

**Last reviewed:** November 2019

**Intervention website:** <https://divorceandparenting.com/>

# GUIDEBOOK INTERVENTION INFORMATION SHEET

## New Beginnings

Please note that in the ‘Intervention summary’ table below, ‘child age’, ‘level of need’, and ‘race and ethnicities’ information is **as evaluated in studies**. Information in other fields describes the intervention as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.

Intervention summary	
<b>Description</b>	The New Beginnings Program (NBP) is a parenting intervention for parents who are divorcing, separating or are separated with a child between 3 and 18 years. It is delivered by two practitioners to groups of up to eight parents through 10 sessions lasting 1 hour 45 mins each. During these sessions, parents learn strategies for reducing inter-parental conflict, supporting their child’s needs, and improving the quality of the parent–child relationship.
<b>Evidence rating</b>	4
<b>Cost rating</b>	2
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting children’s mental health and wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved emotional wellbeing</li> <li>- Improved mental health.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved behaviour.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preventing substance abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced substance use (male only)</li> <li>- Reduced alcohol use (female only).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Child age</b> (population characteristic)	3 to 18 years

## Foundations Guidebook – Intervention information sheet

Visit the Foundations Guidebook | [www-foundations.org.uk/guidebook](http://www-foundations.org.uk/guidebook)

Intervention summary	
<b>Level of need</b> (population characteristic)	Targeted Selected
<b>Race and ethnicities</b> (population characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asian</li><li>• African American</li><li>• Hispanic</li><li>• White.</li></ul>
<b>Type</b> (model characteristic)	Group
<b>Setting</b> (model characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Out-patient health settings</li><li>• Community centres.</li></ul>
<b>Workforce</b> (model characteristic)	Two psychologists or social workers
<b>UK available?</b>	No
<b>UK tested?</b>	No

## Model description

The New Beginnings Program (NBP) is for parents with a child between 3 and 18 years old who are separating or have separated.

NBP is delivered by two practitioners to groups of up to eight parents through 10 sessions lasting 1 hour 45 mins each. Parents also receive two individual phone sessions between instructors to tailor intervention content to each family's individual needs.

NBP's content targets four factors that commonly place separating families at risk:

1. The quality of the residential parent's relationship with their children
2. The maintenance of effective discipline post parental separation
3. Children's exposure to inter-parental conflict
4. Children's access to the non-residential parent.

## Foundations Guidebook – Intervention information sheet

Visit the Foundations Guidebook | [www.foundations.org.uk/guidebook](http://www.foundations.org.uk/guidebook)

During these sessions, parents learn strategies for reducing inter-parental conflict, supporting their child's needs, and improving the quality of the parent–child relationship. Strategies covered include anger management techniques, active listening skills, and age-appropriate discipline. Parent learning is promoted through group discussions, videos, role-plays, coaching, troubleshooting difficulties, and home practice assignments. Through these activities parents learn how the skills are linked to children's adjustment outcomes and how to use them effectively.

### Target population

<b>Age of child</b>	3 to 18 years
<b>Target population</b>	Families with a child between 3 and 18 years, who are divorced, separated, or separating

Please note that the information in this section on target population is as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.



## Theory of change

Why		Who	How	What		
Science-based assumption	Science-based assumption	Science-based assumption	Intervention	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental separation, divorce, and the subsequent period represent a stressful transition in the family lifecycle</li> <li>• Parental separation is known to increase the risk of child emotional and behavioural problems during childhood and adolescence.</li> </ul>	Avoiding conflict and working effectively as co-parents can reduce the stress children experience during parental divorce and separation.	Separating parents can benefit from advice on improving the co-parenting relationship and reducing inter-parental conflict.	Parents learn to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work effectively as co-parents while living apart</li> <li>• Reduce inter-parental conflict</li> <li>• Support their children's needs through active listening skills</li> <li>• Encourage positive child behaviour</li> <li>• Implement age-appropriate discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are better able to work effectively as co-parents</li> <li>• Families are better able to manage conflict</li> <li>• Parents experience improved wellbeing</li> <li>• Parent–child interaction improves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are better able to manage post-separation</li> <li>• Children's emotional wellbeing is supported</li> <li>• Children's behaviour improves.</li> </ul>	Children are at less risk of emotional and behavioural problems as they develop.



## Implementation requirements

<b>Who is eligible?</b>	Families with children aged between 3 and 18 years where the parents have recently divorced, separated, or are separating.
<b>How is it delivered?</b>	New Beginnings is delivered in 10 sessions of 1 hour 45 mins duration each by two practitioners, to groups of up to eight parents.
<b>What happens during the intervention?</b>	Activities include group discussion, skills demonstration videos, role-plays, review of use of skills, troubleshooting difficulties, and assignment of home practice. Through these activities parents learn how the skills are linked to children's adjustment outcomes and how to use them effectively.
<b>Who can deliver it?</b>	Practitioners are expected to have a master's qualification or higher, for example as a social worker or psychologist.
<b>What are the training requirements?</b>	The practitioners have three days of intervention training. Booster training of practitioners is recommended.
<b>How are practitioners supervised?</b>	It is recommended that practitioners are supervised by one host-agency supervisor, with 112 hours of intervention training, and one external supervisor.
<b>What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?</b>	Intervention fidelity is maintained through the following processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training manual</li> <li>• Other printed material</li> <li>• Online training</li> <li>• Video and DVD training materials</li> <li>• Face-to-face training</li> <li>• Fidelity monitoring.</li> </ul>
<b>Is there a licensing requirement?</b>	Yes
<b>*Contact details</b>	<p>Contact person: Dr Sharlene Wolchik</p> <p>Organisation: Arizona State University REACH Institute</p> <p>Email address: <a href="mailto:Wolchik@asu.edu">Wolchik@asu.edu</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="https://divorceandparenting.com/">https://divorceandparenting.com/</a></p> <p>*Please note that this information may not be up to date. In this case, please visit the listed intervention website for up to date contact details.</p>



## Evidence summary

New Beginnings' most rigorous evidence comes from two RCTs which were conducted in the United States.

Both RCTs were included in a single study, and identified statistically significant improvements in children's internalising and externalising behaviour, and mental health, with impact sustained in longer-term follow-up.

New Beginnings can be described as evidence-based: it has evidence from at least one rigorously conducted RCT or QED demonstrating a statistically significant positive impact on at least one child outcome.

Child outcomes			
Outcome	Improvement index	Interpretation	Study
Reduced internalising problems	+13	0.17-point improvement on the Child Behaviour Checklist (Internalising Scale)	1
Reduced internalising problems	+24	19.1-percentage point reduction in proportion of participants developing an internalising disorder (measured using the Diagnostic Interview Schedule IV)	1
Reduced internalising problems	+6	1.58-point improvement on the Child Behaviour Checklist and the Preschool Child Behaviour Checklist (internalising scale)	2
Reduced diagnosis of mental disorder	+32	12.5-percentage point reduction in proportion of participants with diagnoses of mental disorder (measured using the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children)	1
Reduced externalising problems	+22	0.28-point improvement on the Child Behaviour Checklist (Externalising Scale)	1



Reduced externalising problems	+15	0.19-point improvement on the Child Behaviour Checklist (Externalising Scale) at 6 month follow-up	1
Reduced externalising problems	+5	1.34-point improvement on the Child Behaviour Checklist and the Preschool Child Behaviour Checklist (externalising scale)	2

## Search and review

	Number of studies
Identified in search	3
Studies reviewed	3
Meeting the L2 threshold	0
Meeting the L3 threshold	2
Contributing to the L4 threshold	0
Ineligible	1

## Individual study summary: Study 1

Study 1	
Study design	RCT
Country	United States
Sample characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>240 divorced mothers with a child aged between 9 and 12 years</li> <li>Mothers must have been divorced within the previous two years.</li> </ul>
Race, ethnicities, and nationalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>88% White</li> <li>8% Hispanic</li> <li>2% African American</li> </ul>



Study 1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% Asian</li> <li>• 1% Other.</li> </ul>
<b>Population risk factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47% of mother reported completing some college courses</li> <li>• The median yearly income of families was in the range of \$20,001–\$25,000.</li> </ul>
<b>Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline</li> <li>• Post-intervention</li> <li>• 6 month follow-up (Study 1a)</li> <li>• 6-year follow-up (Study 1b)</li> <li>• 15-year follow-up (Study 1c).</li> </ul>
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<p><i>Post-intervention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced externalising behaviour problems</li> <li>• Reduced internalising behaviour problems.</li> </ul> <p><i>6-month follow-up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced externalising behaviour problems.</li> </ul> <p><i>6-year follow-up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced externalising behaviour problems</li> <li>• Reduced mental disorder symptom count.</li> </ul> <p><i>15-year follow-up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced internalising disorder</li> <li>• Reduced drug use (male only)</li> <li>• Reduced alcohol use (female only).</li> </ul>
<b>Other outcomes</b>	<p><i>Post-intervention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1a: Improved mother–child relationship (parent report)</li> <li>• 1a: Improved use of effective discipline (parent report)</li> <li>• 1a: Reduced inter-parental conflict (child report).</li> </ul>
<b>Study Rating</b>	3
<b>Citations</b>	<p><b>Study 1a:</b> Wolchik, S. A., West, S. G., Sandler, I. N., Tein, J. Y., Coatsworth, D., Lengua, L., ... &amp; Griffin, W. A. (2000) An experimental evaluation of theory-based mother and mother–child programs for children of divorce. <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i>. 68 (5), 843–856.</p> <p><b>Study 1b:</b> Wolchik, S. A., Sandler, I. N., Millsap, R. E., Plummer, B. A., Greene, S. M., Anderson, E. R., ... &amp; Haine, R. A. (2002) Six-year follow-up of preventive interventions for children of divorce: A randomized controlled trial. <i>Jama</i>. 288 (15), 1874–1881.</p>





## Study 1

**Study 1c:** Wolchik, S. A., Sandler, I., Tein, J.-Y., Mahrer, N., Millsap, R., Winslow, E., . . . Reed, A. (2013) Fifteen-year follow-up of a randomized trial of a preventive intervention for divorced families: Effects on mental health and substance use outcomes in young adulthood. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. 81 (4), 660–673.

## Brief summary

### Population characteristics

This study involved 240 divorced mothers with a child aged between 9 and 12 years (mean age 10.4 years) living in the vicinity of Phoenix, Arizona. 49% of the children were female. The mean maternal age was 37.3.

Mothers had been divorced for at least two years (average of 12 months and physically separated an average of 27 months) and were not in a new co-habiting relationship. Legal custody arrangements for the children were 63% sole maternal, 35% joint, and 2% split.

Additional inclusion criteria for the study included: neither the mother nor any residential child was currently in treatment for psychological problems; custody arrangement was expected to remain stable during the trial; family resided within a one-hour drive of the site where the intervention was delivered; mother and child could complete the assessment in English; child did not have a special educational need or disability, and if diagnosed with ADHD they were taking medication. Families were also excluded at pretest interview if the child reported any suicidal ideation, extremes scores on either child depression index or CBCL (Child Behaviour Checklist) externalising behaviours.

The median yearly income of families was in the range of \$20,001-\$25,000 and 47% reported completing some college courses.

Mothers in the sample were 88% White, 8% Hispanic, 2% African American, 1% Asian, and 1% Other.

### Study design

280 families were randomly assigned through a computer-generated algorithm to one of three groups: NBP for mothers (81 mothers), NBP dual component for mothers coupled with additional support for the children (83 mothers), and a control condition (76 mothers). The child support included relaxation techniques, problem-solving skills, and challenging negative thoughts, while the control condition involved reading materials and self-study. The particular conditions of interest are the NBP for mothers and control condition.

The groups were equivalent on key demographics and baseline outcomes with the exception that inter-parental conflict was lower in the control condition compared to the dual component condition.



## Measurement

Assessments were conducted at baseline, post-intervention, 6-month post-intervention, and at 6-year and 15-year follow-ups.

### *Pre-intervention, post-intervention, and 6-month post-intervention (Study 1a)*

- **Child report** measures included selected items from the Child Report of Parenting Behavior Inventory (CRPBI) and the Open Family Communication subscale of the Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale (PACS), three questions from the Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (CPICS), the Threat Appraisal Scale, the Children's Coping Strategies Checklist—Revised (CCSC-R), the Coping Efficacy Scale, the Youth Self Report, the Children's Depression Inventory, and the Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale-Revised (CMAS-R).
- **Parent report** measures included selected items from the Child Report of Parenting Behavior Inventory (CRPBI), the Open Family Communication subscale of the Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale (PACS), the Oregon Social Learning discipline scales, three questions from the Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (CPICS), six questions about the quality of the father-child relationship and the Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL).
- **Teacher report** measures included the six-item Acting-Out subscale and the Shy-Anxious subscale of the Teacher-Child Rating Scale.
- **Researcher-led** assessments included coded observations of the mother and child communicating during a problem-solving task.

### *6-year follow-up (Study 1b)*

- **Child report** measures included the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children, a 27-item self-report scale of externalising problems, Divorce Adjustment Project Externalizing Scale (DAPES), the Child Depression Inventory (CDI), the Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale (CMAS), the Monitoring the Future Scale, and a set of questions about the number of sexual partners.
- **Parent report** measures included the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children and the Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL).

### *15-year follow-up (Study 1c)*

- Measures included the Diagnostic Interview Schedule IV (DIS) to assess internalising and externalising disorders (child report). Recent mental health problems (last six months) were assessed using the internalising and externalising problems subscales of the Adult Self Report (ASR) (child report) and Adult Behaviour Checklist (ABCL) (mother report).
- Substance-related disorders and number of substance-related disorders were assessed. The Diagnostic Interview Schedule IV, the Monitoring the Future Scale, and items from the Quantity and Frequency of Alcohol and Drugs Scale, ASR and ABCL (mother report) were used to assess substance use.
- Some measures were combined to produce composite scores of risks.



## **Study retention**

### ***Post-intervention (Study 1a)***

100% of the participants completed the post-intervention assessments.

### ***6-month follow-up (Study 1a)***

98% (234) of the participants completed assessments at the 6-month follow-up, including 98% (79) from the mothers-only group, 98% (81) from the dual component group and 97% (74) from the self-study control.

### ***6-year follow-up (Study 1b)***

91% (218) of the families completed assessments at the 6-year follow-up, including 95% (77) of the mothers only group, 88% (73) from the dual component group and 89% (68) from the self-study control group. No differential attrition was observed.

### ***15-year follow-up (Study 1c)***

90% (204) of the mothers in the sample completed assessments at the 15-year follow-up, and 80% (N=194) of the young people in the sample. For this analysis, the two treatment groups were combined, with a total of 82% (134) completed data sets, while 79% (60) were available for the self-study control. Missing variable analyses imputed data to include the full sample of 240.

## **Results**

### ***Data-analytic strategy***

To assess the intervention at post-intervention and 6-month follow-up, regression models were created which compared NBP for mothers against the control condition and NBP for mothers against the NBP dual component (mother and child). Interactions effects were included to assess the differential impact of the intervention based on pre-intervention scores for both NBP for mothers and NBP dual component. The scores from the child and mother report measures were combined to create composite variables.

At 6-year follow-up, NBP for mothers and NBP dual-component were both compared against control condition, using ANCOVAs, logistic regression (for dichotomous measures), or ordinal logistic regression (for ordinal measures). Scores for the child report scales were combined to create composite measures.

At 15-year follow-up, multivariate analyses were conducted to examine main and interaction effects of the intervention. For these analyses, NBP for mother and NBP dual component were included as single intervention group and compared to the control group. Gender was included as a moderator in the analyses, and participants were nested within group. Additionally, missing variable analyses were conducted and baseline self-esteem and internalising problems were included as co-variables to account for differential attrition. Missing data was handled using full-information maximum likelihood estimation for continuous variables, and multiple imputation for count and categorical



variables. To account for multiple comparison, Benjamani–Hochberg correction was applied. In all analyses intent to treat was used.

## Results

At post-intervention, NBP for mothers demonstrated positive effects on children’s internalising and externalising problems, compared to the control condition. The intervention effect on externalising problems was greater for those with poorer initial functioning. In contrast to family reports of adjustment, teachers reported more shy and anxious behaviour for children in the intervention (NBP for mothers) when compared to the control condition at post-intervention.

The positive effects on family reported externalising problems were maintained at 6-month follow-up. At 6-month follow-up teachers reported more acting out behaviour in the control condition compared to the intervention. No significant differences were found between the NBP dual component and NBP for mothers.

Other positive effects were found post-intervention for mother–child relationship quality, discipline, attitude towards father–child contact. For several outcomes, more positive effects occurred in families with poorer initial functioning.

At 6-year follow-up, reduced externalising behaviours and mental disorder symptoms were found for NBP in comparison to the control group. Interaction effects continued to suggest a stronger intervention effect for those at higher risk at baseline.

At the 15-year follow-up, the young people in NBP (both the mother intervention and the dual component intervention) reported a lower rate of internalising disorders, a reduction in substance misuse (for males only), and a reduction in alcohol use (for females only).

## Study 1: Outcomes table

Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
<b>Child outcomes NBP (mothers only) and control</b>					
Internalising problems	Composite score (child, parent report)	$d = 0.34$	Yes	157**	Post-intervention
Internalising problems	Composite score (child, parent report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up



Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
Internalising problems	Composite score (child, parent report)	NR	No	145	6-year follow-up
Externalising problems	Composite score (child, parent report)	$d = 0.57$	Yes	157	Post-intervention *
Externalising problems	Composite score (child, parent report)	$d = 0.38$	Yes	153	6-month follow-up *
Externalising problems	Composite score (child, parent report)	NR	Yes	145	6-year follow-up *
Acting out problems	Acting-Out subscale of the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (teacher report)	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Acting out problems	Acting-Out subscale of the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (teacher report)	$d = 0.17$	Yes	153	6-month follow-up*
Shy-anxious behaviours	CMAS-R (teacher report)	$d = 0.36^{***}$	Yes	157	Post-intervention *
Shy-anxious behaviours	CMAS-R (teacher report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up



Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
Threat appraisal	Threat appraisal scale (child report)	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Threat appraisal	Threat appraisal scale (child report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Active strategies	Questionnaire (child report)	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Active strategies	Questionnaire (child report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Avoidant strategies	Questionnaire (child report)	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Avoidant strategies	Questionnaire (child report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Active strategies	Researcher observation	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Avoidant strategies	Researcher observation	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Distraction coping	Researcher observation	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Support coping	Researcher observation	$d = 0.04$	Yes	157	Post-intervention*



Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
Mental disorder symptom count	CDI & CMAS composite (child report)	NR	Yes	144	6-year follow-up *
Drug dependence or abuse symptom count	Composite score (child measure)	NR	No	144	6-year follow-up
Polydrug use	Composite score (child measure)	NR	No	138	6-year follow-up
Number of sexual partners	Child report	NR	No	138	6-year follow-up
<b>Parent outcomes – NBP (both NBP for mothers and NBP dual component) and control</b>					
Internalising problems	Composite ABCL/ASR internalizing t-Score (mean) (child/parent report)	NR	No	240	15-year follow-up
Externalising problems	Composite ABCL/ASR externalizing t-Score (mean) (child/parent report)	NR	No	240	15-year follow-up
Internalising disorder	Diagnostic Interview Schedule IV (DIS IV) Internalizing disorder past 9 years (%) (child report)	OR =.26	Yes	197	15-year follow-up
Externalising disorder	DIS IV Externalizing disorder past 9	NR	No	211	15-year follow-up



	years (%) (child report)				
Internalising or externalising disorder	DIS IV Internalizing or externalizing disorder past 9 years (%) (child report)	OR = .30	Yes	197	15-year follow-up
Age regular drinking	Item from DIS IV (child report)	NR	No	240	15-year follow-up
Binge drinking	Item from Quantity and Frequency of Alcohol and Drugs Scale (child report)	NR	No	240	15-year follow-up
Alcohol use	Monitoring the Future scale Alcohol use past month (mean) (child report)	d = .44*** (female)	Yes	240	15-year follow-up *
Marijuana use	Monitoring the Future scale Marijuana use past month (mean) (child report)	NR	No	240	15-year follow-up
Polydrug use	Monitoring the Future scale Polydrug use past year (mean) (child report)	d = .55 (male)	Yes	240	15-year follow-up *
Other drug use	Monitoring the Future scale Other drug use past year (mean) (child report)	d = .61 (male)	Yes	240	15-year follow-up *
Substance use problems	Composite ABCL/ASR substance use problems t-score (mean)	d = .50 (male)	Yes	240	15-year follow-up *





	(parent and child report)				
Substance use disorder	DIS IV Substance use disorder past 9 years	NR	No	211	15-year follow-up
Number of Substance use disorders	DIS IV Number of substance use disorder past 9 years	d = 0.40 (male)	Yes	211	15-year follow-up *
<b>Parent outcomes – NBP mothers only and control</b>					
Mother-child relationship quality	Composite measure (observation, child and parent report)	d = 0.49	Yes	157	Post-intervention *
Mother-child relationship quality	Composite measure (observation, child and parent report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Effective discipline strategies	Composite measure (mother and child report)	d = 0.50	Yes	157	Post-intervention
Effective discipline strategies	Composite measure (mother and child report)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Contact with father	Mother report	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Contact with father	Mother report	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up



Attitude towards father child relationship	Composite measure (mother report)	$d = 0.09$	Yes	157	Post-intervention*
Interparental conflict	Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (mother/child composite)	$d = 0.13$	Yes	157	Post-intervention*
Interparental conflict	Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (mother/child composite)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Conversational latitude	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	NR	No	157	Post-intervention
Conversational latitude	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Validation of content	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	$d = 0.8$	Yes	157	Post-intervention
Validation of content	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Open-ended questions	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	NR	No	157	Post-intervention



Open-ended questions	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	NR	No	153	6-month follow-up
Attending	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	d = .49	Yes	157	Post-intervention
Attending	Parent–child communication (observational measure)	d = 0.37	Yes	153	6-month follow-up
<p>Cohen's d corresponding to intervention contrast for overall sample (no interaction).</p> <p>* Cohen's d corresponding to the intervention contrast evaluated at the mean of the pretest distribution of the sample / or categorical variable (interaction).</p> <p>** For number of participants at post-intervention, 6-month follow-up, and 6-year follow-up, the number of mother only and control group are presented. This does not represent attrition. At the 15-year follow-up, both intervention groups were collapsed, and missing data imputed, hence the higher sample size.</p>					

## Individual study summary: Study 2

Study 2	
<b>Study design</b>	RCT
<b>Country</b>	United States
<b>Sample characteristics</b>	830 families (including 886 mothers or fathers) with children aged between 3 and 18 years, where the parents had attended court in the past two years for a divorce, separation, or change in parenting time agreement.
<b>Race, ethnicities, and nationalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59.4% white</li> <li>• 31.4% Hispanic</li> <li>• 9.2% other racial or ethnic background.</li> </ul>
<b>Population risk factors</b>	None reported



Study 2	
<b>Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline</li> <li>• Post-intervention</li> <li>• 10-month follow-up.</li> </ul>
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved internalising behaviour</li> <li>• Improved externalising behaviour.</li> </ul>
<b>Other outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved parenting</li> <li>• Improved relationship quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Study Rating</b>	3
<b>Citation</b>	Sandler, I., Wolchik, S., Mazza, G., Gunn, H., Tein, J. Y., Berkel, C., ... & Porter, M. (2019) Randomized effectiveness trial of the New Beginnings Program for divorced families with children and adolescents. <i>Journal of Clinical Child &amp; Adolescent Psychology</i> . 40 (3), 247–263.

## Brief summary

### Population characteristics

The trial was conducted in partnership with family courts in two urban and two small-town, rural counties in Arizona. Participants included 830 families, mothers (n=474; 57.1%) as well as fathers (n=356; 42.9%).

Parents ranged from 18 to 63 years old, and children ranged from 3 to 18 years old; 47.8% of the children in these families were female.

At the pretest assessment, 262 (31.6%) of the 830 parents were divorced, 442 (53.3%) were legally married but divorcing, and 126 (15.2%) were never legally married but were in court to establish or change a parenting time agreement following separation. Parents also had to spend at least three hours per week with a child or at least one overnight per fortnight, and were not mandated to a parenting class by the Juvenile Court or Child Protective Services.

In terms of ethnicity, 59.4% of parents were White, 31.4% Hispanic, 9.2% other race or ethnicity.

Parents had a wide range of education levels: 3.7% less than a GED or high school diploma, 15.7% GED or high school diploma, 36.5% some college or vocational training, 14.5% associate degree, 29.6% bachelor's degree or higher.

### Study design

The study was a two-arm RCT. Participants across four cohorts were randomised to NBP (N=445) or a comparison group (N=385), using a computer-generated random number, with a 53% to 47% ratio of NBP to comparison group. Where two parents in a couple enrolled in the study, only one parent was included in the analysis.



The comparison condition involved a low dose intervention of two group sessions, in which practitioners presented information on risk and protective factors targeted in the intervention, as well as peer support discussion and goal setting.

## Measurement

Measurement took place at baseline, post-intervention, and at a 10-month follow-up.

- **Child report** measures for children aged 9 or over included The Family Routines Inventory, Involvement Communication from the Open Communication subscale of the Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale, Closeness single item, the Child Monitoring Scale, the Parent and Child report – Child Report of Parental Behavior Inventory, and the Children’s Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale, The Brief Problem Monitor, the Caught in the Middle Scale, and Badmouthing.
- **Parent report** measures included The Family Routines Inventory, Involvement, Communication from the Open Communication subscale of the Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale, Closeness single item, the Child Monitoring Scale, the Parent and Child report – Child Report of Parental Behavior Inventory, the Children’s Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale, the Oregon Discipline Scale, the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) for children aged 6 to 18, and the Preschool CBCL (Pre-CBCL) for children aged 3 to 5.
- **Teacher report** measures included The Brief Problem Monitor and the Teacher–Child Rating Scale. .

## Study retention

### *Post-intervention*

At post-intervention, 82% (N=678) of the sample was retained, representing 83% of the control group (320 families), and 80% of the intervention group (358 families) remained.

### *10-month follow-up*

At 10-month follow-up, 73% (N=603) of the sample was retained, representing 78% (N=299) families in the control group and 68% (N=304) families in the intervention group.

Data was obtained at pre-intervention, post-intervention, and/or 10-month follow-up from 559 (73.8%) of the 757 children aged 9 or older and from teachers of 687 (96.5%) of the 712 eligible children whose parent provided permission to collect teacher-reported data.

On average, parents who did not complete the post-intervention interview reported less education, lower risk, and fewer child internalising problems at pre-test than those who did. Parents who did not complete the 10-month follow-up interview reported less education than those who did. Parents in the comparison condition who did not complete the post-test interview reported fewer child externalising and total problems at pre-intervention than those who did. Parents in the NBP who did versus did not complete the post-intervention interview did not significantly differ on child externalising or total problems at pre-intervention.



## Results

### *Data-analytic strategy*

Regression analyses compared NBP with the control condition including baseline covariates: baseline status on the outcome, baseline risk, county of residence, parent gender, and an indicator of whether both parents were enrolled. Interactions tested whether program effects were moderated by baseline status on the outcome, parent gender, parent ethnicity (non-Hispanic White vs Hispanic), child age, and inter-parental conflict. A false discovery rate correction was applied for each domain of outcomes with multiple measures. Missing data was handled with imputation (full information maximum likelihood) and an intent-to-treat approach was used.

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on child and parent outcomes at post-intervention and at 10-month follow-up.

### *Findings*

At post-intervention, reduced child internalising (parent and child report), externalising (parent only) and total problems (parent and child report) were found for the intervention group compared to the control. At 10-month follow-up, reduced internalising problems (parent and child report) and total problems (parent only) were maintained, when moderated by ethnicity. Significant interaction effects showed child adjustment outcomes to be moderated by ethnicity, demonstrating that the intervention was effective for white participants and less effective for Hispanic participants.

Some negative effects were observed. At the post-test assessment, teachers reported more externalising problems, lower task orientation, lower assertive social skills, and lower frustration tolerance among a subgroup of younger children (children aged 8 and younger) from NBP when compared to the control group. The study authors, however, suggest that negative effects were mitigated as the 10-month follow-up didn't identify any statistically significant negative effects for children in treatment group. Moreover, these findings are only observed in the school context (not in the home, where improvements in behaviour are observed), and are only observed with respect to a subgroup of younger children.

### *Parenting outcomes*

The intervention improved parent self-reports of discipline and monitoring at post-intervention. Improvements in parent self-report in parenting relationship quality and rejection at post-intervention were moderated by ethnicity, with intervention effect stronger for White participants and less so for Hispanic participants.



## Study 2: Outcomes table

Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
<b>Child outcomes</b>					
Internalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Parent report)	d = 0.36* Ethnicity white	Yes	830	Post-intervention *
Internalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Parent report)	d = 0.17 Ethnicity white	Yes (moderated only)	830	10-month follow-up *
Externalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Parent report)	d = 0.28 Ethnicity white	Yes	830	Post-intervention *
Externalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Parent report)	NR	No	830	10-month follow-up
Total Problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Parent report)	d = 0.33 Ethnicity white	Yes	830	Post-intervention *
Total Problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Parent report)	NR	No	830	10-month follow-up
Internalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Child report)	d = 0.14 Child age -1SD	Yes (moderated only)	757	Post-intervention *
Internalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Child report)	d = 0.48 Ethnicity white	Yes (moderated only)	757	10-month follow-up *
Externalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Child report)	NR	No	757	Post-intervention
Externalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Child report)	NR	No	757	10-month follow-up



Total Problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Child report)	NR	No	757	Post-intervention
Total Problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Child report)	d =0.34 Ethnicity white	Yes (moderated only)	757	10-month follow-up *
Internalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	Post-intervention
Internalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Externalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Teacher report)	d =0.16*** Child age - 1SD	Yes (moderated only)	712	Post-intervention *
Externalising problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Total problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	Post-intervention
Total problems	CBCL/Preschool CBCL (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Learning problems	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	Post-intervention
Learning problems	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Task Orientation	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	d =0.16 *** Child age- 1SD	Yes (moderated only)	712	Post-intervention *
Task Orientation	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Frustration Tolerance	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	d =0.17 *** / 0.14 Child age -	Yes (moderated only)	712	Post-intervention *





		1SD/+1SD (mixed results)			
Frustration Tolerance	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Assertive Social Skills	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	d = 0.16*** Child age - 1SD	Yes (moderated only)	712	Post-intervention
Assertive Social Skills	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
Social Competence	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	Post-intervention
Social Competence	Teacher-Child Rating Scale (Teacher report)	NR	No	712	10-month follow-up
<b>Parent outcomes</b>					
Parenting Relationship Quality	Composite score (Parent report)	d=0.45 Ethnicity White*	Yes	830	Post-intervention
Parenting Relationship Quality	Composite score (Parent report)	NR	No	830	10-month follow-up
Discipline	Composite score (Parent report)	d=0.22	Yes	830	Post-intervention
Discipline	Composite score (Parent report)	NR	No	830	10-month follow-up
Rejection	Child Report of Parental Behaviour Inventory (Parent report)	d=0.45 Ethnicity White	Yes	830	Post-intervention



Rejection	Child Report of Parental Behaviour Inventory (Parent report)	NR	No	830	10-month follow-up
Monitoring	Child Monitoring Scale (Parent report)	d = 0.13	No	830	Post-intervention
Monitoring	Child Monitoring Scale (Parent report)	d = 0.13/0.19-1sd/+1sd Child age 0.16 Conflict (m)	Yes	830	10-month follow-up
Parenting	Composite score (Child report)	NR	No	757	Post-intervention
Parenting	Composite score (Child report)	NR	No	757	10-month follow-up
Conflict	Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (Parent report)	NR	No	830	Post-intervention
Conflict	Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (Parent report)	NR	Yes (moderated only)	830	10-month follow-up
Interparental Conflict	Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (Child report)	NR	No	757	Post-intervention



Interparental Conflict	Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (Child report)	NR	No	757	10-month follow-up
Caught in the Middle Scale	Caught in the Middle Scale (Child report)	NR	No	757	Post-intervention
Caught in the Middle Scale	Caught in the Middle Scale (Child report)	NR	No	757	10-month follow-up
Badmouthing	Badmouthing questions (Child report)	NR	No	757	Post-intervention
Badmouthing	Badmouthing questions (Child report)	NR	No	757	10-month follow-up
<p>Where moderated effects were significant, effect sizes for these are reported; otherwise effect sizes for simple main effects are reported.</p> <p>***Statistically significant in favour of the control group.</p>					

## Other studies

The following studies were identified for this intervention but did not count towards the intervention's overall evidence rating. An intervention receives the same rating as its most robust study or studies.

Wolchik, S., West, S., Westover, S., Sandler, I., Martin, A., Lustig, J., . . . Fisher, J. (1993) The children of divorce parenting intervention: Outcome evaluation of an empirically based program. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 21 (3), 293–331.

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**Note on provider involvement:** This provider has agreed to Foundations' terms of reference (or the Early Intervention Foundation's terms of reference), and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the intervention provider.