

Project IMPACT: An Effective Family Preservation Program for Parents with Intellectual Disabilities

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Agenda

- Our community-academic partnership
- Intellectual disabilities and child welfare involvement
- Gaps and opportunities for growth
- One solution: What is Project IMPACT and why does it work?
- What does the evidence tell us?
- Discussion: What can we do?



Community-Academic Partnership

- Partnership established in 2018 based on discussions between researchers at Boston University and Montclair State and child welfare professionals at the Westchester Institute of Human Development and Project IMPACT.
- Discussions regarding research goals, data sharing, data ownership and dissemination of findings.
- Pilot funding received for initial study from Boston University Center for Innovation in Social Work and Health.
- NIH funding received for follow up study using Project IMPACT data.

Prevalence

Q: What percentage of parents in the US have an ID/D?

A: 1.5 – 2.3%

Q: What percentage of parents with child welfare involvement have an ID/D?

A: 9 – 22%

Q: What percentage of parents with ID/D experience child welfare involvement?

A: ~22%

Q: What percentage of removals are attributed (at least in part) to parental disability?

A: ~19%

Q: What % of parents who have an ID/D who are investigated ultimately have parental rights terminated?

A: 15%

Gaps in Training and Service Provision

- Families First supports in-home-based prevention AND programs have to be evidence-based
- This population has gone unseen SO the evidence-base is weak (at best)
- Research demonstrates that child welfare:
 - Workers are not trained to work with this population
 - Not prepared with services, training, or supervision to serve this population adequately

Opportunities to Serve This Population

There have been practices developed that can help build parenting skills, but the focus has not been in child welfare settings:

- Identifying parents' learning styles:
Visually? Auditory?
- Partializing larger skills into discrete tasks
- Opportunities to practice in real life settings
- Use modeling, feedback, and reinforcement



Introducing Project IMPACT

- Intensive, home-based program in Westchester County, NY for parents with intellectual disabilities and/or significant learning needs
- Created in 2006 based on need for specialized parent training
- Developed with funding support from the Westchester County Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Eligible families have an IQ of 80 or less and are receiving DSS Preventive Services

Description of the Program

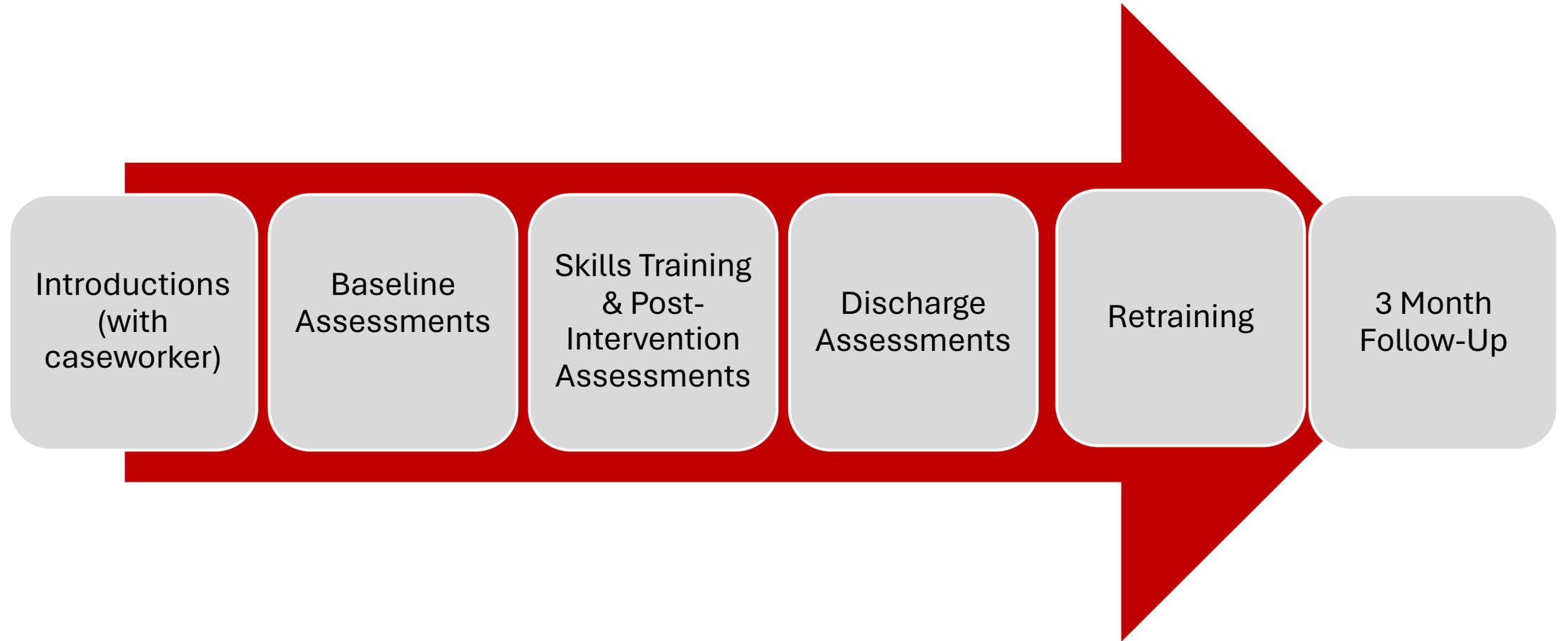
Staffing:

- Clinicians: 2 Social Workers (1 Bilingual)
- Expanding to 1 additional Bilingual Social Worker
- Program Director: Psychologist
- Supervisor: Psychologist

Intensity:

- Clinicians work with 3 families at a time.
- Each family is seen:
 - 1-½ to 2 hours a day
 - 3 days a week
 - for 4-6 months

Program Timeline



Key Curriculum Domains

Curriculum ranges from basic child care skills to more complex decision-making/problem-solving skills:

- Interaction Skills
- Promoting Development
- Basic Child Care
- Safety
- Health Safety
- Home Management/Budgeting
- Problem-Solving
- Advocacy

Forms of Intervention Utilized

Verbal Instruction:

- Psychoeducation
- Modeling & Role-Playing

Interactive Activities

Reinforcers

Video-Tape Feedback

Technological Supports:

- Videos
- Cell Phones/Apps

Assessment Tools

- Clinical Interviews & Observations
- Skill Sheets (covering over 20 different skills)
- Measure on Parent Functioning
 - *Stress-Parenting Stress Inventory (PSI)*
- Measures on Child Functioning
 - *Adaptive Behavior-Vineland-2*
 - *Child Behavior-Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)*
- Measure on the Home
 - *HOME Inventory*

What Does the Evidence Show: Prior Research

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- 2013 – Small study found improvements in parenting skills and quality of home environment (N=50)
 - 2021 (Study 1) – Participation in Project IMPACT led to improvements in parenting skills while controlling for covariates (# of children in family, children’s behavior, amount of time spent in program)(N=133)
 - 2021 (Study 2) – Participation in Project IMPACT was related to less family separation (N=133)
 - Completers had lower rates of family separation
 - More time spent in program was related to lower rates of family separation

Qualitative Findings: Why Should Project IMPACT Work?

- Intensive support services
 - 3 days per week, 1.5 – 2 hours each session, 4 – 6 months
- Tailored parenting curriculum
 - Based on parenting strengths and areas of need
 - Unique learning styles
- Interagency collaboration and advocacy
 - DSS, community-based agencies
 - Holistic support for families in naturalistic settings (home and community)
- Worker-client relationship – quality of relationship between clinician and parents



Introducing Study 3

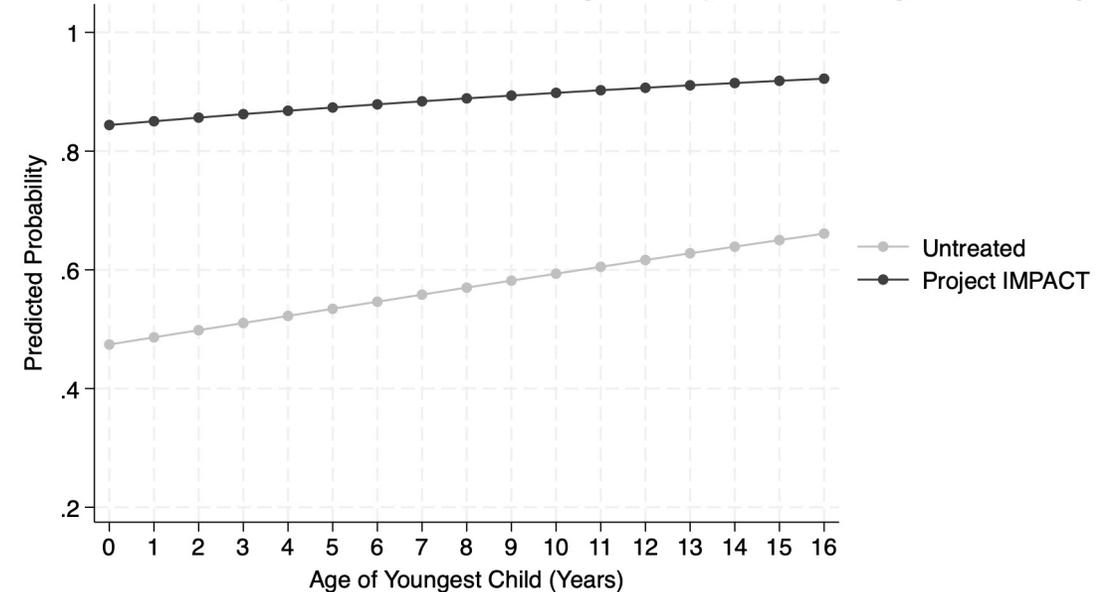
RQ: Is Project IMPACT more effective at keeping families intact compared to other services that families may encounter?

- We compared Project IMPACT program data to parents with ID/D in NJ's suburban/urban counties
- We used a statistical technique that simulates random assignment to treatment to create groups that were similar
- Finally, we calculated the odds of families remaining intact comparing Project IMPACT families to non-Project IMPACT families

Project IMPACT compared to no family preservation

Predictor/Control	OR	SE	z	p	95% CI
Participation in Project IMPACT: Yes	5.86	3.47	2.99	<0.00	1.83 - 18.71
Black, non-Hispanic: Yes	1.30	0.62	0.55	0.58	0.51 - 3.29
Youngest child age	1.05	0.06	0.93	0.35	0.95 - 1.17
# of children with disabilities	1.42	0.37	1.34	0.18	0.85 - 2.37
History of mental health treatment: Yes	1.07	0.51	0.14	0.89	0.42 - 2.70
History of CPS involvement: Yes	0.64	0.44	-0.65	0.52	0.17 - 2.46

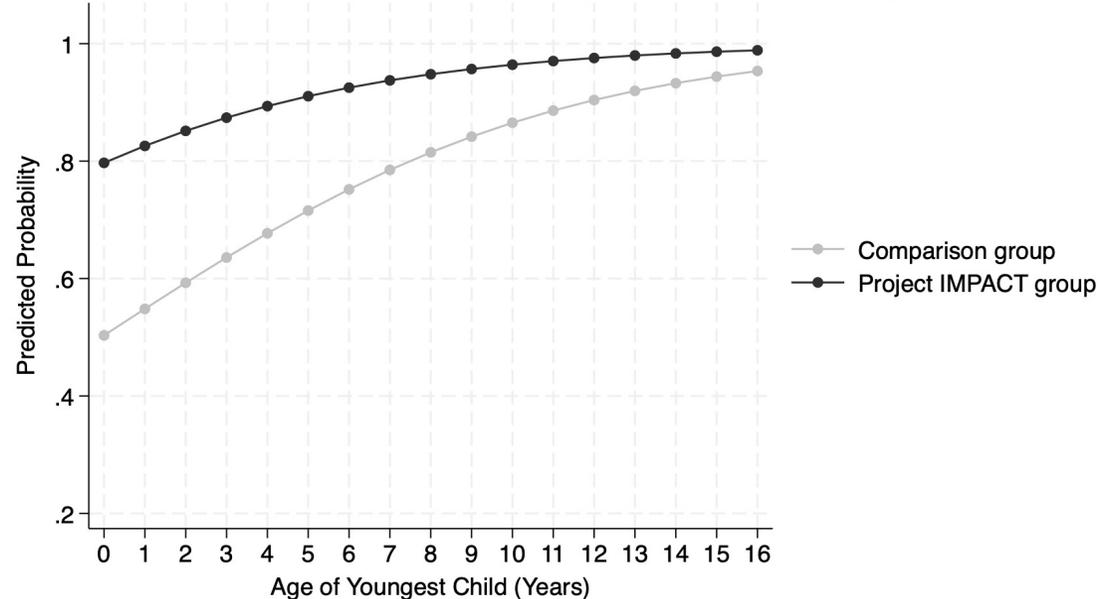
Predicted Probability of Families Remaining Intact by Tx and Youngest Child's Age



Project IMPACT compared to non-specialized family preservation

Predictor/Control	OR	SE	z	p	95% CI
Participation in Project IMPACT: Yes	5.64	3.51	2.78	<0.00	1.66 - 19.11
Black, non-Hispanic: Yes	2.03	1.00	1.44	0.15	0.78 - 5.33
Youngest child age	1.22	0.10	2.45	0.01	1.04 - 1.43
# of children with disabilities	1.45	0.39	1.43	0.15	0.87 - 2.45
History of IPV: Yes	0.79	0.40	-0.47	0.64	0.29 - 2.14
History of mental health treatment: Yes	0.57	0.29	-1.10	0.27	0.21 - 1.55
History of CPS involvement: Yes	0.41	0.31	-1.18	0.24	0.09 - 1.79

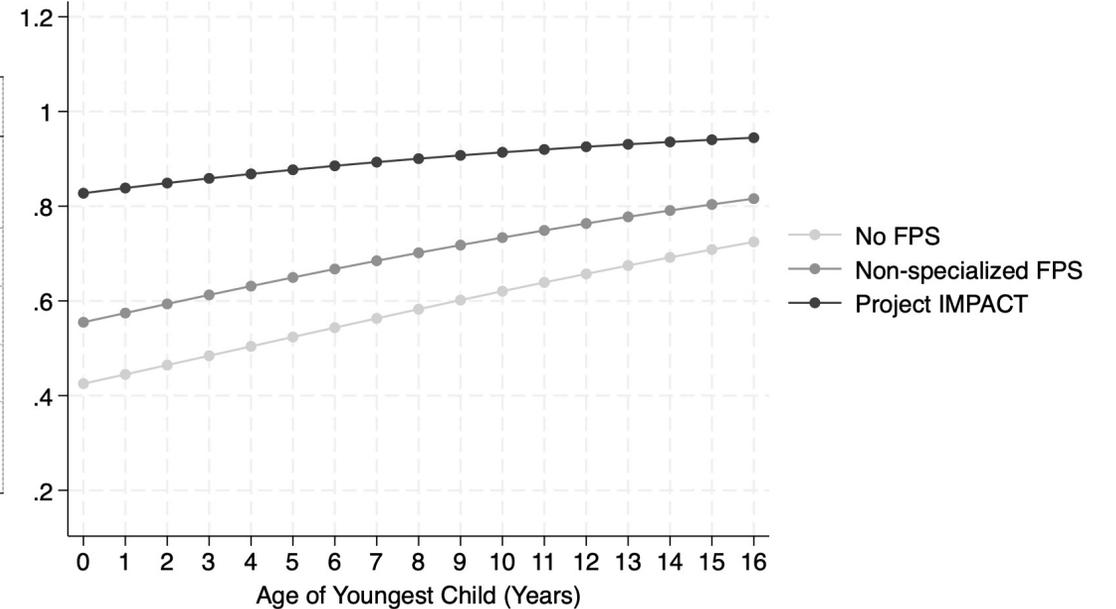
Predicted Probability of Families Remining Intact By Tx and Youngest Child's Age



Comparing all 3 conditions

Predictor/Control	OR	SE	z	p	95% CI
Treatment (compared to no FPS)					
Non-specialized FPS	1.68	1.40	0.63	0.53	0.33 – 8.57
Project IMPACT	6.27	3.85	2.99	<0.01	1.88 – 20.89
Youngest child's age	1.08	0.06	1.43	0.15	0.97 – 1.21
History of mental health treatment: Yes	1.11	0.50	0.23	0.82	0.46 – 2.67

Predicted Probability of Families Remaining Intact by Tx and Youngest Child's Age



Focus Groups

- Four focus groups were held between December 4, 2023, and January 16, 2024
- 14 participants including Department of Children and Families staff from New Jersey (n=4) and Connecticut (n=3), practitioners with expertise in disability and child welfare (n=3), and disability researchers (n=4).
- The format of the sessions included 1) introductions to the research team and participants, 2) an overview of Project IMPACT and previous research findings related to Project IMPACT, 3) key findings from the NIH R03 study, and 4) a facilitated discussion.
- **Key Findings:**
 - Need for training and tailored interventions
 - Need to continue building the evidence-base for interventions (e.g., manualized curriculum, validated tools and instruments)
 - Need for additional research that documents the clinical components of the program that are making it so successful
 - Need for policy advocacy to continue elevating the prevalence of this sub-population and the need for evidence-based prevention and intervention programs.

Discussion

What are your experiences working with parents with ID? What information presented resonates with you? What surprised you?

What programs/services does your organization provide services for parents with intellectual disabilities? Are there resources outside your organization that are helpful?

What would the barriers be to implementing a program like Project IMPACT in your jurisdiction's child welfare organization?

What supports and resources would you need to implement a program like Project IMPACT in your organization?

Thank you and Contact Information

We appreciate your time today!

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