

**PARENTING EDUCATION AND CHILD WELFARE RECIDIVISM:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE NURTURING PARENTING
PROGRAM GRADUATES AND NON-GRADUATES OF
FRESNO COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

PARENTING EDUCATION AND CHILD WELFARE RECIDIVISM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE NURTURING PARENTING PROGRAM GRADUATES AND NON-GRADUATES OF FRESNO COUNTY

This study examined data from 199 parents with active child abuse cases referred to the Nurturing Parenting Program (NPP) between April 1997 and July 1998 by the Family Reunification program of Fresno County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The sample included 104 NPP graduates and 95 non-graduates. All parents were reunified or had ongoing unsupervised contact with at least one child in the family. A comparative study of the recidivism patterns of graduate and non-graduate parents was conducted. Data were analyzed to compare number of parents with recidivism, time sustained before recidivism occurred, differences in severity of the original and recidivism offenses, and the prevalence of parental substance abuse and domestic violence in the home at the time of each offense. Results showed significantly less recidivism within the graduate group as compared to the non-graduate group. Time sustained without recidivism was significantly longer for graduates than for non-graduates. Physical abuse was reduced by almost fifty percent for graduates with recidivism offenses. Findings suggest that NPP graduates are at lower risk for repeated child abuse than non-graduates, appear to use less physical violence when recidivism does occur, and sustain longer without recidivism than non-graduates. Additional findings indicate that the NPP may have a mediating influence on parental substance abuse and domestic violence in the home.

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