

Brock

The Family Game: A Parenting Intervention to Increase Positive Parent-Child Interactions

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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the effectiveness of The Family Game training package designed to teach parents with learning difficulties (LD) noncorporal behaviour management strategies to increase positive parent-child interactions, and child instruction-following.

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Children of parents with LD are at increased risk of developmental delay as well as emotional and behavioural problems (e.g., Feldman & Walton-Allen, 1997)
 - However, having LD is not necessarily directly linked to ineffective parenting
- Parents with LD can be successfully taught a range of parenting skills such as childcare, home safety and more stimulating interactions (Feldman, 1994; Wade et al. 2008)
 - Performance-based training in the home is most effective
 - Child outcomes have been positive but data are limited
- Most studies in this area have been conducted on infants or children under the age of 2 years

RESEARCH GAP

- Studies on typical parents have shown that ineffective discipline is related to behaviour problems and can lead to future antisocial behaviour (Snyder et al. 2005)
- Despite the documented risk of behaviour problems in children of parents with LD, there are no empirically-validated programs to address this risk
- Only two studies conducted with older children of parents with LD (Tymchuk & Andron, 1988; Mildon et al. 2008)
- The Family Game has previously shown promising results in uncontrolled settings, but needs to be evaluated in a controlled study

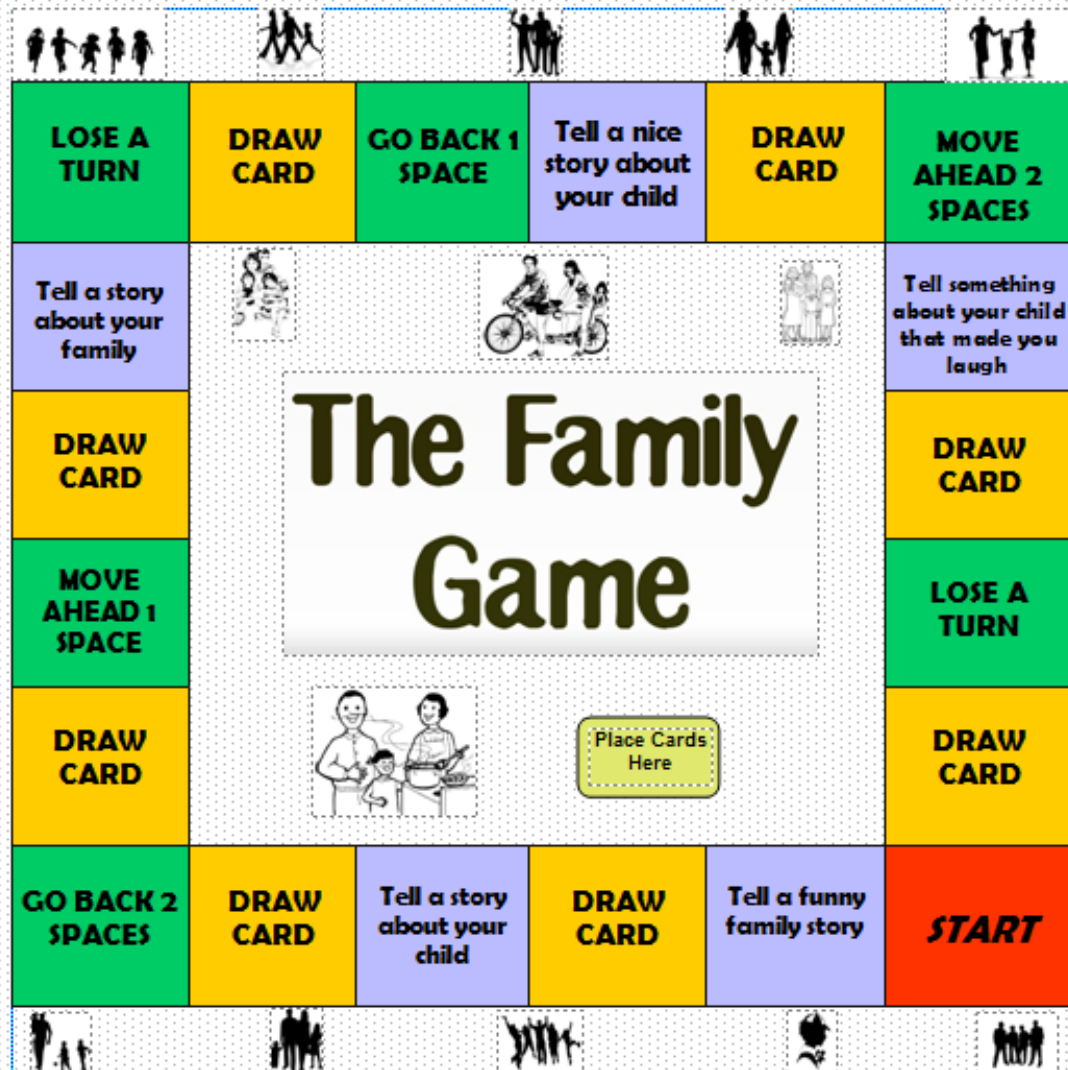
STUDY METHOD

- Eligibility criteria: Parents with LD who had children ages 2-14 years
- Participants
 - 8 total parents with LD initially began the study
 - 2 couples (father and mother) and 4 single mothers
 - Fathers did not have documented LD
 - 1 couple and 1 single mother withdrew from the study
 - Age range of parents: 23-46 years
- Data collection carried out in two regions in Ontario, Canada
 - Some participants are still involved in training
- Study design: Multiple baseline across skills and participants
- Generalization probes in the game and in home setting

THE FAMILY GAME TRAINING

- Three parenting skills taught: Clear Instructions, Recognition and Correction
- Individual or couple intervention carried out at the parents' home
- Training delivered in a board game format with 2 trainers, one of whom played the game with the parent
 - In couples, father and mother played against each other
- Participants roleplayed various parenting scenarios from individualized card decks
- Each skill taught sequentially after the previous one reached mastery criterion (80% correct answers across 2 consecutive sessions)

THE GAME BOARD & CARDS



Your children have finished breakfast and have left their cereal bowls on the table. You want them to take them to the sink.

What do you say?



You want your children to put their coats on hooks when they come in from outdoors.

What do you say?



Your children run away from you while you are walking to the park with them.

What do you do?



You have asked your children to help set the table. They do.

What do you say?



CLIPS OF TRAINING*

- Instructions
- Recognition: praise & no-praise
- Correction (response cost)

*With the parents' consent to show clips at the TASP Conference

THE FAMILY GAME TRAINING

- 45 cards in total
 - 10 training cards for each skill and 5 generalization cards each
- Generalization was programmed using strategies recommended by Stokes & Baer (1977)
 - Numerous examples of parenting situations
 - Relating the training setting to home environment
 - Varying correct responses
 - Instructing parents to use skills at home
- Sessions were carried out at least once a week and took 1 to 1.5 hours
- New cards were constantly added to the deck to address new parenting situations and to make sure the parents were not memorizing the answers to specific cards.

DATA COLLECTION MEASURES

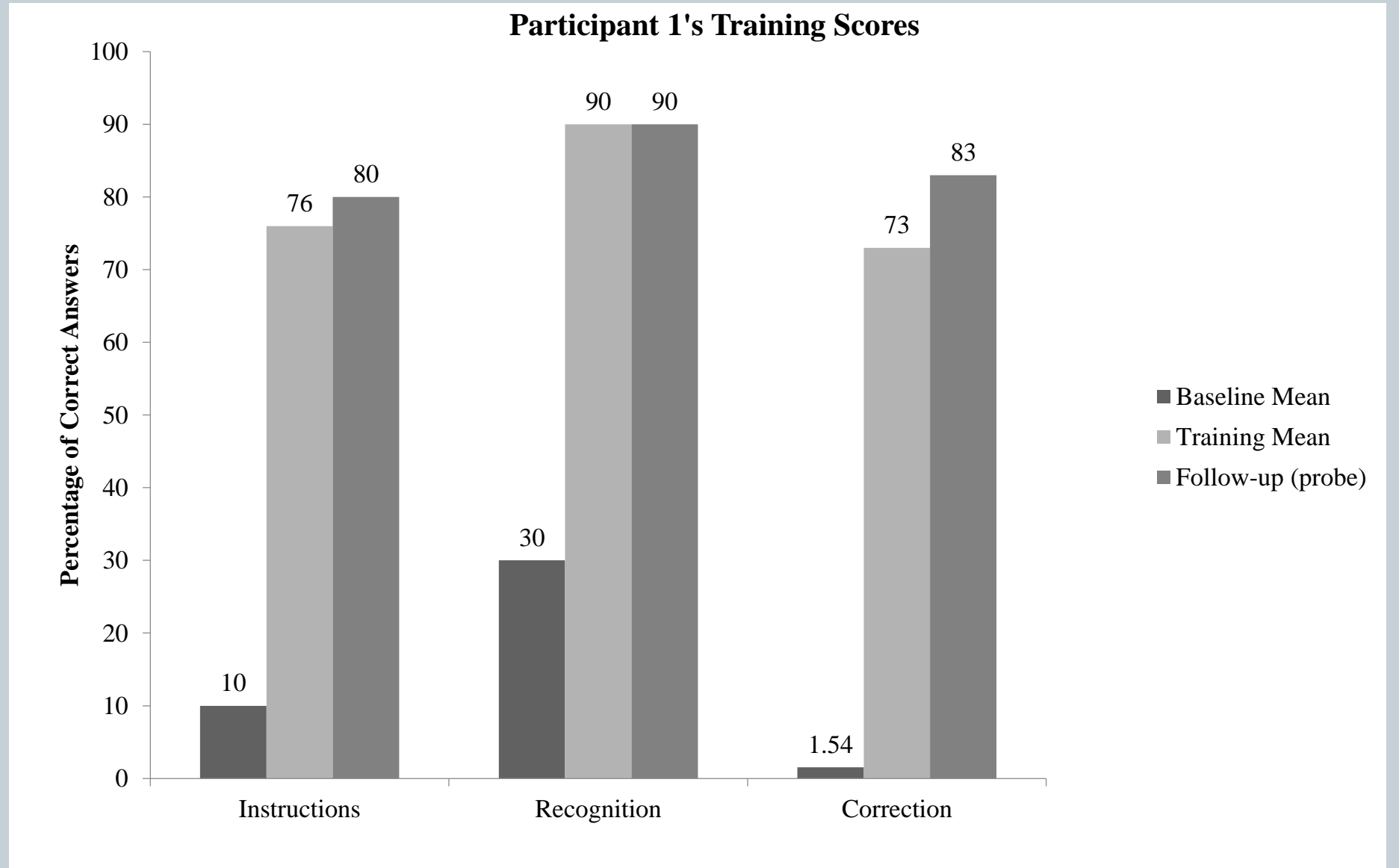
- Observational data
 - Game cards (training cards & generalization cards)
 - Home observations
 - Interobserver agreement was acceptable (>80%)
- Collateral measures – administered before and after training
 - Demographics Questionnaire (pretest only)
 - Child Behaviour Management Survey (CBMS)
 - Parenting Stress Index – Short Form (PSI-SF)
 - Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC)
 - Consumer Satisfaction Questionnaire (posttest only)
- Additional measures used for data collection in Region 2:
 - Functional Assessment Screening Tool (FAST)
 - Procedural Integrity Checklist

RESULTS

- Region 1: Both participants mastered all skill areas and maintained their training scores as well as generalization card scores at a 1 month follow-up
 - Home observation data from baseline, posttest and follow-up indicate an increase in delivery of clear instructions at home for one participant
 - Increase in child instruction-following and decrease in child not following instructions for both children
- Region 2: Currently receiving training on Instructions and Recognition

RESULTS

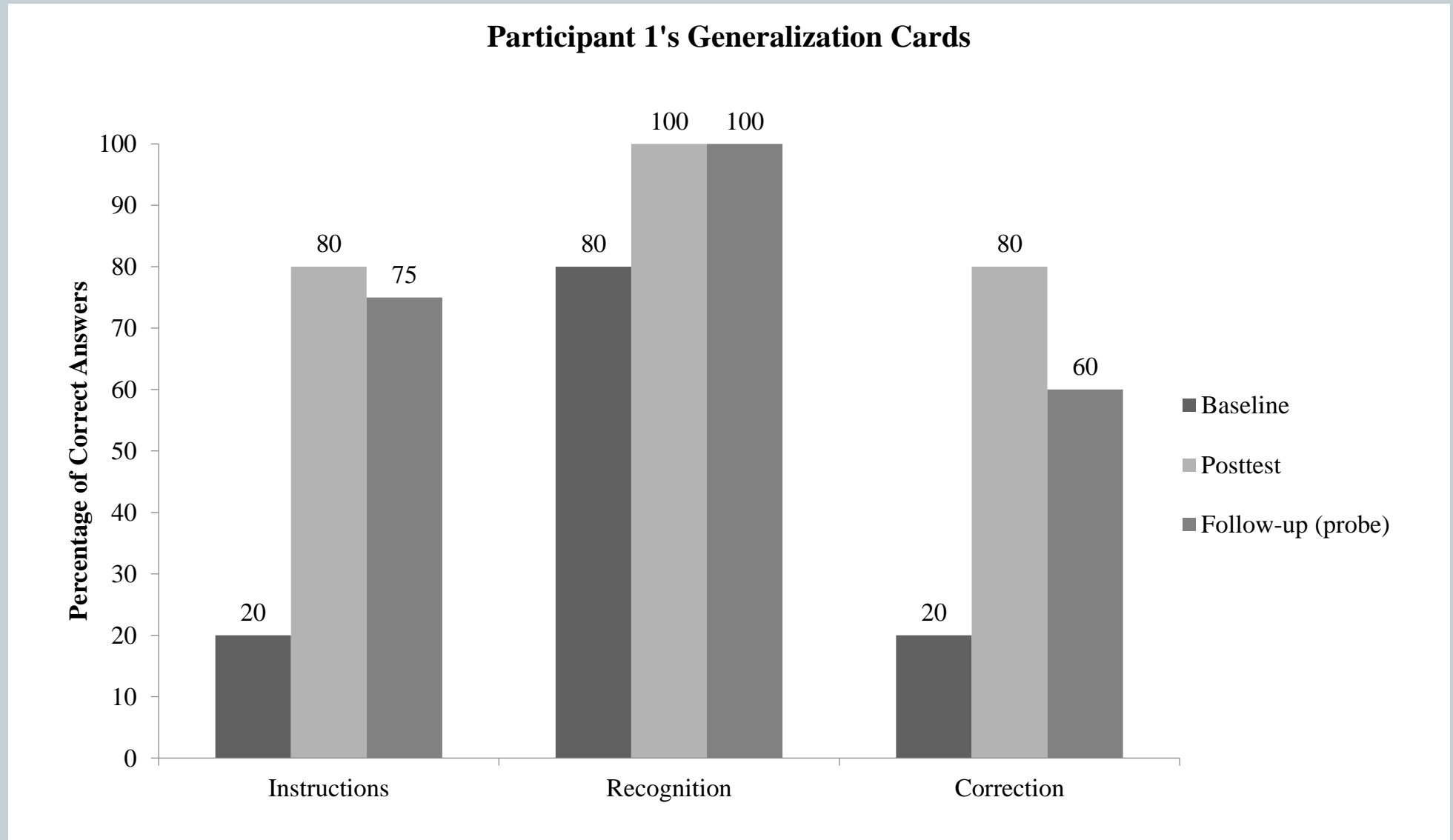
■ Participant 1 (Region 1) – Training scores



Note: Instructions baseline is based on 1 data point. Follow-up probes also indicate 1 data point. All other percentages are means.

RESULTS

■ Participant 1 (Region 1) – Generalization Cards

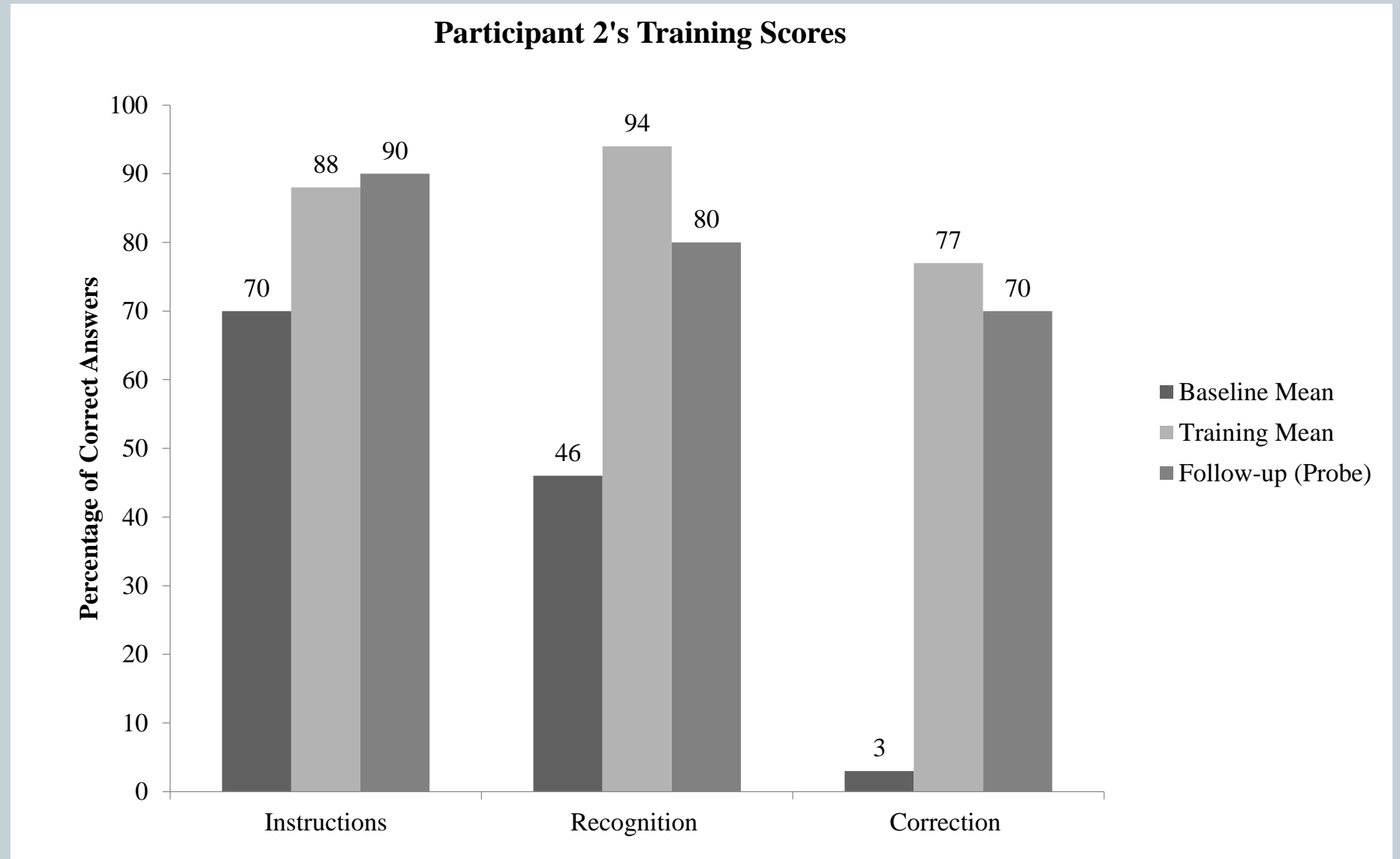


RESULTS

- For Participant 1, delivery of clear instructions at home increased from 32% at baseline to 56% at posttest
- Child compliance increased from 40% at baseline to 67% at posttest
- Child noncompliance decreased from 40% at baseline to 14% at posttest

RESULTS

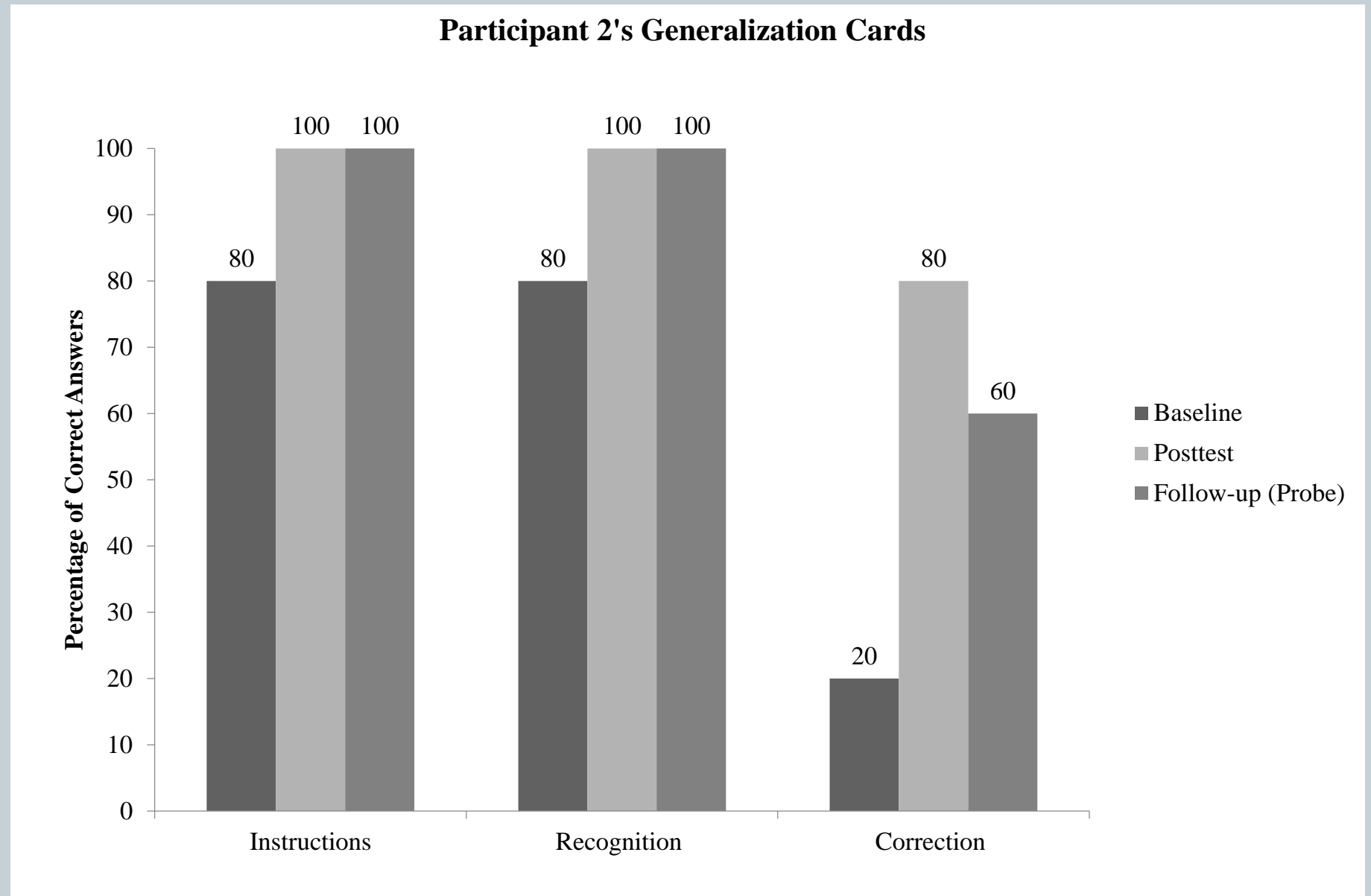
■ Participant 2 (Region 1) – Training Scores



Note: Instructions baseline is based on 1 data point. Follow-up probes also indicate 1 data point. All other percentages are means.

RESULTS

■ Participant 2 (Region 1) – Generalization Cards

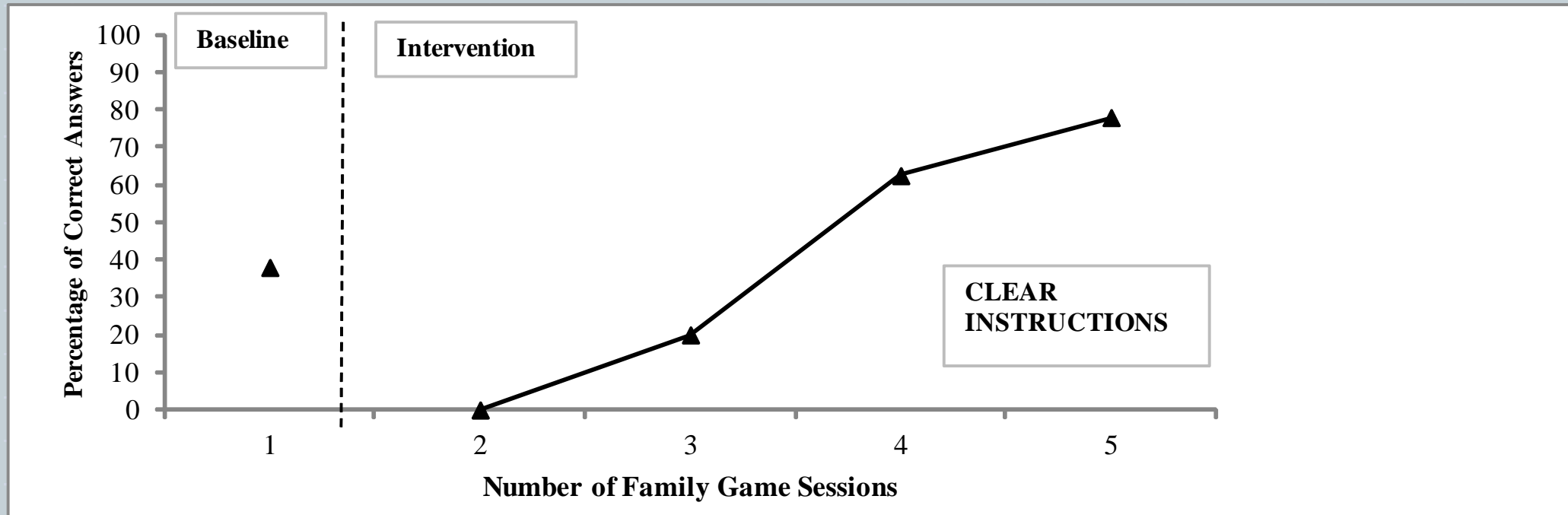


RESULTS

- For Participant 2, child compliance increased from 40% at baseline to 52% at posttest
- Child noncompliance decreased from 47% at baseline to 22% at posttest

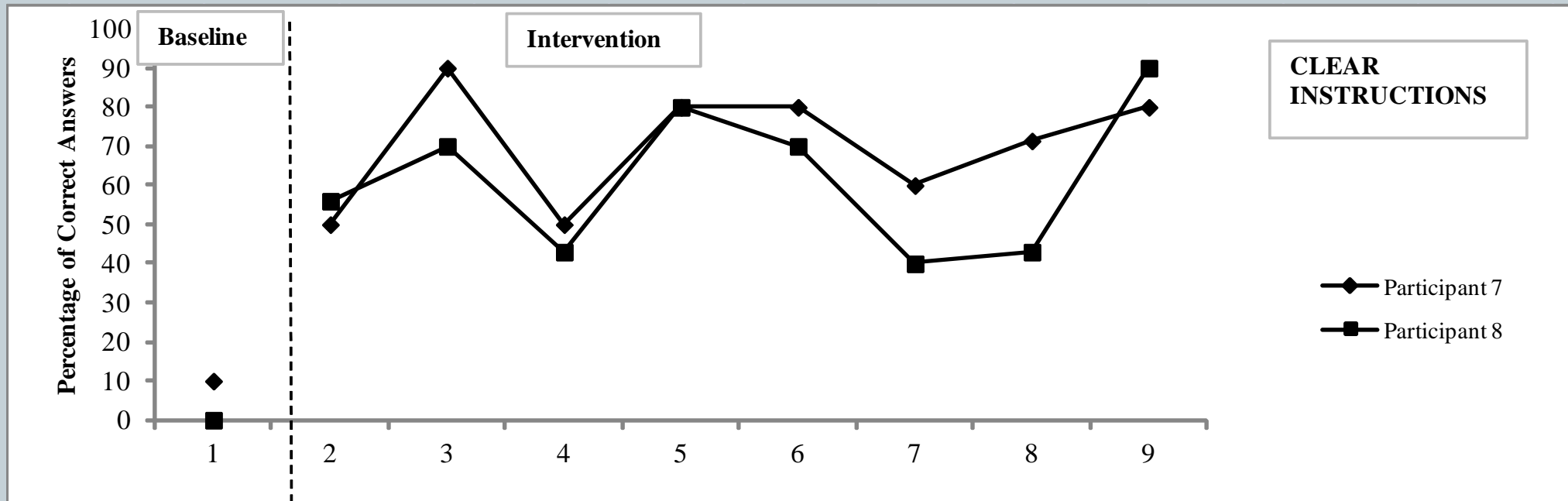
RESULTS

■ Participant 4 (Region 2)



RESULTS

■ Participants 7 and 8 (Region 2)



RESULTS

- Region 1 collateral measures:
 - The total number of reported child problem behaviours significantly decreased for one participant
 - Total stress score decreased for one participant
 - Parental self-efficacy in handling child problem behaviour increased on the CBMS for two participants
 - High consumer satisfaction ratings

DISCUSSION

- Presents preliminary evidence that The Family Game training program is effective in teaching parents three skills: Clear instructions, Recognition and Correction
- One of the first studies to address behaviour problems in older children of parents with LD
- Fills research gaps in measuring related parent and child outcomes as well as social validity (Feldman, 1994; Wade et al. 2008)
- Part of the reason for variability in scores may be due to percentage calculations
- Instructing to generalize may not lead to actual behaviour in the home
- Reactivity effects for children and parents being observed directly (Repp et al. 1988)

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Provides a way to tailor intervention to meet individual parent needs
- Viable alternative to intensive *in-situ* programs
- Less resource-intensive and easy to implement
- Enjoyable for parents
- Allows programming for generalization to home setting
- Do not assume that parents will generalize from training situation to actual behavior in their homes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Small sample and some dropouts
- Home observations were limited to baseline, posttest and follow-up
- Follow-up period was brief
- Overlapping services

RECOMMENDATIONS

- More frequent home observations to reduce novelty of the observer and assess generalization more frequently
- Use tangible reinforcers for rapid acquisition and increased attendance
- Enhanced generalization strategies (Stokes & Baer, 1977)
 - Bringing picture of the child to game training session
 - Incorporation of video feedback within game training session
 - Mediating generalization by self-management and tangible reinforcement

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