Working with Parents of Children with Externalizing Problem Behavior

1. Introductions – Do you currently engage in parent training – or have you – and how do you approach it?

Constructing and Running Successful Parent Training Groups

- Even if court-ordered, help parents to see the value (“Ready, willing, and able”)
  - Why parent training instead of just child training?
  - Value of skills for child as well as other children in family
  - Your role as both teacher and “coach”

- Anticipate and subsume resistance
  - Multiple reminders
  - Child care
  - Transportation
  - Meal or snack

- Provide attendance reinforcers
  - Weekly expenses plus final bonus (if allowed)
  - Grocery or other shopping vouchers
  - Tickets to family events

- Have materials ready for handout
  - If they need it, provide it
    - Explanatory handouts
    - Charts for points – “Where are you going to put it?”
    - Child reinforcers – Collaborate (Toys/food, privileges, tokens, social)

- Create a structure and stick to it as much as possible, such as:
  1. “Focus on Success” Go-Round
  2. Review of last session’s training and practice
  3. New training and practice, including problem-solving for generalization
  4. Individual goal-setting, including family activities
  5. ”What did you learn tonight?” Go-Round
  6. Snack and adjournment

- Important (not exhaustive) Training Elements
  - Identifying problem behavior and it’s positive opposite
  - Effective use of reinforcers
  - Understanding the problem with using harsh or physical punishment
  - Rationale, correct use, and implementation of time out
  - Effective use of mild punishers, such as reprimands and response cost
  - Working effectively with the school