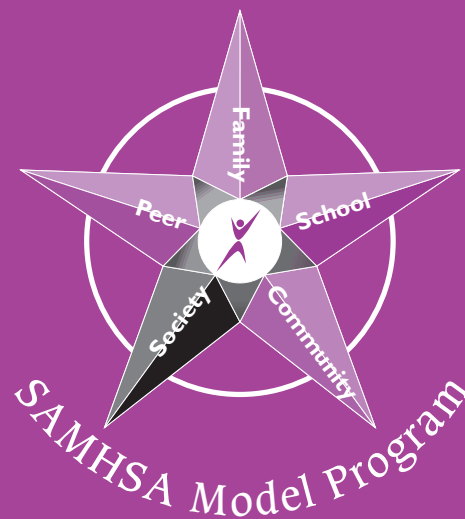


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*Effective Substance Abuse and  
Mental Health Programs  
for Every Community*

## The Incredible Years Training Series

The Incredible Years Training Series features three comprehensive, multifaceted, developmentally based curricula for parents, teachers, and children. The program is designed to promote emotional and social competence and to prevent, reduce, and treat aggressive, defiant, oppositional, and impulsive behaviors in young children 2 to 8 years old.

Young children with high rates of aggressive behavioral problems have been shown to be at great risk for developing substance abuse problems, becoming involved with deviant peer groups, dropping out of school, and engaging in delinquency and violence. Ultimately, the aim of the teacher, parent, and child training programs is to prevent and reduce the occurrence of aggressive and oppositional behavior, thus reducing the chance of developing later delinquent behaviors.

Incredible Years addresses multiple risk factors known to be related to the development of conduct disorders in children in both school and home. In all three training programs, trained facilitators use videotaped scenes to structure the content and stimulate group discussion and problem solving.

### INTENDED POPULATION

Incredible Years has been tested with 2- to 8-year-old children presenting with conduct problems (i.e., having high rates of aggression, defiance, oppositional, and impulsive behaviors). It has also been evaluated with children 2 to 6 years old, who are at high risk by virtue of living in poverty. These programs have been evaluated and found successful with children of both genders from

### Proven Results

- According to standardized reports by teachers and parents, at least 66% of children previously diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder/Conduct Disorder (ODD/CD) whose parents received the parenting program were in the normal range at both the 1-year and 3-year followup assessments.
- The addition of the teacher and/or child training programs significantly enhanced the effects of parent training, resulting in significant improvements in peer interactions and behavior at school.

### INTERVENTION

Universal

Selective

Indicated



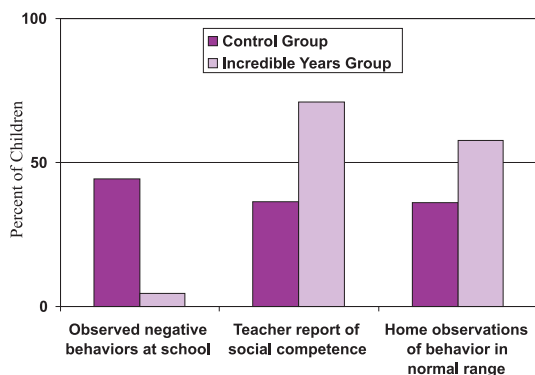
**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

## OUTCOMES

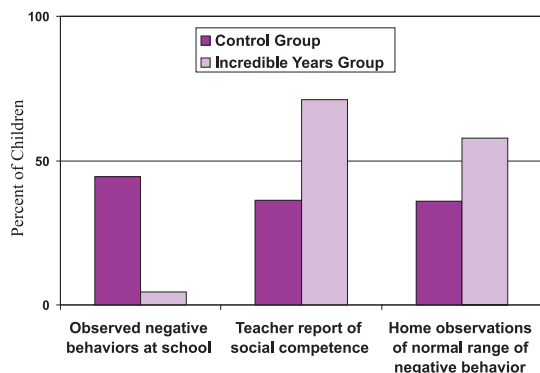
Two randomized control group evaluations indicated that the child training series significantly:

- Increased children's appropriate cognitive problem-solving strategies
- Increased children's use of prosocial conflict management strategies with peers
- Increased children's social competence and appropriate play skills
- Reduced conduct problems at home and school

Clinically significant improvements in social competence and negative behaviors among high-risk Head Start children



Clinically significant post-intervention changes in behavior among Head Start children who were in high-risk range at baseline



various ethnic groups, including Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, and African American, and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in parts of the United States, Canada, and Great Britain.

The Incredible Years curricula may be implemented by schools, school districts, and related programs (including Head Start, day care, and kindergarten) as early prevention programs. Additionally, the child and parent curriculum may be used in mental health centers as a treatment for families with children who are diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder/Conduct Disorder (ODD/CD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

## BENEFITS

- The child program promotes children's social competence and reduces conduct problems
- The parent program helps parents strengthen parenting skills and become more involved in their children's school activities
- The teacher program strengthens classroom management skills, reduces classroom aggression, and improves teachers' ability to focus on students' social, emotional, and academic competence

## HOW IT WORKS

The program uses interventions delivered through three curricula: BASIC (basic parenting skills), ADVANCE (parental communication and anger management), and SCHOOL (parents promoting children's academic skills), which are presented in four distinct formats:

**Dina Dinosaur Small Group Therapy**—18 to 22 weekly 2-hour sessions for children

**Dina Dinosaur Classroom**—includes 60 lesson plans that can be delivered 1 to 3 times a week in 45-minute class periods (preschool and early school-age lesson plans available)

**Parenting Groups**—12 to 14 weekly 2-hour sessions for the BASIC series and 10 to 12 weekly 2-hour sessions for the ADVANCE and SCHOOL series

**Teacher Classroom Management Series**—fourteen 2-hour sessions or 4-day intensive

Some of the strategic interventions used in these programs include:

- Group parenting skills training
- Group teacher classroom management training
- Group support for parents, teachers, and children
- Self-management skills training

- Peer support
- Decisionmaking skills training
- Training of group leaders/facilitators
- Interpersonal skills for training parents, teachers, and children

## IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

To successfully implement Incredible Years, the organization or school must be committed to excellence, evident in good administrative support and support for facilitator certification by certified trainers, as well as ongoing technical support and consultant workshops.

Each of the three curricula consists of videotapes, comprehensive facilitator manuals, books, take-home assignments, and refrigerator notes. It is recommended that all group participants (parents, teachers, children) have their own individual books and that facilitators have their own manuals. Videotape equipment is necessary.

Each group should have two group leaders. Group leaders complete a certification process that involves attendance at a certified training workshop, peer review, videotape feedback, and consultation.

### Training and Materials

Certified trainers are available to train therapists, counselors, teachers, and others to run parent, teacher, and child groups. Training sessions can accommodate 25 people, and run 3 days for group leaders of the Parenting Program, 2 days for leaders of the Dinosaur Child Program, and 4 days for the Teacher Classroom Management Program.

## PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Incredible Years series was developed to promote positive, effective, research-proven parenting and teaching practices that strengthen young children's social competence and problem-solving abilities, and reduce aggression at home and school. In the 1980s, the BASIC parenting program was evaluated and found to be successful in promoting lasting improvements in parent-child interactions and reducing children's behavior problems at home for at least two-thirds of the children. However, a followup evaluation 3 years later indicated that approximately one-third of the children were still having considerable difficulties at school and with their peer group. As a result of these findings, two new components—one focusing on parental communication, anger management, and problem-solving skills (ADVANCE) and another that developed child social skills and promoted problem-solving strategies and emotional language (Dinosaur School)—were added. Evaluation indicated these program components enhanced peer relationships, social problem-solving, and marital collaboration. For the past 6

years, a teacher-training curriculum, designed to teach positive classroom management skills, also has been under evaluation and found to significantly enhance the effectiveness of parent training.

### EVALUATION DESIGN

All three program components have been extensively evaluated in randomized control group studies with children diagnosed with ODD/CD. Program evaluations have included home and school observations by unbiased evaluators and teacher and parent reports on standardized measures. These findings have been replicated in four randomized studies by independent investigators with different ethnic populations and age groups in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

In the past decade, these programs have been adapted for use as prevention programs and have been evaluated with Head Start families with preschoolers and with toddlers and teachers in day care facilities. Two randomized control group studies have proven the effectiveness of the parent and teacher interventions in Head Start programs. Currently, the classroom-based Dinosaur Curriculum is being evaluated in kindergarten and first grade.

### PROGRAM DEVELOPER

#### **Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Ph.D.**

Dr. Webster-Stratton, professor and director of the Parenting Clinic at the University of Washington, developed and produced The Incredible Years. Her mission is to develop cost-effective interventions to prevent and treat conduct problems in young children that can be widely disseminated. Dr. Webster-Stratton's programs have been extensively researched over the past 20 years in a series of studies funded by the National Institute for Nursing Research, Head Start Partnerships Grants, and various agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

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### RECOGNITION

Model Program—Substance Abuse and  
Mental Health Services Administration, U.S.  
Department of Health and Human Services

Model Program—Office of Juvenile Justice  
and Delinquency Prevention, U.S.  
Department of Justice

U.S. Leila Rowland National Mental Health  
Award