% girls)

BOBBY AND THE FORBIDDEN M&M'S

Some introductory talk and tasks…



I'm a bit hungry



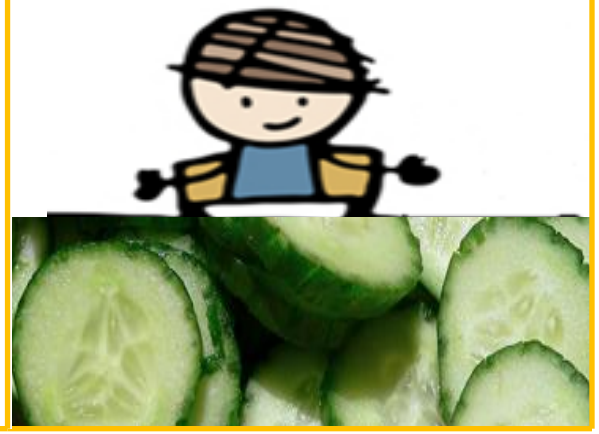


We'll be right back



Bobby, I want you to leave the food in the box





Praise instruction for parents

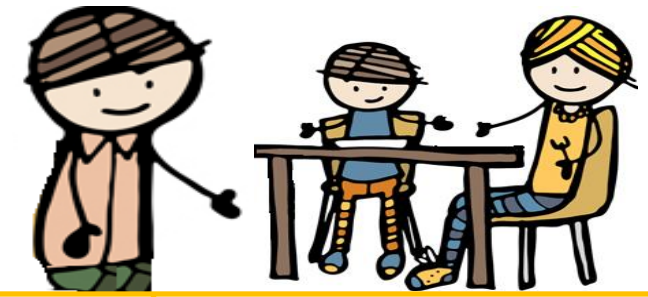
1. *What* to say:
   - Verbal instruction
   - Video tape
   - Modeling

2. *How* to say it:
   - Be enthusiastic
   - Sit at the table, look at the child

Labeled praise: Well done, you left the food in the box!
Unlabeled praise: Well done!
Control: …*silence*…

BOBBY AND THE FORBIDDEN M&M'S

Some introductory talk and tasks…



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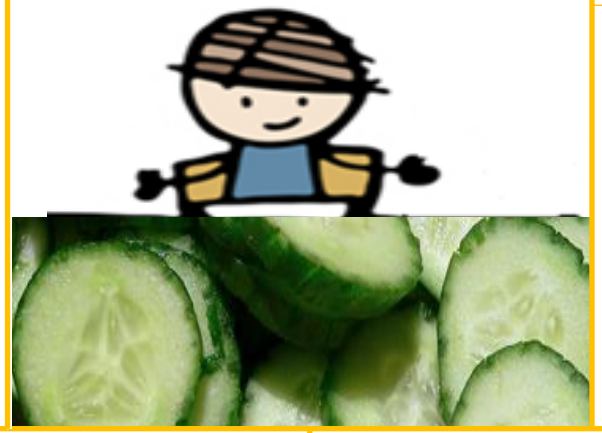


We'll be right back



Bobby, I want you to leave the food in the box





3 minutes later…

Well done, you left the food in the box!



I feel more like eating chocolate





We'll be right back

Bobby, I want you to leave the food in the box

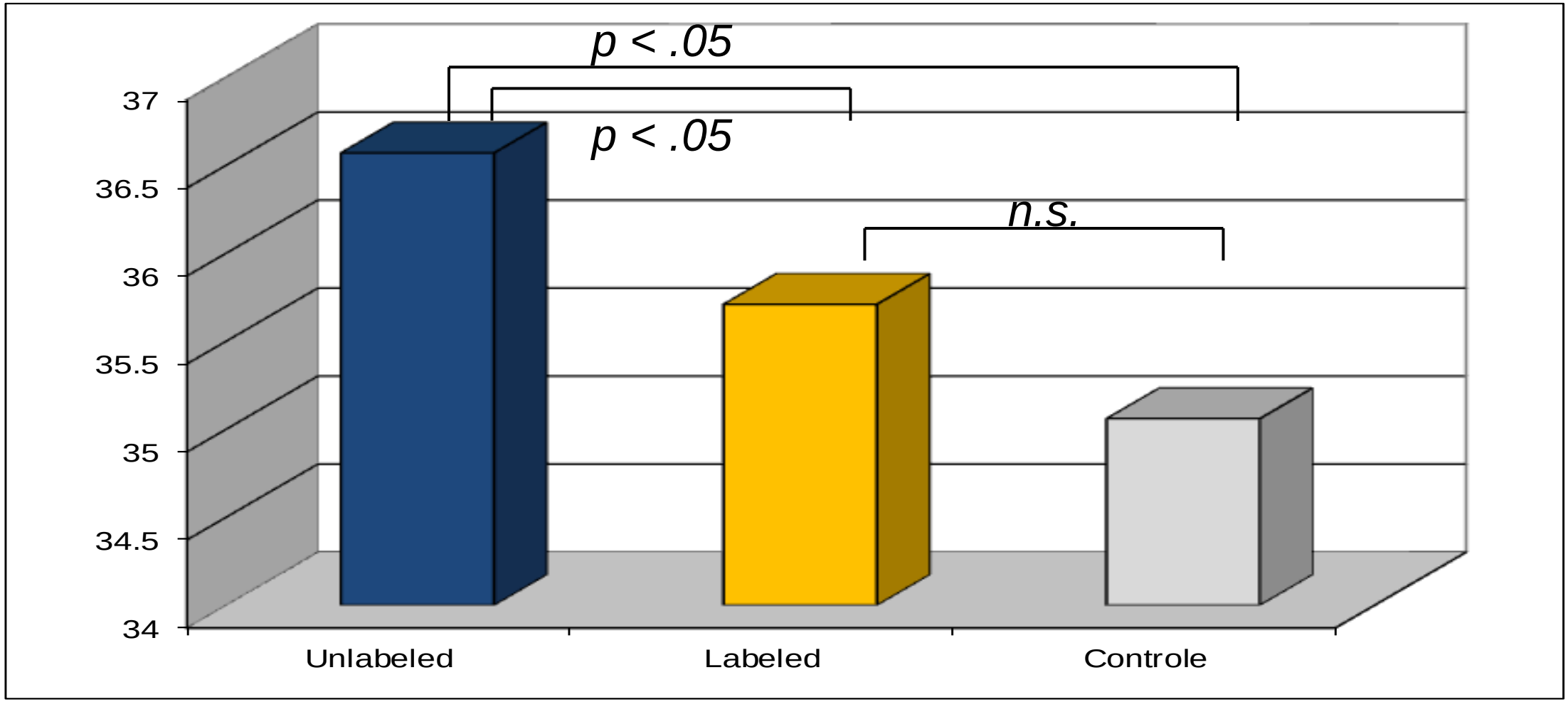


Another 3 minutes later…



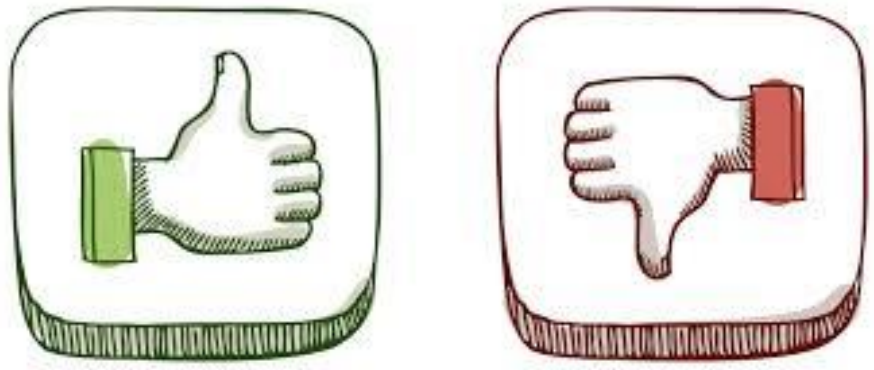
THE END

Child Compliance



Strategy #4
Microtrials

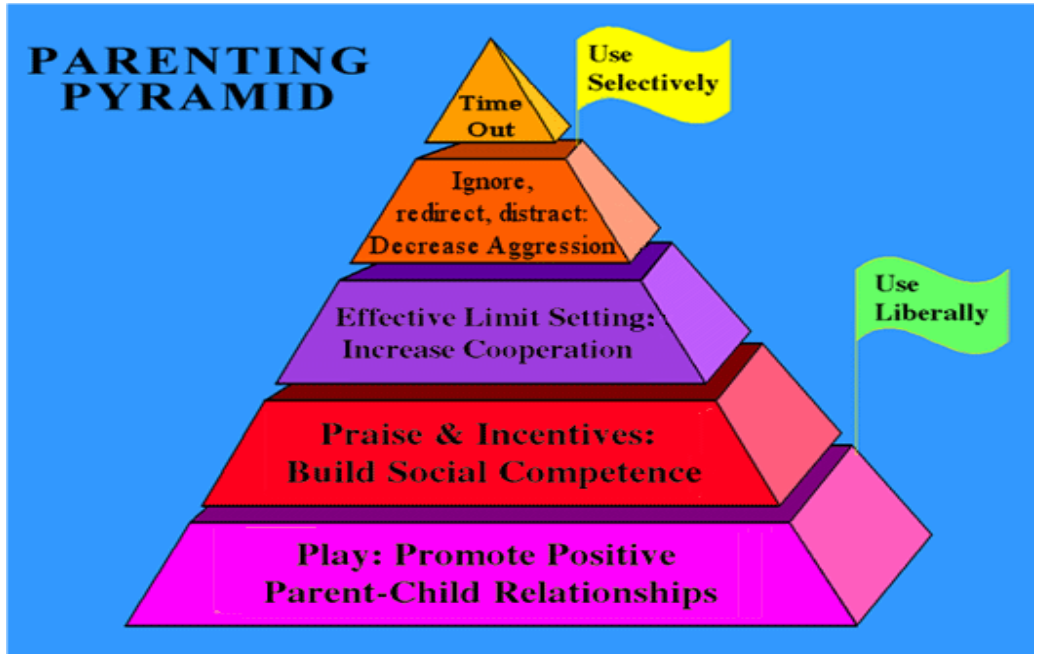
Experimental test of the causal individual effects of an ingredient.

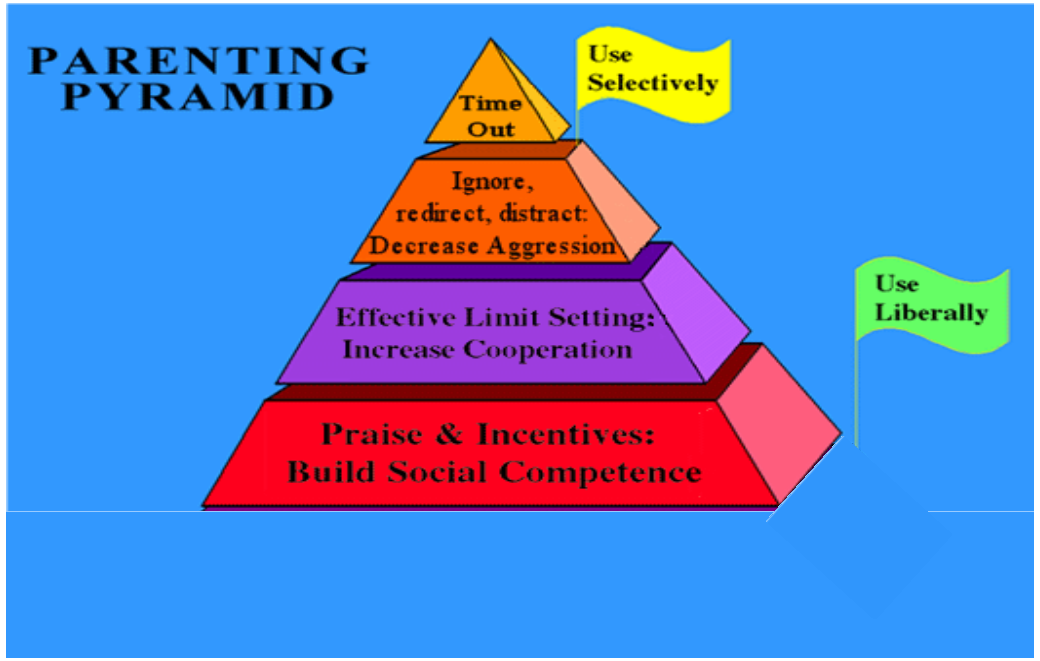


Strategy #5
Additive or dismantling trials

Experimental test of the causal added effects of an ingredient.

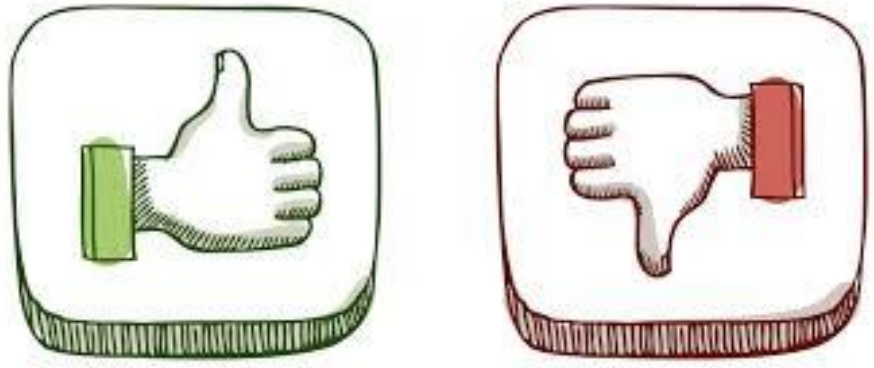
Is the Incredible Years parenting program more effective with the relationship enhancement component than without?





Strategy #5
Additive or dismantling trials

Experimental test of the causal added effects of an ingredient.



	Feasibility	Generalizability	Causal inference
#1 Expert opinion			
#2 Common ingredients			
#3 Assocations between ingredients and program effects			
#4 Microtrials			
#5 Additive/dismantling trials			

	Feasibility	Generalizability	Causal inference
#1 Expert opinion			
#2 Common ingredients			
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#4 Microtrials			
#5 Additive/dismantling trials			

Recap

1. Family support programs are like drug cocktails

2. The merit (scientific and societal) of identifying effective ingredients

3. Strategies to identify effective ingredients—balancing feasibility, generalizability, and rigor

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Thank you!

Comments, thoughts, questions? Please reach out.

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