

ACT-Parents Raising Safe Kids: The Implementation of the ACT-PRSK Parenting Program in the Cultural Context of Belgium

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Introduction

VIOLENT PARENTING

- Exposure to abuse and neglect in early childhood can have long-term consequences on child's physical and mental well-being (Arata et al., 2005)
- Child abuse is more prevalent in families with a **lower SES** (Altafim & Linhares)
- **Insufficient parenting skills** as potential cause of child maltreatment (Van Petegem et al., 2015; Portwood et al., 2011)
- **Parenting training** can be a helpful prevention tool (Sanders et al., 2014)

ACT-PARENTS RAISING SAFE KIDS

- Developed by American Psychological Association
- Internationally active
- Provide parents with necessary tools to develop positive parenting skills
- Main objectives:
 - **Prevention** of violent parenting
 - Protecting children from violence and abuse

PREVIOUS FINDINGS

- Improvements in positive discipline
- More adaptive emotion regulation in children and parents
- Reduction of physical and verbal punishment
- Improvements in monitoring children's media use
- Improved communication skills
- (Altafim & Linhares, 2019; Knox et al., 2013; Magalhaes et al., 2018; Pedro et al., 2017; Portwood et al., 2011)

Intervention Description

- 9 2-hour group-sessions
- Parents and caregivers of children of 0-10 years old
- **Culturally sensitive**
- **Accessible** for low SES populations
 - Offered for free
 - No literacy skills needed

Program Content

Pre-meeting: Motivational Interview & introduction

1. Learning and understanding children's behaviors
2. Young children's exposure to violence
3. Understanding and controlling parents' anger
4. Understanding and helping angry children
5. Children and screen time
6. Discipline and parenting style
7. Discipline techniques for positive behaviors
8. Empowering parents

Research Goals

1. TRANSLATIONS AND CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

- Translation of 3 manuals in French & Dutch
- Adaptations to Belgian cultural context

2. PROGRAM EFFICACY

- Effective for parenting behaviors and parental mental health?
- Effective for low SES populations?
- What mechanisms play a role in the program's efficacy?

Method

PILOT STUDY (*currently running*)

- Test translated program materials
- First glimpse at program efficacy

SAMPLE

- N = 3 Moroccan mothers
- $M_{age} = 35.67$ years

MEASURES

- **Pre-post** questionnaires
 - Parental mental health
 - Parenting behaviors
 - Child internalizing-externalizing behaviors
- Weekly questionnaires **before & after** each session regarding content of the past week or the session content
- Weekly questionnaires for **facilitators**



Potential Outcomes

- Program efficacy?
 - Improved parenting strategies & parental mental health;
 - Use of positive discipline
 - Decrease in harsh parenting practices
 - Adaptive emotion regulation strategies
 - Decrease in depressive symptoms and parental stress
- Role of SES?
 - May play a moderating role
- Underlying mechanisms?
 - Group alliance

Challenges

- Recruitment: organizations & participants
- Method: use of questionnaires