

A family was referred by CWS to the FP program in February 2012 after allegations of physical abuse were dropped as unfounded. The 6 year old child had said at school that his grandmother has hit him with a hanger on his back. There were no marks or bruises. The grandmother denied using corporal punishment.

The child was an infant when he was removed from his mother's custody due to drug abuse during pregnancy and afterwards. He was placed in the guardianship of his grandmother along with his two older siblings.

Because of the prenatal drug exposure, the child had early developmental problems that had required intervention including speech therapy, special education programs, and an IEP plan. However, the school and grandmother experienced much difficulty with regards to the child's behavior. He was noncompliant, threw tantrums, and even threatened the teacher. The school had even requested that he be removed.

The FP worker made a home visit and interviewed the grandmother. The FDM was utilized to note strengths: The child and siblings were adequately provided their basic needs for by grandmother who had adopted the older children as her own; The family was strong and connected with older siblings assisting grandmother in care of younger brother; There was attention to health needs; There was no domestic violence or presence of abuse; Grandmother had strong family and spiritual support, but was struggling with the complex needs of her young grandson and had not sought services from Children's Mental Health.

The FP worker recommended that the grandmother receive PCIT services from CALM to focus on behavioral problems by utilizing PRIDE SKILLS and to heal the broken attachment bond with the mother by establishing a healthier bond with the grandmother, who had a more authoritarian parenting style.

The grandmother was motivated to help her grandson and fully participated in PCIT by learning the skills and coming to weekly coaching sessions with the therapist. The therapist worked with the siblings and the school to reinforce consistency in the way that everyone dealt with the child's behavior as the siblings had previously undermined the grandmother by perhaps pampering their little brother and the school had labeled the child as a problem.

After a year, the family graduated from the program. The therapist reported that the child had developed a healthy bond with the grandmother, had increased personal eye contact, and appeared more secure in his environment. Behavior problems at school and in the home had decreased.

This case demonstrates how attachment disorders and developmental issues can be healed and improved through the intervention offered through trauma focused PCIT.

PCIT PRIDE SKILLS increase self-esteem, improve the parent-child relationship, decrease behavior problems, decrease abuse potential, and decrease child mental health problems.