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Telehealth Parent Training in the Early Start Denver Model: Results From a Randomized Controlled Study

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Abstract: Telehealth training may benefit parents' use of early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This study is one of the few randomized trials to compare telehealth parent training in the Early Start Denver Model (P-ESDM) with a community treatment-as-usual, early intervention program. Parents were randomized to 12 weekly 1.5- hr video conferencing sessions with website access to P-ESDM learning resources or to monthly 1.5-hr video conferencing sessions with website access to alternative resources to support their intervention. Telehealth training facilitated higher parent fidelity gains and program satisfaction for more of the P-ESDM than the community group at the end of the 12-week training and at follow-up. Children's social communication skills improved for both groups regardless of parent fidelity. Findings suggest the feasibility of telehealth training with improved parent intervention usage and satisfaction from the program. However, the impact of these effects on children's development over time is yet to be understood.