

Who should deliver early intervention?

Comparing one-on-one therapy and parent coaching for young children with autism.



Dr Hannah Waddington and Eleanor Wilson

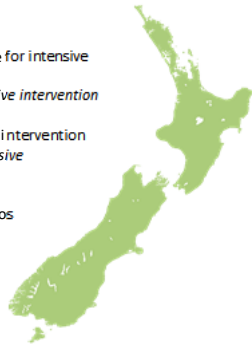


Early Start Denver Model

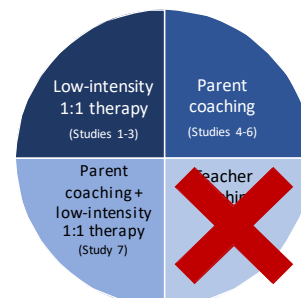
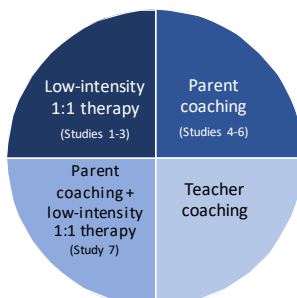
- For children with, or suspected to have, autism between 12 and 60 months
- Routines-based intervention
- Delivered by parents, teachers, or therapists
- Evaluated in over 30 studies, with most showing promising results
- Most effective when implemented intensively (15+ hours per week)



- No government funding or insurance coverage for intensive early intervention
→ Most families/whānau cannot afford intensive intervention
- Lack of professionals trained in intensive early intervention
→ Even families/whānau who can afford intensive intervention, cannot always access it
- No autism-specific ECE, high child:teacher ratios
→ Intensive group intervention difficult



New Zealand ESDM Research



Parent Perceptions

Parent Coaching [3]	Therapy [6]
Parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rated their experiences positively Found implementing the techniques to be slightly disruptive Identified strengths and challenges related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes for their children The ESDM model The parent training procedures The relationship with the trainer 	Parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rated their experiences positively Valued the relationship between the child and the therapist Felt the strategies aligned with their parenting style Found the improvements in behaviour to be socially significant

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Parent Coaching \approx Therapy

Use of Techniques

Parents [4, 5, 7]	Therapists [1, 2, 7]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 of 9 reached 80% or above correct use of techniques. Average correct use ranged from 25-86% Parents varied in terms of the specific techniques that they used the most Overall, parents showed limited improvement in instructional techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average correct use of techniques ranged from 85-96%

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Parent Coaching $<$ Therapy

Child Engagement



Parent Coaching [4, 5, 7]	Therapy [1, 2, 7]
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Child Engagement



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Parent Coaching \approx Therapy

Child Language and Imitation



Parent Coaching [4, 5, 7]

- 2 of 9 children showed improvements in utterances/vocalisations.
- 2 of 9 children showed improvements in imitation.

Therapy [1, 2, 7]

- 7 of 10 children showed improvements in utterances/vocalisations
- 8 of 11 children showed improvements in imitation

Child Language and Imitation



Parent Coaching [4, 5, 7]

- 2 of 9 children showed improvements in utterances/vocalisations.
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Therapy [1, 2, 7]

- 7 of 10 children showed improvements in utterances/vocalisations
- 8 of 11 children showed improvements in imitation

Parent Coaching < Therapy

Practical Implications

- Possibly easier to support engagement than language or imitation.
- Parents may need more support to teaching children new skills.
- Need to find a more effective method of coaching parents to use ESDM techniques.
- Child outcomes may be improved by combining parent coaching with a small amount of 1:1 therapy.



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