

## **Training Requirements for Certification as a PCIT Therapist**

These requirements were developed by the PCIT International Training Task Force in collaboration with the PCIT International Board of Directors. This document should be considered “dynamic” in that the training and certification requirements will evolve as new research arises in intervention, training, and dissemination. Currently, there are several formats used in training therapists to deliver PCIT effectively with adherence to its essential elements. These training requirements reflect the minimum training necessary within any of these formats to develop competence as a PCIT Therapist using the 2011 PCIT Protocol (Eyberg & Funderburk, 2011).

### **I. Definition**

Certified PCIT Therapists are individuals who have received appropriate and sufficient PCIT training to be qualified to provide PCIT services to children and families.

### **II. Training Requirements for Certified PCIT Therapists.**

In order to apply for certification as a PCIT therapist, therapists must document applicable graduate education, basic PCIT training, and consultation training which includes completing two cases as described below.

#### **A. Graduate Education.**

1. Have a master’s degree or higher, or an international equivalent of a master’s degree, in a mental health field

**AND**

2. Be an independently licensed mental health service provider (for example, licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, licensed marital and family therapist, licensed practicing counselor, licensed clinical social worker, etc.) or be working under the supervision of a licensed mental health service provider.

**OR**

1. Be a psychology doctoral student who has completed the third year of training and be conducting clinical work under the supervision of a licensed mental health service provider.
2. **Special Note Concerning Timing of Training:** Students may receive PCIT training before completion of their master’s degrees. However, they cannot be certified as PCIT therapists until their master’s degree is complete or until they have completed the third year of their doctoral training.

**B. Basic Training.** To apply for status as a Certified PCIT Therapist, an applicant must demonstrate appropriate Basic Training, as evidenced by:

1. 40-hours of face-to-face training with a PCIT Regional or Global Trainer that includes an overview of the theoretical foundations of PCIT, DPICS coding practice, case observations, and coaching with families, with a focus on mastery



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of CDI and PDI skills, and a review of the 2011 PCIT Protocol. The 40 hours of training may be conducted via didactic training, a mentorship model, or any combination of the two. PCIT training is ideally offered over a period of time rather than limited to one timepoint, for example CDI training at one time, followed by PDI training at a later date.

**OR**

2. 10 hours of online training from a program endorsed by PCIT International and 30 hours of face-to-face contact with a PCIT Regional or Global Trainer. Online training must be supplemented with skills review from a PCIT Trainer. Therefore, the 30 hours of face-to-face training may be conducted in didactic training, a mentorship model, or any combination of the two. This training will include an overview of the theoretical foundations of PCIT, DPICS coding practice, case observations, and coaching with families, with a focus on mastery of CDI and PDI skills, and a review of the 2011 PCIT Protocol.

**OR**

3. 40 hours of PCIT training with a PCIT International Within Agency Trainer using a combination of didactic training and live co-therapy and supervision. Training from a PCIT Within Agency Trainer must include a minimum of 20 hours of co-therapy and/or live case supervision and continue until the trainee meets CDI and PDI coaching competencies. Video review or phone consultation cannot be used in lieu of the co-therapy or live-supervision requirements. This training will include an overview of the theoretical foundations of PCIT, DPICS coding practice, case observations, and coaching with families, with a focus on mastery of CDI and PDI skills, and a review of the 2011 PCIT Protocol.

**C. Consultation Training.**

1. Until the two PCIT cases meet graduation criteria, the applicant must remain in contact via real-time consultation (e.g., telephone conference or live, online, or telehealth observation) or video review with feedback with a certified PCIT Trainer at least twice a month.
2. The applicant must serve as a therapist for a minimum of two PCIT cases to graduation criteria as defined by the 2011 PCIT Protocol. At least one of the cases must be conducted with the applicant as the primary therapist (e.g., lead therapist or equal co-therapist).

**D. Skill Review**

Applicants must have their treatment sessions observed by a certified PCIT Trainer. Observations may be conducted in real time (e.g., live or online/telehealth) or through video recording. Within Agency Trainers can only use video review after trainees have met competencies in CDI and PDI (see B.3. above).

1. To demonstrate skill development, the applicant's competence will be observed by a PCIT Trainer in the following sessions conducted by the applicant:
  - a. CDI Teach
  - b. PDI Teach
  - c. CDI Coach
  - d. PDI Coach
2. The PCIT Trainer will review these sessions and determine whether the applicant has demonstrated mastery of each skillset; as such, the applicant must be prepared to provide additional session observations as necessary to document adequate skill.

### **III. Therapist Competency Requirements**

**A. Assessment Skills.** By the end of the training process, the applicant should be able to:

1. Administer, score, and interpret the required standardized measures for use in assessment and treatment planning. (Required measures: Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (ECBI); Recommended measures: Therapy Attitude Inventory (TAI), Parenting Stress Index-Short Form (PSI-SF), Sutter-Eyberg Student Behavior Inventory-Revised (SESBI-R), and Behavior Assessment Scale for Children (BASC) or Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL))
2. Administer behavioral observations from the DPICS-IV Coding System.
3. Achieve a minimum of 80% agreement with a PCIT Trainer using the DPICS-IV during 5 minutes of either live coding or continuous coding with a criterion video recording.

**B. CDI-Related Therapist Skills.** By the end of the training process, an applicant should be able to:

1. Conduct the CDI Teach session, adequately explaining all items on the treatment integrity checklist in the 2011 PCIT Protocol as observed by the PCIT Trainer.
2. Meet the parent criteria for CDI skills (10 labeled praises, 10 behavioral descriptions, 10 reflections; 3 or fewer negative talks, questions, plus commands) in a 5-minute interaction with a child or a 5-minute role-play with an adult portraying a child.
3. Demonstrate for the PCIT Trainer how to determine the coaching goals for a CDI session by interpreting the DPICS-IV data from the CDI Progress Record.

**C. PDI-Related Therapist Skills.** By the end of the training process, an applicant should be able to:

1. Present the PDI Teach Session, adequately explaining all items on the treatment integrity checklist in the 2011 PCIT Protocol as observed by the PCIT Trainer.

2. Effectively manage a PDI Coach session and accurately demonstrate the discipline sequence with a child in treatment. In the case when a full discipline sequence does not occur or cannot be video recorded, the applicant must demonstrate the skills through video role-play.
3. Demonstrate the ability to explain the discipline procedure in concise, developmentally appropriate terms to a child (or ability to coach a parent through this).
4. Accurately explain the House Rules procedure as described in the 2011 PCIT Protocol. Accuracy can be assessed through role-play, and does not require observation of an actual session.
5. Accurately explain the Public Behaviors procedure as described in the 2011 PCIT Protocol. Accuracy can be assessed through role-play, and does not require observation of an actual session.

#### **D. General Coaching Skills**

1. By the end of the training process, an applicant is expected to demonstrate adequate and sensitive coaching as observed by the PCIT Trainer.
2. By the end of the training process, an applicant is expected to model CDI skills during all interactions with parents and children throughout the treatment.

#### **IV. Application Requirements**

- A.** Upon completion of Consultation Training, an applicant for Certified PCIT Therapist status must complete the Certified PCIT Therapist Application (available from PCIT International Certified Trainers or at [www.pcit.org](http://www.pcit.org).)
- B.** Following acceptance of the Certified PCIT Therapist Application, the applicant must successfully complete the PCIT Certification Experience which reviews concepts covered in Basic and Continuation Training (available at [www.pcit.org](http://www.pcit.org)).
- C.** Final decisions about certification of PCIT Therapists will be made by PCIT International.

#### **V. Responsibilities of Certified PCIT Therapists**

- A.** Use the 2011 PCIT Protocol and 2013 Clinical Manual for DPICS-IV as disseminated by PCIT International.
- B.** Remain current in PCIT research by activities such as attending conferences, reading research or practice articles for continuing education credit, or conducting research.
- C.** Certified PCIT Therapists are required to obtain at least 3 hours of PCIT Continuing Education credit every 2 years through educational activities sponsored by the PCIT International Task Force on Continuing Education. PCIT International is an APA-

approved CE sponsor and provides continuing PCIT education through its online educational and conference programming.

## **VI. Maintaining Certification**

- A. Certification Period.** Therapists are certified for 2 years from the beginning date on their Certified PCIT Therapist Certificate.
- B. Re-Certification.** Certification as a PCIT Therapist is renewable every 2 years. To renew, Certified PCIT Therapists must submit a brief application for re-certification and document successful completion of 3 hours of PCIT Continuing Education in programs of learning that have been preauthorized by PCIT International. The Certification Experience is required only for the initial certification application.