

Study of ICDP in South Africa

Fra hard disiplin til regulerende dialog?

*Om endring av oppdragelsesstil etter deltagelse på
International Child Development Programme
(ICDP) i Sør-Afrika*

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In April 2013, Silje Bjørnstad, from Oslo, Norway, produced a study for her thesis that evaluates the work of ICDP in South Africa. The study shows positive changes in parents' relationships with their children after attending ICDP courses.

Summary of the results:

Parents who had attended ICDP courses (N=50) were compared to those who did not (N=34) on their pre and post scores on parenting, psychosocial health, and child strengths and difficulties.

Parents who had attended the ICDP course showed positive changes in their parenting strategies and in their perception of the child's difficulties. There was a significant decrease in the punitive parenting strategies, from 80% to 58%, as well as lower scores on the statements that attributed negative intentions to the child. Parental mental health difficulties decreased significantly.

There were few significant associations between parental reflective functioning and other measures before the ICDP course. After the course, parents reported an increased interest in the child's mental processes and this was significantly associated with positive parenting strategies.

As such, parental guidance can help to change punitive parenting strategies, including physical discipline, even when these are embedded in culture. Parents who attended ICDP courses seemed to have integrated their actions towards the child with interest in the child's thoughts and feelings in a different way after the course. The study raises new research questions about parents' perceptions of the child as a mental agent and about cultural variations in child rearing.