

# Pilot Study on Family Support Simulations Under RWJF Grant

The aim of this pilot study was to assess the potential utility of two virtual human role-play simulations that could serve as an initial step to (1) help family care workers teach parents how to effectively read to their children in a way that fosters sharing, attachment, and enjoyment of reading, and (2) help parents to better manage their 2- to 5-year old child's behaviors to promote healthy development.

In the study, family support workers (n=10) and parents (n=14) recruited by NJ Family Connections completed a pre-survey, then the simulation followed by a post-survey and a one-month follow-up survey.

The lead researcher on the study was Glenn Albright, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Baruch College/CUNY and Director of Research, Kognito.



*Snapshot from the home visit simulation*

In general, family care workers found the simulation to be very effective:

- 90% stating it was very good or excellent
- 90% saying they would recommend it to their colleague.

Additionally, family care workers reported greater self-efficacy:

- Confidence in their ability to use prescribed coaching steps to help a parent learn how to read to their child
- Helping a parent overcome the problems they are having in getting their child to cooperate when reading to them
- Modeling for a parent how to read to their child.

Overall, parents found the simulation to be very effective:

- 86% stating it was very good or excellent
- 100% saying they would recommend it to other parents

Additionally, parents reported increases in parental adjustment, positive encouragement, family relationships, and parental consistency particularly in respect to dealing with a child's misbehavior. Parents reported a decrease in corporal punishment (spanking), a higher consistency in punishment for misbehavior and less arguing with their child about behaviors from pre-test to 1-month follow-up .

To view the simulation and learn more please go to [www.conversationsforhealth.com](http://www.conversationsforhealth.com)

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