Chapter 7
The Effective Black Parenting Program

Introduction

This chapter reports on the development, description and evaluation of the first of the two culturally-specific programs CICC has created, the Effective Black Parenting Program for parents of African American children. This award-winning program, and the other culturally-specify program we created for parents of Latino children, our Los Niños Bien Educados, are cultural adptions of our OCP program. The program for the Latino community is the subject of the next chapter.

We at CICC approached the task of creating the cultural programs in a very deliberate, systematic and cautious manner. We engaged in more than ten years of research and development activities. They have turned out to be the most widely used culturally-specific parenting skill-building programs in the United States.

There are several videos about these two programs on the CICC website (www.cicccparenting.org). Viewing them will enhance your appreciation of the phenomenal impact they continue to have on families and on the instructors who deliver them. Go to the page entitled Videos/Photos. Scroll through the various videos and enjoy.

Why Cultural Programs Were Developed Carefully

The reasons for the deliberate and cautious evolution of these programs are reflected in the following introductory comments from Black Parenting: Strategies for Training, a book that I wrote in the mid-
1980s about the initial development and field testing of the program for African American parents:

"When you take on the task of designing parenting programs, you are operating in very sensitive areas. Parent training deals directly with how individuals and groups rear their children, and it is through child rearing that many of our most cherished personal, religious, and cultural values are transmitted. Choosing to focus on parent training is a choice to confront our society's most personal and possibly most important activity.

"When the focus is on parenting programs for ethnic or racial groups that have been persecuted and oppressed, the task takes on an additional meaning. Blacks and other groups have managed to survive the most opprobrious inhumanities because of the strengths of their families and their will to overcome. When you talk about programs to impact black families, you are talking about influencing the same social units that have provided the intimate support that nurtures the will to overcome. And you better be damn sure that what you are proposing will enhance that capacity to overcome.

"If what you must offer will indeed be helpful, you are then faced with the complex task of adapting or designing programs that address parenting themes that are relevant to the black experience in America. And in so doing you must be knowledgeable about and respectful of the diversity of black experiences in America and of the diversities within black communities."
"Though most blacks live in poverty or on the margins of poverty, there is socioeconomic diversity in the black community. There are black business leaders, doctors, lawyers, and scholars. The educational and material resources that these individuals can bring to child rearing are markedly different from what their impoverished brothers and sisters can. This diversity has many implications for designing parenting programs.

"Fully one half of all black children in America are now growing up in single-parent families headed by women, and this fact is important for designing and implementing parenting programs. Programs for black parents must address the special issues of Single parenthood to be relevant.

"There are diversities of outlook and opinion regarding cultural issues that need to be considered. While most blacks share a special consciousness about what it means to be black, there are different levels of cultural or ethnic consciousness, different degrees of ethnic identification and even ethnic denial and ethnic self-disparagement. Blacks also differ in their awareness and opinions concerning Ebonics, or black dialect, while some deny its existence and others promote its usage. These matters are obviously relevant to any programs that assist black parents in rearing black children. How to address this rich diversity of cultural issues and opinions is a major challenge.

"There is also diversity within black communities regarding intergroup relations. Historically, blacks in America have struggled with the question of integration versus separatism. Black nationalism is a
powerful force in some segments of black communities but not in others. Not all blacks look kindly on white folks who want to be helpful. Indeed, blacks who associate with whites are often viewed suspiciously by many of their brothers and sisters.

"These intergroup diversities with their undercurrents of reverse racism are important to the content, implementation, and institutional sponsorship of black-parenting programs, and they created unique problems in developing the adapted programs. Because CICC is not a black organization, and because I am white, the black folks who have worked on this project have had to do so at some personal discomfort and risk. I, too, have experienced these discomforts and risks.

"All of our shared uneasiness emanates from our country's history of white racism and discrimination. And this is a critical issue in programs for black parents. It not only gets expressed in terms of who should develop the programs but also in terms of questioning the nature of the programs themselves and why the programs are needed at all.

"An important issue in regard to the nature of the programs is their value orientation. The standard programs are based on values of individual responsibility and individual achievement. They are not based on other relevant value orientations such as the more communal African values that emphasize shared responsibility and shared achievement. Therefore, the very task of adapting the standard programs for black parents, a task which appears to keep the underlying value orientation of the programs intact, is a source of controversy in and of itself.
"The need for the programs is also a source of controversy. And what seems to be behind the question of why the programs are needed is a sensitivity to being considered inferior or deficient. Given the history of white racism and its many ugly manifestations, it is certainly understandable why black America would have this type of sensitivity.

"Thus, any program for black parents is closely scrutinized to see whether it is based on assumptions of inferiority or deficiency. In terms of adapting parenting-skill programs, this issue gets expressed through asking whether the programs imply by their existence that blacks are deficient in parenting knowledge or skills.

"But this question could just as easily be asked of the original programs and of white parents. That is, do the original programs, because they teach parenting ideas and skills, imply that white parents are inferior and deficient in parenting know-how and skills?

"And the answer to both questions is "no."

“The answer is "no" because the question is inappropriate when applied to educational programs that teach new ideas and skills. It is like asking whether teaching a new subject to college students implies that they are inferior or deficient. Of course, it doesn't. It only implies that there is some new or better organized information that should be helpful and that is why the course is being taught.

"A more productive question in terms of racial discrimination and parenting programs is the question of equity or equal opportunity. If the majority group has available parenting programs that seem to help them raise children who succeed in this society, shouldn't minority
groups have equal access to this social opportunity? And here the answer is a resounding "yes!"

"And making these programs more relevant to minority groups is one way of promoting this type of equal opportunity. Through their potential to empower black parents of all economic conditions with important information and skills, these programs could serve as vehicles for helping black parents convince their children that the future is worthwhile. The programs may not change the socioeconomic and political forces that hold black families back, but they can provide a stronger knowledge base from which these forces can be fought."

As I indicated much earlier in the sections about my personal and familial reasons for having CICC create the cultural programs, these types of considerations played major roles in how both cultural programs were created.

**Why And How The Programs Were Developed**

Each program was developed differently over several years and with funding from several sources.

The evolution of both began initially during the years of 1979-1981, under a $350,000 grant from NIMH for a project called *Culturally-Adapted Parent Training*. The proposal for that grant had been requested by the director of the then-existing NIMH Center for Minority Mental Health, Dr. James Ralph.

I had met Dr. Ralph at a conference his Center was conducting in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1978. The conference was about *Improving*
Mental Services for Blacks in the South. I was an invited speaker because they wanted a white professional who had some success in administering mental health services in a Black community. They had learned of my work at Kedren Community Mental Health Center in South Los Angeles, and selected me for that role because of those experiences. I felt honored when I found out those reasons.

Being at that conference gave me an opportunity to inform Dr. Ralph that CICC itself was running an NIMH-supported project. This project was the one we spoke about in the previous chapter, the national model for training mental health personnel to deliver parenting programs. I told him that the parenting programs we were using in that model were excellent, but they were designed for White middle-class parents. We discussed the possibility of a project to figure out how to adapt those parenting programs to make them more relevant for minority group parents.

Dr. Ralph suggested that when I get back to Los Angeles that I meet with his Minority Group Research Centers at Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital (the Fanon Mental Health Research Center for African American) and at UCLA (the Spanish-Speaking Mental Health Research Center). The objective of those meetings was to discuss the possibility and design of a research project to modify the parenting programs for African Americans and Latinos. The leaders that I met with, Drs. Lewis King and Hector Myers at Fanon, and Drs. Amado Padilla and Estaben Olemedo at UCLA, were enthusiastic and supportive.
A grant proposal was written for such a project. The proposal was evaluated at NIMH by a Review Committee composed primarily of the top minority group researchers in our country. They approved proposal and recommended funding it.

That was truly an accomplishment to be proud of as that was the only Review Committee in the National Institute where minorities had the power to recommend the use of federal dollars. They recommended me as the Principle Investigator and CICC as the institution to carry out the project.

The Culturally-Adapted Parent Training Project

The project involved conducting research interviews with African American, Latino and white parents about their actual child rearing practices, their dreams for their children’s futures, and their world views about parenting. The data from those interviews were used for comparing and contrasting the three groups. Up until that time in history there had been very few studies of the actual practices of those minority groups so it was considered wise to have that sort of information available as adapted versions of the OCP, P.E.T. and the STEP programs were being developed.

The project also involved assembling Blue Ribbon Panels made up of authorities on parenting from African American and Latino professional groups. One of their tasks was to review the programs to be modified and recommend which aspects should be emphasized. They were also tasked with reviewing the results of the parent interviews to help the project staff interpret their meaning. They wrote about their opinions
of the programs before we had three, very intensive days of meetings at CICC with me and the rest of the project staff.

For the African Americans, there was another phase of this project. Special instructional units were created about the cultural matters that had been recommended for inclusion in the programs. Then there was a field testing of those units alongside the testing of the standard programs.

There was not enough time to also transform the research with the Latino parents and the recommendations its Blue-Ribbon Committee into instructional units as part of this project.

Now we will present the project work with and for African Americans, which represents the first steps in evolving what eventually became the Effective Black Parenting Program. It took another large grant in the early 1980s from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to finalize and test the program.

**Project Results with African Americans**

The staff of the project was carefully chosen for cultural competence and sensitivity, and was composed of representatives from the respective cultures. The Blue Ribbon Panel of African American, who were available for those amazing and illuminating meetings, were for the African American program, Dr. Charles W. Thomas, a Professor in the Department of Urban Affairs from the University of California at San Diego who wrote the classic book *Boys No More: A Black Psychologist’s View of Community* (Thomas, 1971) and who was considered the father of Black Psychology; his wife Shirley Thomas who was a mover and shaker
in the Head Start movement; Dr. Hector Myers of the UCLA Psychology Department (who eventually became the first African American tenured professor in Psychology at UCLA) and who subsequently played pivotal roles in additional projects to refine the program; Dr. Donald K. Cheek, a social psychologist from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo who was born in Harlem and authored the challenging book, *Assertive Black, Puzzled White: A Black Perspective on Assertive Behavior* (Cheek, 1976); then graduate student Hope Hill from Columbia University who is now a Professor at Howard University; and Dr. Ramona Anne Mohamed. Dr. Barbara Solomon of the Social Work Department at the University of Southern California was also a panelist, but could not attend the meetings.

There were many critical issues about the creation of the program that were discussed at these meetings. Dr. Thomas, who was in many ways the leader of the panelists, reflected that he and the other panelists, or similarly qualified African Americans, ideally should have been creating the program. But since none of them had done the background work on parent training like myself and CICC, or had convinced NIMH to support the creation of the program, he was gracious and very sharing in his participation, as were the other members of this distinguished panel.

In addition to the recommendations from the Blue-Ribbon panelists, CICC consulted the writings of several authoritative books written by African American parenting scholars. These included *Black Child Care* (1975) by Drs. James Comer and Alvin Poussaint, *The Black Child: A Parent’s Guide* (1973) by Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross and Barbara Wyden, and *The Black Parent’s Handbook* (1976) by Clara McLaughlin. Many of
the idea of these scholars became part of the initial instructional units and the final program.

Care was also taken to involve parents from the communities in which the programs were to be field tested. Because the programs were initially designed for poverty-level parents of young children, African American parents who had their preschool children enrolled in Head Start programs, were selected to be interviewed in their homes by African American interviewers.

I was the lead author on creating the new instructional units, with special assistance and collaboration from project staff or panelists. Dr. Marilyn Steele, who conducted many of the interviews with black parents, played several shaping roles in the evolution and writing of the units. Marilyn Marigna, a social worker on the NIDA field test project, also contributed to the writing, as did Dr. Bryan Nichols. In the NIDA field test project both Drs. Steele and Nichols eventually became field test instructors and later National Trainer-of-Instructors.

Program Development Research

The choices about the topics to be covered in the interviews and the research measures to be used were informed by a conception of culture. The conception that was used was that of Dr. Lorand Szalay and his colleagues at the Institute for Comparative Social and Cultural Studies (Szalay and Deese, 1978). They defined culture as two levels of group specific behavior.

The first level is the objective and directly observable behavioral characteristics of a group. This consists of group-specific
language and dialect characteristics, verbal and non-verbal communication styles, customs, choice of religious observations, dance, music and the actual child-rearing practices of the group. This level is the objective culture of the group and it is readily and immediately available for observation. The study assessed this level of group-specific behavior through questioning the parents about their actual child rearing practices and having them describe what they do and say in response to their children's behaviors. These questions dealt with their children's prosocial or positive behaviors, as well as antisocial or negative behaviors and those that indicated the need for parental emotional support.

The second cultural level is more intangible and hidden. It is the subjective and inferred cognitive organization which is believed to control the overt manifestation of group specific behavior. It is synonymous with the idea of "implicit culture" which refers to psychological variables, images, attitudes, and value orientations. Szalay refers to this level as subjective culture or the cultural frame of reference.

It was this subjective level of culture that the sociologist Orville Brim had in mind in his classic book, *Education for Child Rearing (1965)*, when he was discussing the factors that influence the success of parent training programs:

"The existence of cultural values which regulate parent behavior presents an obstacle to the success of many parent education programs. A large amount of research has shown that new ideas and
practices are accepted by individuals to the degree that they 'fit in' with existing cultural patterns. It is likely that some of the content presented in a parent education program will be compatible with the existing internalized culture patterns of the parent, and thus no resistance will be encountered. But some of the content will not fit the existing patterns: indeed, it will be a challenge to them. What is the educator to do then? He cannot retreat, change his objectives, since it is likely that the transmission of the challenging or controversial material is the major purpose of the program. Instead he must try to bring out into the open the parent's cultural values, where they can be re-examined as part of the educative process."

Bringing these values and the cultural frame of reference "out into the open" is no easy task, since they are believed to operate mostly below the level of conscious awareness. Our study assessed the cultural frame of reference through a variety of measures, including one which Szalay and his associates created specifically for this purpose (Szalay and Deese, 1978). The Associative Group Analysis is a measure that uses the free associations which groups of people give to specific concepts as a basis for identifying their cultural frame of reference for these concepts. The study used this method to explore the parents' cultural frame of reference regarding two family concepts ("family" and "children") and two family process concepts ("raising children" and "disciplining children").

Several other measures were used that fell somewhere between the objective and subjective levels. Some simply described the characteristics and life situations of the parents and children. Parents
were questioned about their reasons for using corporal punishment through a series of open-ended questions. Their expectations for their children's occupational and educational achievement were explored by asking what they want their children to be and how much education they should have. And there were questions that dealt specifically with cultural issues in child rearing such as what they told their children about being Black or Latino.

The interview was designed and conducted in such a way as to facilitate the parents' comfort in discussing controversial ethnic and cultural issues. Along these lines, the parents were asked at the beginning of the interviews how they referred to themselves in terms of their personal ethnic group identification. The ethnic self-designation that a particular parent preferred was the term that was used throughout that parent's interview. Thus, it was found that the vast majority of African American parents preferred to be called "black" as opposed to "Afro-American" or "Negro". The newly immigrated Latino parents preferred to be designated as "Mexicanos" and the second-generation Latinos preferred "Mexican-American" as their ethnic self-designation. These results were understood as both a reflection of the diversity within cultural groups and as an indication of a group's desire to define and redefine its own identity. A similar study conducted in different African American and Latino communities, and at a different time in history, would probably reveal somewhat different self-designations because of changing social and political awareness.

The writings of cultural scholars and researchers had also alerted the project to specific parenting themes or issues that were likely to emerge
from the interviews. The previously mentioned black parenting scholars published their books immediately after the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s. They spoke about a particularly black orientation to disciplining children that they believed had originated in response to the slavery experience and to the discriminatory laws and practices that continued after emancipation. For example, black psychiatrist Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross and Barbara Wyden, *The Black Child - A Parent's Guide* (1973), spoke about a "traditional black discipline" where parents sought to protect their children from the dangers of white racism by demanding obedience to their authority and using harsh disciplinary methods like whippings and spankings to enforce their expectations and rules. Dr. Harrison-Ross and others also spoke of the need to develop a more positive approach to discipline that was not based on protecting children from white harm but that instilled in children a desire to achieve in a world where there were more opportunities. Robert Hill in his classic book, *The Strengths of Black Families* (1971), also alerted the project to be sensitive to the reality that many poverty-level black parents have high levels of achievement for their children, despite their own modest achievements.

This *Program Development Research* was being done for the express purpose of providing additional information out of which cultural adaptations could be made of parenting programs that had originally been designed for middle class Euro-American parents. Because of this, research data was also collected from groups of Euro-American parents using similar home interview procedures and measures, so that cross-cultural comparisons could be made. After all, the need for
culturally-specific programs assumes that there are important child rearing differences between Euro-American and Other-American parents. These are the differences that need to be accommodated in programs for different cultural groups. Thus, CICC saw it as necessary to also interview Euro-American parents of young children and compare their child rearing worldviews, attitudes and practices with those of the African American and Latino parents.

Two groups of Euro-American parents were interviewed: a predominantly lower and working class group whose children were enrolled in Head Start and other publicly-supported preschools, and a predominantly middle and upper middle class group whose children were mainly enrolled in private nursery schools and whose overall style of life closely resembled that of the families who were depicted in the standard parent training programs.

A great deal of information from the parent interviews was found to be useful in shaping the content and processes of the program. Many of the results were reinforcing the writings and observations of African American family life scholars, as well as the recommendations and viewpoints of the expert panel. Some of the results were so compelling that they were used in the program.

As has been mentioned, the program was being developed initially for use in low-income African American communities, and the parents who were interviewed were mainly from the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum. Of the 100 African American parents who were interviewed, 44 were considered poor and working class and 51 were
classified as middle class. All the parents had a preschool child enrolled in a Head Start Program. These parents were referred to in the research as the Black Head Start group. The two Euro-American comparison groups were termed White High Income (24 upper class, 36 upper middle, and 40 middle) and White Low Income (67 poor and working class, 28 middle class). Thus, the Black Head Start and the White Low Income groups were most similar in terms of social class standing and the Black Head Start and White High Income the least similar.

The parents' reactions to questions about their occupational and educational goals for their children, and about the persons who they relate to and rely on in raising their children, were extremely influential in framing the teaching of the entire program and in justifying the use of program strategies and skills.

Ninety-six percent of the parents wanted their children to achieve higher levels of education than they themselves had obtained, which is consistent with Robert Hill's data about high educational aspirations in black families (Hill, 1971). Ninety-five percent wanted their children to have higher status jobs than they themselves held, which is also consistent with a strong achievement orientation.

These results were in our minds as we decided to frame the teaching of the entire program around an African American achievement perspective on parenting. This perspective was expressed in the major parenting strategy of the program, the Pyramid of Success for Black Children Strategy. This became one of the instructional units here. It also was used in the first session of the actual Effective Black Parenting
Program and was repeated and reinforced throughout the entire program. This strategy involves the parents in exploring the goals they have for their children as they grow up. It also involves looking at the characteristics their children will need to develop to reach these goal (See Pyramid of Success drawing).
Then the discussion turns to what parents can do to help their children develop the necessary characteristics. The basic idea is to appeal to the parents' achievement desires for their children as a way of
motivating them to learn and use the concepts and skills that are taught in the program. The *Pyramid of Success for Black Children Strategy*, which is more fully described below, includes the notion of helping children develop the self-discipline that is needed for achieving higher levels of academic and occupational success.

The use of the symbol of the pyramid in this important program strategy is consistent with the program's intention to use as many positive cultural symbols as possible. Images of the pyramids of Egypt are important to a positive cultural identity for African Americans because Egypt is part of Africa and therefore Africans created these amazing architectural structures. By using the pyramid image throughout the program and drawing its African origins to the attention of the parents, the program helps parents to see a relationship between themselves and the shining achievements of their ancestors, thereby stimulating a sense of cultural pride that can be shared with their children. It was a similar appreciation of the Egyptian/African origins of intellectual achievements that helped shape the then contemporary emphasis on Afrocentricity among African American scholars (Asante, 1988).

The parents also indicated that relatives, as contrasted with friends or neighbors, were the people they were most in contact with, and to whom they were most likely to turn to for help or advice in raising their children. This preference or reliance on extended family members also supported the writings of such scholars as Hill (1971) and Martin and Martin (1978). This information led directly to the idea of having the parents invite key extended family members into the program at a particularly relevant juncture. It also contributed to including, a
presentation on such African values as cooperation, collective responsibility and interdependence to provide a historical vantage point on how and why the extended family became so important in black communities (Nobles, 1974a, b).

A great deal of valuable program information also emerged from the data about the parents' worldviews or cultural frame of reference regarding family and parenting concepts. Recall that culture was defined as two levels of group-specific behavior and that each level needed to be measured with separate techniques. The first level is the objective, observable level of culture that was measured through parental reports of their parenting behaviors in concrete and specific child rearing situations.

The second is the subjective and largely unconscious level, or the cultural frame of reference, that is measured by such techniques as parental world associations to concepts like family and children, and raising and disciplining children. Here parents were asked to say what came to their minds as they thought about each concept, a method that eventually was incorporated into the program to help in teaching an important part of a session that dealt with one of these concepts (disciplining).

The way that this important worldview or cultural frame of reference data was collected, analyzed and presented is as follows:

As part of the interviews, the parents were asked to participate in a word association game, in which they were asked to verbalize their associations to each of the four concepts. The parents were shown a card on which a concept was written, and they were asked to say whatever
words, objects, ideas or issues came to mind in association with each concept. One minute of associations per concept was allowed with a maximum of 12 associations per concept. The interviewer wrote down the parents' associations on a response sheet and told the parents when the minute was up.

This procedure resulted in thousands of associations per concept per cultural group. The resultant words were analyzed using the *Associative Group Analysis Technique* created by Szalay and his associates (Szalay and Deese, 1978). First, the associations that came earliest were given higher weights or scores, based on the assumption that those that came earliest were more central to a parents' image of a concept. The weights that were used were based on an empirical procedure developed by Szalay and his associates. The weights were: 6-5-4-3-3-3-2-2-1-1-1-1. Thus, if "mother" was the first association by a parent to the concept of "family," the response score for "mother" for that parent was 6. If it was the eighth association for another parent, it earned a response score of 2.

Then all the response scores for each of the four concepts were totaled, resulting in, for example, a total response score of 2053 for the *Black Head Start* parents for the concept of Family, or of 1801 for that group's total response score to Disciplining.

Then the multi-cultural research team determined which of the responses had similar meanings and clustered those responses together into "components of meaning." For example, all the responses or words to the concept of Family that referred to mothers, fathers and children were clustered together into a component of meaning that was called
"Immediate Family." The "Immediate Family" responses accounted for 577 of the 2053 total weighted responses of that concept for the Black Head Start group.

Another example is when all responses to the concept of Disciplining that had to do with spanking, whipping, hitting or beating were combined into a component of meaning called "Spank/Whip." These responses accounted for 322 of the 1803 total weighted responses of that concept for the Black Head Start group.

Then it was possible to determine the percentage of total responses that fell into each component for each concept. In the above examples, it was determined that 28 percent of the Black parents' responses to the concept of Family fell into the component of "Immediate Family" and 19 percent of their responses to the concept of Disciplining was encompassed in the component of meaning called "Spank/Whip."

The percentages of responses per component are then displayed in the form of a wheel graph, which is called a "semantograph" because it encompasses a group's meaning for a concept. Thus, a semantograph reflects the worldview of a group regarding a specific concept. It shows the multifaceted or multi-component nature of the worldview, and indicates which components of meaning are most dominant or most salient for a group. By superimposing the semantograph of one group on top of the semantograph of another group, similarities and differences between the worldviews of each group regarding any concept can be discerned. If there is great overlap between the components of each semantograph, the groups have very similar worldviews about a concept;
if there is little overlap, they differ greatly in their worldviews for that concept.

Figure 1 contains the superimposed semantographs of the *Black Head Start* and *White High Income* groups regarding their worldviews of the concept of Family. As can be seen, the components of Immediate Family, Love/Psychological Caregiving, and Togetherness are the most dominant for both groups. There is also a substantial overlap throughout the semantograph, indicating that the groups are very similar. This similarity is further confirmed in the correlation coefficient that was calculated between the two groups in terms of the percentages of weighted responses for each component of meaning. As is indicated in the key of the semantograph, the correlation was a positive .93 which is highly significant statistically ($p = < .01$). This provides further evidence that these two groups are quite similar in terms of their worldviews regarding the idea of Family, despite their cultural and class differences.
The worldview of the Black Head Start group regarding Family revealed a greater emphasis on Togetherness which led to the program's adoption of a "family unity" rationale for teaching and explaining family rules. For
example, in helping parents to motivate their children to follow family rules, the program asks parents to provide children with good reasons why they should follow the rules, rather than telling their children to follow the rules "just because I told you." One of the main appeals that parents are taught to employ as they discuss rules with their children is that rules help to keep the family unified and together.

This type of program strategy (*appealing to their minds and not their behinds*) was Influenced by the Head Start parents' associations to the concept of Family.
Figure 2 displays the semantographic comparisons between the **Black Head Start** and **White High-Income** groups in terms of their worldviews for the family process concept of Raising Children. Here there is much
less overlap and the groups are very different, with a small non-
statistically insignificant positive correlation. While Love is a dominant
component for both groups, there is slightly more emphasis on loving
children as part of raising them for the Black Head Start parents, and this
emphasis was capitalized upon in the program by appealing to the
parents' love of their children as a main reason for taking the time and
effort to learn and use the program skills. The strong emphasis on
Teach/Educate by the Black parents also led CICC to refer to child rearing
as being an issue of “teaching" children. To build a Pyramid of Success for
Black Children, parents are oriented to model and teach various qualities.
The Black parents' emphasis on Discipline as a main component for
Raising Children reinforced the need to place special emphasis on this
phenomena in the program.
Figure 3 reveals even greater differences between these groups in terms of their frame of reference on Disciplining children. Here the differences are so great that the low and statistically insignificant
correlation is a negative one. Three of the dominant components of Disciplining for the Black parents are Punishment, Spank/Whip and Obedience/Respect. This triad of important meanings was understood as empirical substantiation of what the Black parenting scholars called "Traditional Black Discipline". This showed to CICC that the orientation was still present in some African American communities.

Such an attitude is likely to be strongly challenged by the program's emphasis on the use of non-violent disciplinary approaches. This attitude was likely to be firmly entrenched in the minds and histories of many parents. Thus, CICC decided to use the word association method as a program teaching technique for bringing this orientation out in the open so that it could be more carefully examined. Parents in the program are asked to give their associations to the idea of Disciplining and their associations are compared to those of the Head Start parents. The dominance of associations of punishment and 'spanking and whipping is related back to the slavery experience, and the ideas of the Black Parenting scholars about the influence of slavery are discussed. Parents then have a new or different perspective on the origins of this approach to discipline in African American communities and therefore are more likely to be receptive to learning other disciplinary approaches.

Then the program capitalizes on the fact that the Head Start parents also emphasized Love and Understanding, Talking, and Explaining and Teaching as part of their Disciplining worldview to draw the parents' attention to the black scholars' comments about a different approach. Here the program introduces its major disciplinary strategy, The Modern Black Self-Discipline Strategy, which is grounded in the ideas of the Black
parenting scholars and offers a clear alternative to "Traditional Black Discipline."

The program also made use of the fact that Obedience and Respect were more salient aspects of the Black Head Start parents' worldview on Disciplining (associations of this nature were almost non-existent in the worldview of the White High Income parents). The Black Head Start parents' emphasis on respect contributed to the decision to refer to those child behaviors that parents would like to increase as being respectful behaviors, and those they would prefer to decrease as being disrespectful behaviors (in contrast to such similar behaviors being termed appropriated or inappropriate in the original OCP). This cultural accommodation was also in line with the program's desire to acknowledge and utilize colloquial and Ebonic expressions. By referring to the child behaviors that the parents would like to decrease as being disrespectful behaviors, the program reinforces and is evocative of a cultural expression for showing disrespect, Le., "dissin." For Black communities where this type of Ebonics expression is prevalent, calling unacceptable or inappropriate child behaviors disrespectful strikes a very responsive chord and helps makes the program resonate with the linguistic culture of the community. The program also refers to using drugs as disrespectful behavior, where the drug user is "dissin" to his or her own body.

The data on the parents' actual practices with their children in a variety of typical child rearing situations (the objective level of culture) also had an influence on what was taught and emphasized in the program.
Figure 4 contains a graph of the type of practices that the Black Head Start and White Low and Higher Income parents used when their children complied with parental requests or did what they said. The fact that 24 of
the *Black Head Start* parents did not say or do anything positive when their children were cooperative alerted the program creators to emphasize the need to be responsive when children are behaving respectfully and to orient parents that it was important to "catch the children being good." The fact that relatively few of the *Black Head Start* parents who were responsive praised the specific behaviors of their children was also a reason to stress the need for parents to acknowledge the actual behaviors that are praiseworthy.
Figure 5 displays the practices that the three groups of parents employed when their preschool children were disobedient in a major way, i.e., when they violated important family rules. One-third of the Black Head
Start parents indicated that their children were never disobedient in a major way, suggesting that their disciplinary approaches were working very well for them. Fewer of the remaining Black Head Start parents employed discussions during major disobediences, and while there were no group differences in terms of spanking or slapping children at critical instances like this, more of the Black Head Start parents hit their children with objects when their children seriously disobeyed. These results alerted CICC to stress that discussion is a "disciplinary" technique, and to make the point that both child physical injuries and reports of child abuse are more likely when children are struck with objects.

The clear majority of parents in all groups reported that they had hit or spanked their young children at one time or another. Thus, the groups did not differ in whether they had used corporal punishment. They did differ in the reasons they gave for hitting their young children, as the parents were also asked, in other sections of the interview, about their reasons. The Black Head Start parents gave more reasons for hitting their children, indicating that they considered such practices as serving a wide range of important purposes. These included: teaching right and wrong, teaching obedience, improving child behavior, and being a necessary tool for communicating with children who do not have the developmental capabilities to be reasoned with. These differential results further alerted CICC to the need to spend a great deal of time dealing with discipline and corporal punishment issues and to have the program relate to these issues in a variety of ways using a variety of teaching techniques.

In terms of what the parents shared with their children about being Black, fifty percent of the Black Head Start parents indicated that they
had never discussed anything with their children about being Black. Given the importance of the parent's role in helping children develop positive racial and ethnic identities, this fact further stimulated the program creators to ensure that parents were instructed to be very active in helping their children develop pride in their Blackness. This theme became part of the Pyramid of Success for Black Children and the focus of entire training sessions.

The data from the parents' interviews served as a rich, research-based reservoir for program ideas, techniques and guidelines. The interview results not only contributed to the content of the Effective Black Parenting Program but to its fundamental spirit as well.

As you now know, a great deal of what is taught in the actual Effective Black Parenting Program was initially a series of instructional units which were created as part of the Culturally-Adapted Parent Training Project. The units were about the Pyramid of Success for Black Children, Traditional Black Discipline versus Modern Black Self-Discipline, and Pride in Blackness. They were taught in between the regular instructional units from the standard programs and were not fully integrated with the ideas and skills of the standard programs.

These versions were field-tested with Black Head Start parents and the results were very positive, especially in terms of the parents' reactions to the cultural units. The results also tended to indicate that the Confident Parenting-adapted program was the more effective in terms of teaching basic skills. The instructors who taught the programs were also impressed by the parents' reactions and enthusiasm but they
commented that they felt like they were teaching two programs at the same time. Clearly, more work needed to be done to integrate programmatic content.

That work was made possible by a three year, $790,000 grant to CICC from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in the mid-1980s, *Drug Abuse Prevention and Black Parent Training*. I had been asked to serve on a NIDA work group early in the 1980s and one reason for assembling such a group was to stimulate research proposals on parent training as a drug abuse prevention strategy. We then submitted a proposal for the project.

The Effective Black Parenting Program

That grant afforded us the opportunity to sharpen the instructional units and fully integrate them in front of and around the content of the *OCP*. The result was the 15-session *Effective Black Parenting* which was initially published in the mid-1980s. Then in 1996 a more attractive version of the training materials, the Instructor Manual and the Parent’s Handbook, was created through a grant from the California Community Foundation. We used that opportunity to modify some of the teaching methods and to add African Proverbs to the program. The use of these poetic sayings from different countries in Africa was to show the relationship between what is taught in the program and the wisdom of the elders. A description of each of the sessions, including the proverbs, will follow.

Before learning about what is taught in each session of this program, it is important to recall that this program includes the use of the basic
parenting skills from the OCP program. Those skills are: Behavior-Specific Praise, Mild Social Disapproval, Systematic Ignoring, Time Out from parental attention and a Special Incentive Method. In Chapter 5, those skills are described with all their component behavioral parts. In the current chapter, the skills are only mentioned, as repeating the component parts would be redundant.

**Session One** The instructor begins this session by introducing him or herself and presenting reasons for teaching this special program for Black parents. The instructor speaks about the importance of having courses tailored to the histories and life experiences of Black people in America. Then the first African proverb is discussed after writing it on the chalkboard or chart. That proverb is: *Children are the reward of life.*

The instructor tells the parents about his or her educational background and family characteristics. Included is why he or she has seen fit to learn to teach the program, i.e., the need for a special program designed specifically for Blacks. Here he or she talks about how they learn how to deliver the program, through taking a workshop to learn how to deliver it or obtaining the curriculum and learning on his or her own. The Instructor writes the second proverb on the board: *He who learns, teaches.*

Mention is made that, as the elders say in this proverb, that once someone learns to do something good for themselves, there is an obligation to share that with others.

In an icebreaker or loosening-up exercise, the parents share information about themselves and their families.
Then, the instructor begins a series of exercises and presentations that evolve around the concept of building a Pyramid of Success for Black Children. This concept contains the core values of the Effective Black Parenting Program and is taught in such a way as to serve as a motivational tool for stimulating the parents to try out the ideas and skills that the program teaches. It is reinforced during each session of the program through regular Pyramid "Pep Talks."

The concept of building a Pyramid of Success for Black Children begins by looking at the goals which Black parents have for their children. This is accomplished through a call-and-responses teaching method (Structured Group Elicitation) which is like how some Black clergy address and involve their congregations. The instructor uses this method to elicit five life goals: achieving good educations, good jobs, loving relationships, helping the Black community, and resisting pressures to engage in illegal or unhealthy life styles (resisting "street" pressures).

Then the instructor indicates the types of characteristics that children need to develop to have a good chance at achieving the valued life goals: having high-self-esteem, pride in Blackness, self-discipline, good study and school skills, and healthy physical habits. The life goals constitute the top half of the Pyramid of Success, and the necessary child characteristics form the bottom half or the foundation from which the goals are to be achieved (see previous Pyramid of Success drawing).

Parents are then told that there is much that they can do to help their children develop the necessary characteristics and thereby provide their children with a better chance at achieving the life goals. What they
need to do is to model and teach (1) love and understanding, (2) pride in Blackness, (3) self-discipline, (4) good school and study habits, and (5) healthy physical habits. When they are modeling, and teaching these qualities, they are told that they are on the Path to the Pyramid of Succeed for Black Children. A diagram showing the path and the pyramid is displayed and becomes the primary symbol of the program (see Path to the Pyramid of Success drawing).

The parents are informed that the purpose of the *Effective Black Parenting Program* is to supply them with additional ideas and skills to help them stay on the path with their children. Their first homework assignment requires them to review the interrelationships of life goals, child characteristics and what parents can do.
Session Two  After an icebreaker exercise and a review of the Path to the Pyramid concepts and homework assignment, the instructor presents the first major set of parenting ideas, the Social Learning Theory Ideas for
Understanding Child Behaviors. In preparing the class to learn this way of thinking, the instructor shares and discusses the next proverb: *Knowledge is like a garden: if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested.*

After speaking about how these social learning ideas refer to the type of family environment that exists in one’s home, either supportive or non-supported environments, another proverb is introduced and discussed: *The cattle is as good as the pasture in which it is raised.*

Under the theory that is presented, most behavior is learned and can be unlearned; and that children learn social behaviors primarily through the consequences of their actions and through exposure to models. Three types of consequences are described: corrective, positive and withdrawal of positive consequences.

Special attention is given to positive consequences as a means of increasing respectful child behaviors.

The parents are informed that the class will teach a variety of consequence techniques. But first, the class will provide a way of keeping track of child behaviors so that parents can see whether the techniques are working. Then the instructor teaches how to count and record behaviors, including how to define behaviors through their observable qualities. The parents are given a homework assignment to count a child behavior that they would like to increase and a set of questions about the Social Learning Ideas. They are also asked to invite someone who is helping them rear their children (a spouse, relative, or friend) to the next class session.
Session Three  The session begins with the usual acknowledgement that attendance reflects parental efforts to stay on the Path to the Pyramid, and the path interrelationships are reviewed for the benefit of the guests. It is again emphasized that doing the things that are indicated on the path (modeling and teaching love and understanding, etc.) will help children develop positive characteristics and thereby have a better chance of achieving the positive life goals.
The instructor contrasts these ideas with what is likely to happen when a parent does the opposite, i.e., when parents model and teach hostility and rejection, poor self-discipline, hatred of Blackness, etc. The
instructor displays the negative counterpart of the path, a Street to Destruction drawing. Here parents are made to realize that if they are modeling and teaching negative qualities their children are likely to develop negative characteristics (low self-esteem, etc.) which probably means that they will have negative life outcomes (no or poor jobs, delinquency and crime, etc.). The Street to Destruction symbolism is used elsewhere in the program when the instructor wants to draw the parent’s attention to the potential risks of straying off of the path.

The homework questions and the charting assignments are reviewed. These activities are brought within a cultural context by discussing the next proverb: *Let him speak who has seen with his eyes.*

This leads into the teaching of the program's first and possibly most important parenting skill, the effective praise technique. This skill is taught with prefacing it with the following proverb: *When the heart overflows, it comes out through the mouth.* This social reinforcement technique, like most the program's techniques, is carefully taught through a clear sequence of training activities: the instructor delivers a brief lecture on the technique, defines its behavioral components, demonstrates or models its use, and then has the parents role play the technique. Everyone in the class role plays and practices the technique and the instructor provides feedback on parental performance. After everyone has shown his or her ability to deliver the technique, they are given homework assignments to praise the behavior they have been charting and to praise the same child for three other respectful child behaviors each day. In verbally praising their children, parents are oriented to using whatever positive expressions they are comfortable
with, including such enthusiastic Ebonics expressions as "One the one!" or "Hey, that's too tough!" or "Go girl/go boy!" or "Get on down!" etc. etc. ...

Before the end of this session, the instructor leads a discussion on the Extended Black Family which traces its origin to the African heritage and to African values of cooperation, collective responsibility, and interdependence. The extended family members participate in this discussion and their role in supporting the parents in staying on the path is discussed. They are made to feel a very important part of what the parents are trying to accomplish. This is facilitated by including the third proverb of this session: *It takes a village to raise a child.*

*Session Four*  The praise assignments are reviewed and the one which required counting and charting behavior is given special attention. The instructor graphs the results and trouble shoots any problems.

Then the instructor begins to teach a three-part curriculum section on the meaning and difference between "Traditional Black Discipline" and more "Modern Black Self-Discipline." After using the word association game to elicit the parents' ideas and images about disciplining children, in which the parents are made aware of how much they may rely on an approach to disciplining that evolves around punishment, spanking, whipping and child obedience, the instructor provides some historical perspective. Quoting from the Black parenting scholars and using descriptions from the classic television program "Roots," the instructor indicates that this approach was developed in response to the demands of slavery and more recent periods of racial discrimination. It
responds to the need for survival in a hostile world where opportunities for advancement are limited, and the consequences of violating social role guidelines are quite severe (e.g., imprisonment, brutal physical assault, death). The primary goal of this model of parenting, therefore, is to insure the child's survival, and to reduce the risks of undesirable social consequences by raising respectful Black children who do not question authority.

The instructor contrasts this approach with more "Modern Black Self-Discipline," which is based on positive, self-directed, and achievement-oriented approaches to discipline that are designed to enhance self-esteem, self-confidence and feelings of personal and collective competence. This approach to Black parenting evolved during the civil rights and Black power movements.

The parents are then informed that in the modern approach positive consequence methods like praise are disciplinary methods. They are further advised that the use of clear family rules and reasons for rules, along with the frequent use of positive consequences, reduces the need for the corrective consequences (punishment, spanking, whipping) that characterizes the traditional approach. The full spectrum of parenting methods the program teaches is displayed and described, and the parents see that they are consistent with the more modern approach.

The homework involves answering questions on the traditional and modern approaches, reading excerpts from the writings of the Black parenting scholars on discipline which are reproduce in their Parent
Handbooks, and continuing with the home projects on praise and behavior charting.

There are three proverbs that are used at appropriate junctures in this session:

*Not to know is bad; not to wish to know is worse* which prefaces learning about the meaning of disciplining.

*A shepherd does not strike his sheep* which reinforces the fact that in many African communities there were clear values against hitting children.

*Talking with one another is loving one another* which reinforces the idea that discussion, as part of Modern Black Self-Discipline, is considered a disciplinary method.

**Session Five** The new ideas and parenting strategies for this session evolve around an approach to family rules that is consistent with Modern Black Self-Discipline. This session also introduces some information about drug abuse prevention which is followed up in more detail in Session 12.

Parents are taught that family life is a very rule-influenced undertaking, and that most families have a variety of rules under which they operate, whether they are aware of them. Families usually have rules about the personal and social habits of its members, rules about property and possessions, about functioning during meals, about drinking and smoking, chores, and rules about out-of-home behavior with neighbors, police, schoolmates, teachers, etc. Parents are informed that
the purpose of family rules is to help let children know what is respectful and disrespectful behavior.

A conception of family rules as a coin (with a "do" and a "don't" side) is used to explore the parents' rules. This conception is also used to assist the parents in employing clear and reasonable family rules (family rule guidelines). These guidelines consist of (a) giving children reasons for rules ("appealing to their minds and not their behinds") which includes the idea that rules help develop family unity and togetherness, as well as promoting the growth and safety of children, (b) using family rule meetings or discussions to explain rules, (c) communicating rules in a very specific manner, (d) making rules fair, and (e) being sure that children are motivated to want to follow family rules. As homework, the parents are asked to specify various rules that they have in their homes and to ask themselves a series of questions about the rules that enables them to apply the guidelines, such as asking themselves whether they have provided reasons for the rules or whether the rules are fair.

The drug information that is shared includes (a) the influence of drugs on developing the necessary child characteristics and achieving the positive life goals, (b) conflicted societal messages about drugs, and (c) definitions of drug abuse. The Street to Destruction imagery is used here. At this session, the parents’ attention is drawn to the sections in their Parent Handbooks dealing with drugs. Their drug abuse is defined as “an amount, frequency, or pattern of drug use that impairs normal functioning,” and as behavior that is disrespectful to the self.
One section focuses on what parents can do to help young children avoid drug usage. Here it is emphasized that teaching children to be feel good about themselves, having positive role models, promoting high self-esteem and setting limits on behaviors are useful prevention strategies. Also, to be helpful, it is important to become knowledgeable about the effects of such substances as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, inhalants, cocaine, other stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, narcotics, designer drugs, and anabolic steroids. Authoritative information about these substance is also available in the *Handbooks*.

There are also three proverbs for this session that are introduced at the correct time in the session:

*It is the duty of children to wait on elders, not elders on children* which reflects that in Africa there were family rules.

*Appeal to their minds, not their behinds* which is a proverb that was created for the program to reinforce the idea that it is important to explain the reasons for having and following family rules.

*An elephant’s head is no load for a child* which is used when teaching about making rules fair for children.

*Session Six* The new ideas taught in this session evolve around a discussion of family rules in relation to children's developmental capabilities. A great deal of developmental information is shared with parents to have them assess their family rules in terms of their developmental appropriateness. The basic idea is that children's abilities take time to develop, and their abilities at any stage will influence their willingness and capacity to both reason about and follow rules.
Six types of abilities are discussed: abilities to communicate; feel emotions; use the body and its senses; care for self; read, write and do math; and to think and understand. In presenting the latter abilities, the instructor illustrates the stages of thinking development that have to do with children's ideas of right and wrong (morality). This presentation of cognitive-developmental ideas is reinforced by having the parents complete a Piagetian conservation task with an early elementary school age child as a homework assignment (the water glass experiment).

Another homework assignment is for the parents to list three family rules that they are having difficulty enforcing. This exercise is a prelude to the next session's focus on making decisions about managing rule-breaking behaviors.

The two proverbs for this session are: *Wisdom does not come overnight* and *We start as fools and become wise from experience.* Parents are asked to ponder these proverbs as they learn about how it takes time for their children to learn how to think and understand the way adults do, and as they learn about the thinking stages that children go through.

*Session Seven*  Here the Thinking Parent's Approach is presented, discussed and exemplified. It is an internal cognitive process that parents are encouraged to employ when their children break family rules. They are asked to "think before they act," as well as "think after they act." The Thinking Parent's Approach involves asking one's self a series of questions to explore the rule-breaking behavior. It is a diagnostic
approach that clinical social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists often employ.

The questions that the parents are taught to ask themselves are about the rules, about how they have been using the rules, and about the possible causes of their children's rule-breaking behaviors. Used before the parent acts, this approach helps the parent decide whether to employ or not employ a corrective consequence. If a parent decides to employ a corrective, then another decision must be made about what is the best corrective to use for the behavior in question. If the parent realizes that there are some extenuating reasons for the child's behavior or there is a problem in how the rule is being used, the issue becomes one of what type of preventive measure can be used.

The parents are asked to explore the three rules that they are having trouble enforcing within the context of the thinking parent's questions. In asking themselves about the possible causes of the rule-breaking behaviors, they are asked to consider the child’s characteristics and developmental stage, whether the behavior is being modeled by themselves or someone else in the home, whether there are things happening now that influence the behavior, and whether there is something about how the physical environment is organized that promotes the rule-breaking behavior. The parents are provided guidelines on how to change the home environment to prevent rule-breaking behaviors with young children.

Homework assignments further explore the Thinking Parent's Approach, and require the parents to chart a rule-breaking disrespectful
behavior which will serve as a focal point for the next session's discussion of corrective consequences.

Here there are three proverbs:

*Think before we act, think after we act* which is a program proverb which introduces the Thinking Parents Approach.

*What a child says, he has heard at home* which reflects that one of the ways a child may have learned to engage in rule-breaking behaviors is through modeling the behaviors of people in the environment, including possibly the behavior of the parents.

*Do as we say, say as we do* which is another proverb created for the program and which orients parents to be consistent in what they want their children to do and how they themselves behave.

*Session Eight* The discussion of the use of corrective consequences begins with considerations about child-abuse laws, corporal punishment and that such punishment is a slavery legacy. The idea that Black parents are at a disadvantage regarding that section of child abuse laws having to do with corporal punishment is also discussed. Parents are instructed not to use corporal punishment as a corrective consequence because of child abuse laws and because there are other ways to gain cooperation.

One of the program's corrective consequence techniques -- the verbal confrontation method called *Mild Social Disapproval* -- is taught through the usual training sequence of lecture, demonstration and role playing. The parents' homework assignment is to use this method in response to the rule-breaking behavior they have begun charting.
This session has three proverbs which are used to reinforce the use of crisp commands when applying the Mild Social Disapproval Method:

*He who talks incessantly, talks nonsense; Too much discussion means a quarrel,* and *It takes two to make a quarrel.*

**Session Nine** In this session another of the program's corrective consequence method is taught. Parents also discuss and learn a series of exercises about Single Parenting.

The new method involves the withdrawal of parental attention: Systematic Ignoring. Parents are taught that it can be used in response to certain kinds of rule-breaking disrespectful behaviors.

The Single Parenting section addresses such issues as the relationship of single parenting to the Path to the Pyramid, the difficulties of being a single parent, how Black traditions may help single parents, the advantages and disadvantages of being a single parent, using support systems and written resources, and coping with stress. Regarding the latter issue, the parents are taught a stress-reduction technique that employs a guided imagery exercise.

This session also has three proverbs:

*A little subtleness is better than a lot of force* when learning how to ignore certain of their children’s behaviors.

And the other two proverbs deal with single parents (and parents in general) needing to create a support system for themselves: *A brother is like one’s shoulder* and *Cross the river in a crowd and the crocodile won’t eat you.*
**Session Ten**  This session introduces a very detailed set of considerations about using a powerful corrective consequence, the Time Out Method. It is carefully taught because it has the highest likelihood of being misused or misunderstood.

Here there are four proverbs that alert parents to what to expect when they prepare to apply Time Out, and what is likely to happen when they use this powerful method. The relevant proverbs are:

*To make preparations does not spoil the trip,*

*Advise and council him; if he does not listen, let adversity teach him,*

*No matter how long the night, the day is sure to come,*

and a new program proverb, *Forewarned is Forearmed.*

**Session Eleven**  This session presents the most complicated and involved of the program's methods, the Point System Special Incentive Method. This home token-economy system can be used as a corrective consequence method and as a method to promote the use of several respectful behaviors at once. It involves pinpointing and charting respectful behaviors, creating a "*Good Stuff Menu*" of items and activities that children will want to work for, determining a workable exchange ratio, creating home behavior points or star charts, praising children for earning points or stars, making system adjustments, and eventually phasing out the system.

Homework assignments from prior sessions prepare the parents for the use of the Point System and, at this point, they are asked to spend a week thinking about whether they want to institute such a system and
about which behaviors they might want to rate. They are also alerted to next session's coverage of drug issues and they are given a homework assignment to complete, the Parent's Self-Test from their Handbooks, which is about their own substance use.

Three proverbs are employed in this session as parents learn to use the multi-component Point System Method. Two are from Africa and one was created specifically for the program.

The African proverbs are: *It is no shame at all to work for money* and *The day on which one starts is not the time to start one’s preparations.*

The new program proverb is, *It is an act of love to create situations where children will behave in ways that are good for them.*

**Session Twelve** This session begins by providing individual consultations to the parents on their charting projects and on their decisions to employ the Point System. Then it focuses on drug issues, with emphasis on the parent's role in preventing or promoting childhood drug usage.

Drawing on research studies on the contributors to teenage drug abuse, the instructor informs the parents that there have been three consistent findings about how parents seem to contribute: through a lack of love and involvement when the teens were younger, through poor enforcement of family rules, and through the modeling of drug use. When these are operating, children are more likely to become involved in drug usage. These risk-factor findings are related to the Street to Destruction concept.
Then the Path concept is presented again to show that when parents model and teach love and understanding, self-discipline in the formulation and enforcement of family rules, and good personal health habits, they are doing things that counteract the risk factors. In short, the parents are helping their children say "no" to drugs.

The Parent's Self-Test, which looks at parental use of licit and illicit substances, is reviewed. Parents give their reactions to it. Then substance use by parents and family members is examined to determine what the children are exposed to in the form of in-home models.

Several discussions and exercises assist parents in (a) becoming a primary drug information resource for their children through clarifying family drug rules and conducting family drug rule discussions, (b) handling children's concerns about parental drug use, (c) helping children resist peer pressure, and (d) detecting signs of drug use. The next homework assignment is to hold a family drug rule discussion before next week's session.

Again, there are three African proverbs. All have reference to the drug education sections of this session. In those sections parents must evaluate their own drug usage and are likely to learn the drug usage of their peers.

*Before healing others, heal thy self,*

*He who conceals his disease cannot expect to be cured,*

and *He who is free of faults will never die.*
Session Thirteen  The new information and child-rearing strategies introduced in this session encourage parents to institute regular Chit-Chat Times with each child in the family. Relying primarily on the work of one of the Black-parenting scholars, Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, the instructor stresses the importance of every child having a short time each day for an enjoyable, conflict-free and mutually sharing chit-chat with a parent, and examines the meaning, purpose and importance of these brief communicative interludes.

Discussions deal with finding good times and avoiding bad times for chit-chats and selecting appropriate topics. Parents then role play chit-chats with preschool children, elementary school children and with teenagers.

Keeping in mind that next week’s session is the last formal teaching session of the program, parents are asked to review certain issues in preparation for that session (Modern Black Self-Discipline issues and the Thinking Parent’s Approach). They are also oriented to the fact that they will be discussing some important topics about Blackness and Black Pride. The latter includes an exploration of various conceptions of racism, and the matter of blacks putting blacks down, ethnic self-disparagement. Their handbooks contain readings on racism, as well as special reading material on self-disparagement from The Black Parent’s Handbook one of the Black scholars, Clara McLaughlin. The latter includes a series of questions they need to ask themselves about how parents sometimes put down a child’s blackness in what they say to them, such as saying, “act your age and not your color.”
Two African proverbs illuminate this chapter’s teaching about the importance of having regular Chit-Chats with children. Here are the two proverbs:

*Little is better than nothing* and *Mutual affection gives each his share.*

**Session Fourteen** An extended program review precedes a discussion of racial and ethnic self-disparagement issues. The session ends with a discussion of separation matters and the importance of maintaining continuity of learning and application of program ideas and skills.

The discussion and exercises on ethnic self-disparagement are elaborations of the Pride in Blackness topics mentioned during the first session presentation on the Path to the Pyramid. Pride is defined as love and appreciation for Black people and the Black experience, culture and history; avoiding ethnic self-disparagement, and helping children cope with racism.

The discussion of Black self-disparagement is prefaced with information on how all oppressed people occasionally take on the attitudes of their oppressors. Using the questions of one of the Black scholars, Clara McLaughlin from her book, *The Black Parent’s Handbook*, they are asked to look closely at what they might be doing, consciously or unconsciously, to disparage Blackness with their children.

To help children cope with racism, parents consider a specific definition of racism from the Racism/Sexism Center for Educators: racism is prejudice plus power. Parents then engage in two role-play situations
involving racial issues that children are likely to bring home from school, such as what to do when the children report that they were not invited to parties that white students hold, or when they overhear teachers talk about Blacks being less intelligent.

Parents learn to communicate positively about Blackness, through Chit-Chat Time, using this as a way of carrying on the oral tradition. They are urged to become better informed about Black history and culture, and are given sources where they can develop a fuller knowledge base. They are encouraged to go on outings together with their children to learn about culture, such as visiting museums and exhibits about African Americans topics. Further they are oriented to focus on the strengths of Black families (strong kinship bonds, strong religious orientation, adaptability of family roles, strong work orientation and strong achievement orientation).

To maintain continuity of learning and application of program ideas and skills, a list of continuation activities is provided and discussed. Separation issues are also a formal topic of this session, which ends with a discussion of next week's graduation (where, when, etc.). The parents hear that they will be asked to summarize what they have gotten out of the program as they receive their certificates of completion.

A new proverb appears in this session to be used while discussing the need to support each other after the class ends at the next week’s final session:

*A single bracelet doesn’t jingle.*
Numerous prior proverbs are also employed here as part of the program review of this session. Indeed, prior proverbs were also used during the program reviews in prior sessions.

Session Fifteen  The graduation session is either a formal ceremony with community leaders to give out the certificates and deliver speeches, or a less formal get-together at someone's home or at a local restaurant. The parents, instructor and the institutional sponsor decides on the specifics of this symbolically important ceremony. Part of the ceremony includes a repetition of ideas about how the parents can continue to stay on the Path to the Pyramid of Success with their children. This can take the form of their continuing to meet as a local PEP Club (Parents for Effective Parenting Club) or a local Harrambee Club (an African American friendship club).

The Instructor's Kit for the 15 session Effective Black Parenting Program now consists of: (1) an Instructor's Manual, (2) a CD of Instructional Charts/Diagrams and a Promotional Flyer, (3) a Parent's Handbook, (4) a CD of Parental Endorsements, (5) 100 Promotional Flyers, (6) Graduation Certificates, (7) a CD and Worksheets about Getting Parents Into Programs, and (8) The Soulful Parent book. That book, which was recently written, will be discussed below as part of the Program Evaluation section.

A one-day seminar version of the program has also been created. The materials consist of separate Leader and Parent Guides, which are to be utilized with the Instructor's Manual and the CD of the Instructional Charts.
Program Evaluation Studies

This culturally-adapted version of the *OCP* has been inspiring and helping hundreds of thousands of African American parents throughout the United States. Instructors from over 40 states and the District of Columbia have all provided feedback that the parents in their *Effective Black Parenting* classes are sharing very positive aspects of their culture with their children. Many have also become actively involved in school-improvement activities as well as personally seeking out college and job training opportunities because of having the opportunity to take such classes.

NIDA Program Evaluation Studies

The more expected type of program impacts, on the basic child rearing attitudes and practices of the parents and on their relationships with their children and other family members, has been empirically documented in a study with African American families from South Central Los Angeles (Myers, Alvy, Arrington, Richardson, Marigna, Huff, Main and Newcomb, 1992). As has been indicated, that systematic, controlled study was supported by grant funding from NIDA, the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

That funding allowed for paying the costs for such important program supports as child care, transportation and attendance incentives. The study not only employed control groups of parents who had not taken the program, but it also used methods of statistical control (analysis of covariance) to help rule out the influence on the results of such parental behavior determinants as socioeconomic status, chronic family stresses, parental substance abuse, and parental feelings of emotional distress. It was reasoned that these co-factors, which had not been controlled in
previous parent training program evaluation studies, could influence program effects by either interfering with the parent's abilities to participate in the program, or to use the parenting skills taught, or to make necessary changes in the role relationships in the family. Thus, by statistically controlling for these potentially confounding factors, this study represents one of the purest and most conservative tests of parent training program effectiveness.

The study was conducted with African American families who had children enrolled in the first or second grades in elementary schools in South Central Los Angeles. South Central is a high-risk, predominately African American and Latino American, low-income, inner city community. It is characterized by high unemployment and underemployment, a high crime rate, high substance use and abuse, and violent gang activity.

The study spanned two years. During the first year, ten Effective Black Parenting classes were run at schools and churches in the daytime and evening. Parents received a $10 per session attendance incentive for participating, and arrangements were made for making up missed class sessions (parents made up a missed session by attending another class in the neighborhood). The first-year families (Cohort I) included 64 parents who had attended seven or more of the class sessions (mean attendance = 13.4 sessions), with 28 who attended all 15 sessions. A total of 28 demographically similar families served as the Control Group for Cohort I.

During the second year, seven classes were run and the parents earned points for attendance which they could turn in for donated household goods (reductions in grant funds during the second year resulted in having to run fewer classes and provide different attendance
incentives). The Cohort II families included 45 parents who completed seven or more training sessions (mean attendance = 13.82 sessions), with 34 who attended all 15 sessions. A demographically similar group of 36 African American parents served as the Control Group for this second cohort.

Treatment and Control group parents and their children were extensively interviewed prior to the start of the classes (pretest) and immediately after the completion of these 15 session classes (posttest). Measures were taken of parent, child and family variables known to be involved in predisposing or protecting young children from drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, school failure and mental health problems (Alvy, and Myers, 1985). These included parental acceptance/rejection, parenting practices, the quality of parent-child relations, child behavior problems and parental mental health problems.

Table 1 contains a summary of many of the program effects on these important factors.
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<th>Effects for Cohorts I and II</th>
<th>Summary of Pre-Post Test Program</th>
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<td>Cohort</td>
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As discussed earlier, parental attitudes and practices that reflect an underlying psychological acceptance or rejection of children are known to have profound effects on children's self-esteem, emotional stability and social adjustment (Rohner, 1986). Program effects on these universally important phenomena were measured by Rohner's Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire which distinguishes a variety of ways that parents express rejection and acceptance.

Cohort One program parents demonstrated significant reductions in subtle forms of rejection (undifferentiated) where children feel unloved but cannot clearly indicate the specific actions of their parents which contribute to this state. Cohort One program parents also had lower post-test scores on overt hostile/aggressive expression of rejection but these barely missed statistical significance. Oddly, the control parents showed greater gains in parental acceptance but no reductions in any form of rejection.

Cohort Two program parents evidenced significant reductions in both subtle and hostile/aggressive expressions of rejection, showing much clearer program effects in these important areas. By contrast, the Cohort Two control parents showed large increases in these forms of rejection and no gains in acceptance.

Overall, the reductions in different forms of parental rejection, which were reported by the parents who participated in the Effective Black Parenting classes, indicated that these parents became more in tune with the idea that negative attitudes and approaches to their children were harmful to their growth and development. It appears that the programs sensitized them to these realities and helped them eliminate some negativity in their overall orientation to their children.
A variety of specific parental practices were targeted for exploration through a measure that asked parents to indicate how frequently they employ each practice with their first- and second-grade children, a Parenting Practices Inventory (Alvy and Arrington, 1985). For Cohort One program parents there were statistically non-significant trends that indicated increases in use of praise and decreases in hitting. For Cohort Two program parents, the increases in praise and decreases in hitting were large enough to be statistically significant. These parents also evidenced a trend to decrease a variety of other hostile and aggressive practices (yelling and screaming as well as physical force practices) and to increase the use of a variety of warm and accepting practices. Thus, the program parents showed evidence of more frequent use of positive child rearing methods and decreases in use of negative practices.

The reductions in hitting deserve special comment. The use of spanking and other forms of corporal punishment in African American communities has a long history which many African American authorities believe is related to making survival adjustments to the horror and inhumanity of the slavery period. This issue is addressed and discussed at length in the Effective Black Parenting program and parents come to see their use of corporal punishment as being influenced by the history of survival adjustments to slavery and racism. This, as we will soon hear in the comments of one of the parents, often serves as a good reason to stop or decrease the use of corporal punishment. The program also provides other rationales for not hitting children and obviously teaches a wide range of non-violent methods for gaining their cooperation. Thus, it was expected that the practice of hitting children would be altered in some manner through program participation.
Both waves of parents altered their practices as expected, though only the reductions in hitting on the part of the second wave was large enough to reach statistical significance. Thus, with one wave of participating parents their reductions in how often they hit their children met acceptable standards of statistical significance and the reductions in another wave barely missed that standard.

But what of the psychological significance of these observed reductions, whether they reached a statistical milestone? National survey data on the long-term consequences of the use of corporal punishment would suggest that any reduction in use of corporal punishment is psychologically meaningful. The national studies by Straus and his colleagues (Straus and Gelles, 1986, 1990; Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1980) showed that it was a matter of how much corporal punishment was experienced as a child that predicted later life problems, i.e., the more frequently a person was hit as a child the more likely that person was to have substantial social, health, legal and career problems later in life. Thus, it can be reasonably concluded that any reduction in how often corporal punishment is used is important in and of itself. Reductions in use represent reductions in risk. In any case, the Effective Black Parenting program did seem to influence the frequency of use of corporal punishment -- a positive and highly valuable outcome.

Numerous other research studies have demonstrated that children who behave in problematic ways during the preschool and elementary school years are at greater risk for a variety of negative life consequences including school failure, drug abuse and delinquency (Achenbach, 1982; Weiner, 1982). Because of these consistent findings, it was decided to look carefully at whether the parents' participation in the program had an influence on any type of behavior problems that these "normal"
population children might be experiencing, as well as on their social behavioral competencies. Child behavior problems and competencies were indexed using the Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach and Edelbrock, 1983, 1979). Cohort One program parents reported significant reductions in their children's withdrawn behaviors (i.e., feels unlike, withdrawn, likes to be alone) and in hyperactive behaviors (can't concentrate, clumsy, impulsive, poor school work, acts too young) in their sons, and significant reductions in sexual problems (preoccupation with sex, sexual problems, prefers older kids) in their daughters. Cohort Two program parents reported significant reductions for both girls and boys in terms of delinquency behaviors (stealing, lying, destroying property, truancy, disobedience at school, fire setting, etc.). They also indicated improvements in their children's general social competencies, with these improvements reaching statistical significance for girls. Thus, there was evidence that the program helped parents to reduced problematic child behaviors that are often precursors of more serious later life problems, and helped them enhance their children's general social competence.

The overall quality of parent-child and family relationships is an indicator of family cohesion and togetherness. These qualities were explored through a Retrospective Assessment of Family Relationships Questionnaire which asked parents to reflect on their relationships with their children and other family members and to indicate the nature of those relationships over the last three months while the program was in operation. It provided ratings of the quality of relationships and narrative descriptions, thus allowing program parents to put in their own words the impact of the program on their families.

Cohort One parents indicated significant improvements in the quality of their relationships with their first and second grade children as
well as with other family members. They rated these relationships as greatly improved over the course of the program. Cohort Two program parents also rated their relationships as improving but the amount of improvement did not reach statistical significance. Program parents were often effusive and elegant in describing the program's impacts, as is reflected ‘in the following quotes from two program graduates:

Parent #1: "Let me tell about what the program has meant to me. When I first entered the program, I was at my whit's end. As some would say, the program was like an answer to a distress signal. One thing that really hit me kinda close to home was the fact that I was raising my children under a form of slavery. Not as harsh as my foreparents but still a form of slavery. I say this because before entering the program I used to dare my children to do something. I used to whip them for practically everything they did that I thought they shouldn't have done. They were growing up fearing me. I never gave them a chance to express themselves. It was always, 'shut up. I'm the mother, you're the child. What I say goes, and that's that." But what I've come to realize is that children have ideas and opinions too, and they need to express them. If we as parents don't give our children the opportunity to voice their opinions and express themselves to us, how in the world can we expect them to express themselves to the real world and get that good job that we hope that someday they will get. I've always known what I wanted out of life for my children and they are basically the same as the life goals that we learned about in the program, such as a good job, a good education, pride in Blackness, loving relationships with family as well as others, to be able to resist street pressures, and to have high self-esteem. However, before entering the program my methods for teaching them how to obtain these goals were all wrong. Before I always had to put fear in them to keep them in line with these goals. But I have learned that there are other
methods that we can use, such as the praise method. I have used it and I am proud to say that it really works. I found that my children like to be praised for what they do. It builds up their self-esteem. They really feel good about themselves and they work that much harder to change whatever behaviors that I disapprove of. The program really helped me and my family!"

Parent #2: "The class helped me learn about the standards that my parents passed down and helped me understand myself better. It helped me understand my feelings about being Black. It gave me so many things I can do with my children. We can laugh, we can play, we can do all of this without having to say shut up or get out of my face. My world of parenting has been opened to a new horizon. I'm a better mother and a better friend to my children."

The speeches of these two parents during their graduations were quite poignant and deserve to be listened to. They are on the Videos/Photos page of the CICC website, www.ciccparenting.org.

In another analysis of the impact of the Effective Black Parenting Program, parental mental health was observed to improve because of program participation (Alvy, Myers, Arrington, Marigna, Richardson, Huff and Main, 1988). Cohort One parents who participated in the program reported significant reductions in overall psychological symptoms, and in obsessive-compulsive symptoms and interpersonal sensitivity, while control-group parents reported pre-post program increases in these symptoms. Thus, while focusing primarily on the parent-child relationship, the program also appeared to have secondary-level effects by decreasing parental psychological distress and thereby enhancing parental mental health.
Most Cohort One parents were available for a follow-up interview one year after they had completed the program to assess how durable or stable were the effects of this 45-hour parenting program and to determine whether there were any “sleeper effects.” Gains in more positive orientations to child rearing as indexed by the Parental Acceptance/Rejection measure were maintained. A regressive movement back to a more frequent use of hitting and spanking was noted, though the parents were still hitting less often than when they entered the program. Negative and positive “sleeper effects” were found in terms of child behavior outcomes, with girls showing a tendency to engage in more delinquency behaviors and boys showing a significant increase in communicativeness one year later.

Black Family Investment Project Study

The South-Central Los Angeles parents who participated in the systematic NIDA study were drawn from the general population of parents in that community. Subsequently, parents in that community who had been reported for child abuse and neglect, participated in another study. Those parents and their children were at the highest risk for nearly all social, health and legal problems, since they had already demonstrated problematic and life threatening family functioning.

They participated in the program as part of a social-service agency family preservation project known as the Black Family Investment Project, run by the Los Angeles County Department of Children's Services (Turner-Settle, 1993). The parents were referred to the project through the official county reporting line, the Child Abuse Hot Line, which is run by the Department. (Recall from Chapter 4 it was this hotline that came
into existence because of CICC’s initial funding to run a Child Abuse
Information Center in Los Angeles.) The department itself is the largest
public child welfare agency in the United States, serving 50,000 children
per month. At the time of this study, 44 percent of the parents served by
that Department were Black. The Department considered their multi-
service Black Family Investment Project to be an emergency intervention
to prevent Black families in South Central Los Angeles, who had been
reported for suspected child abuse, neglect, abandonment,
endangerment or lack of proper parental supervision, from losing their
children to foster care. Other project goals included increasing the
community participation of these often very isolated families by bringing
services into their homes and neighborhoods.

Prior to the initiation of this project in 1990, an average of 40
percent of Black families that were reported had their children placed in
foster care, thereby disrupting whatever family bonds existed and
causing children and parents to be treated separately. Parents were
referred to whatever mental health and parenting services that were
available in the community, and they had a very poor record of attending
mandated services. The family's social worker coordinated or managed
the out-of-home placement services of the children and the parent's
treatment services.

Thus, parents and children were separated and services were
fragmented. This typical service arrangement had not only resulted in
higher immediate costs because of out-of-home placement of the
children, but higher related costs as many of these children could also be
found currently or subsequently as recipients of services from the County
Department of Probation because of anti-social or delinquent behavior.
The goals of the Black Family Investment Project were actualized by specially trained social workers who functioned as service delivery agents rather than as case managers. The social workers went into the homes of the families to deliver counseling services. All family members were also required to come out to local churches twice each week for parent and child peer group support meetings and parenting training.

The Effective Black Parenting Program was what the parents received, and it was delivered by instructors that were trained by CICC. The program was chosen because of both the range of basic parenting skills and strategies that it teaches, and because of its cultural content and grounding. Indeed, the project prided itself on delivering services that were culturally-congruent and the availability of the Effective Black Parenting curriculum facilitated this pivotal project goal. Its relevance was initially assessed by the project director who received training to deliver the program in 1989 prior to the start of the Project.

The Project has graduated several waves of families and the feedback has been very encouraging. Parents, children and staff all report positive improvements in overall family functioning and cohesion. An independent evaluation revealed a consistent trend towards parents perceiving themselves as disciplining more effectively and perceiving their children as more responsive to their authority. It also showed that the Project was effective in significantly increasing the parents' global self-worth, and that they perceive themselves as having more adequate household management skills (Turner-Settle, 1993).

The first wave of families completed the 6-month Project in 1990 and this wave included 62 families and 372 children. Most of these families attended the services that were provided: 85-90 percent
completed the Project components. This is in stark contrast to families who receive referral services through the more traditional ways of dealing with reported child abuse and who notoriously do not participate in the prescribed treatments without court orders.

Approximately 90 percent of the participating families had previously been referred for suspected child abuse, at least once. Thus, they were chronically dysfunctional families. Yet one year after completing the Project, only 13 percent had lost control of their children through being reported again for child abuse. Two years later, only 25 percent of the Project families had lost control of their children. Thus, the rate of recidivism, and the costs for managing additional cases, were markedly reduced.

Finally, a reduction in the traumatic and costly placement of children into foster care was significantly impacted by the Project services. Only 5 percent of the children served by the Project in 1991 and again in 1992 were placed in foster care and not reunited with their families. Thus, this Project, which made extensive use of the Effective Black Parenting Program, was shown to be both treatment effective and cost effective.

The systematic tests of the impact of the Effective Black Parenting Program, plus the on-going feedback from instructors nationwide and the results of the Black Family Investment Project, provides solid evidence that the program is capable of both (1) promoting effective contemporary parenting among African Americans and (2) protecting their children from many of the forces that predispose them to life-threatening and community-threatening characteristics. When used with proper supports, like child care and attendance incentives, and when followed up by booster or continuation sessions to keep parents on the
"Path to the Pyramid of Success for Black Children," the program certainly has the potential to help more African American parents withstand the pressures of poverty and racism and help them to build a brighter future for themselves and their children.

The program also has great potential, when used creatively with other services for troubled parents and children, to reduce the human suffering and financial costs of child abuse and neglect.

In terms of documenting the life-long impact of this wonderful program, the following letter from one of the children whose family participated in the Black Family Investment Project provides a very optimistic hint of such impact. At the time this letter was received in 2005, the Department was called DCFS, the Department of Children and Family Services.

Recently, staff from the Department's Black Investment Project received a letter from a graduate of the project's Effective Black Parenting course. Children's Social Worker Thelidria Calhoun of the Black Investment Project, shared this letter with "DCFS News":

Dear Mrs. Calhoun:
The way my family and I came to know you is not some- thing I am necessarily proud or ashamed of. However, I can say that after having gone through the Effective Black Parenting course with my family, I gained some critical skills that have stayed with me into adulthood. Even though I went through the program as a child, I learned skills that helped shape me into the self- motivated and determined individual I am today. It was truly a life-changing experience.
Although it has been over 12 years since my family completed this course, I still remember some underlying themes that will stay with me forever. Your program put emphasis on pride, self-esteem, healthy communication, appropriate discipline strategies, child and substance abuse prevention, and the list goes on ... I am currently working on my Ph.D. in Functional Genomics at North Carolina State University. It is my sincere hope that your program continues to be available to meet the unique needs of the Black family and community.

Well, CICC has been able to keep the program going right up until the time of the writing the book. Despite severe financial problems, our organization has continued to conduct instructor training workshops nationwide.

The Soulful Parent Book Interviews

We also have written an entire book about the impact of the program. That 2011 volume is called The Soulful Parent: Raising Healthy, Happy and Successful African American Children. I authored the book by writing (1) an Introductory chapter on the history of the program, (2) chapter introductions about the program sections that were mentioned as being the most influential by the people who were interviewed for this book, which means that a reader will also learn about exactly what is taught in the program, and most impactful, and (3) an Epilogue. That Epilogue acknowledges that contemporary African American scholars are now focusing on the slavery experience as influencing much more than just child rearing, but it also is impacting male-female relations in black communities nationwide. See such important contemporary works as the Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America’s Legacy of Enduring Injury
The *Soulful Parent* consists of 50 interviews with parents and grandparents who have completed classes in the program, and interviews with several parenting instructors. All were asked to convey what parts of the program were most meaningful to them and what the program has meant to their lives. Those were difficult questions because the program deals with so many parenting and social issues and the interviewees had to think quickly about which of those numerous matters came to their mind at that moment. As you will be able to discern from the listings in the Table of Contents of the book, which is reproduced in the Appendix, almost all issues were focused on by one or more of the persons interviewed.

The interviewees were from all regions of the nation. They were interviewed by African American journalists who wrote up their interviews for the book. A digital version of the book is now available on the CICC website.

Two of those interviews are of value to draw attention to, as they were provided by instructors who have made extensive use of the program.

Eva Price of the Family Services of Greater Boston, an organization that has been delivering the *Effective Black Parenting Program*, and the *Los Niños Bien Educados* programs for over a decade, chose to focus on the power of praise and the importance of following through on rewards as the program features she found most meaningful. She also indicated that several parents from her classes take the class more than once, sharpening their use of the skills each time. In addition, she provided the book with a poem she has written about the program and with brief stories on how she has been using the skills with her own children and with a foster child her family is raising.
It is also noteworthy that her agency has worked out a relationship with the local court system that when a parent of color is to be mandated to take a parenting class that the class be specific to their cultural backgrounds. Thus, her agency has been receiving many referrals from the courts and most of those referrals are accompanied with funds to pay for the classes.

The other interview to mention here was with the Reverend Dr. Michael Jackson, pastor of the Aimwell Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama. Pastor Jackson had taken an instructor workshop many years ago when his own children were young. He began delivering classes at his church immediately and his wife joined in running those classes. They both began using the program skills in raising their own children. He chooses to convey those experiences during the interview. He said, “When I learned the techniques like Chit Chat time and Effective Praise, it revolutionized what I would do with my kids.”

Following the programs proverb about “He who learns, teaches,” Rev. Jackson not only has continued to conduct classes at his church with his wife. He has mobilized the local Baptist church community to also have other pastors and educators trained to deliver that program. An instructor workshop was subsequently conducted in Mobile before the turn of the century. That city also saw fit to invite me for a “Dr. Alvy Day” where I spoke about the program at the local historically Black college before hundreds of families and leaders. The mayor and parish commissioners were so kind as to honor me for generating the program.

Though recently CICC has come on some hard times, that have caused the organization to cut back on many of the services it has been
delivering for decades, the organization continues to offer instructor training workshops nationwide. As a result, we continue to receive calls about bringing the program to more communities.

I personally spoke the other day to a staff member of a health agency in Allegany, Pennsylvania. When she realized she was speaking with Dr. Alvy, she shared the personal reasons for trying to bring the program to the agency for which she currently works.

Twenty years ago, when her children were preschoolers, she had the opportunity to take an *Effective Black Parenting* class herself. She conveyed, in very excited and happy tones, that the program has had dramatic effects on herself and her children. She said her little children immediately became more cooperative and began doing better at school. Their teachers told her how well they were beginning to do. And now they are all in college and are all getting along fine with other people. You can imagine how her story made me feel.

This wonderful program, which has been my great pleasure to have started, is enriching and enhancing the lives of generations of children and families. Just as I am so proud of what my own children are doing as adults, my pride is enormous in what this program continues to accomplish.