

An Evaluation of The Power of Positive Communication:
**CD-ROM Based Instruction for Early Care
and Education Professionals**

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F. Leon Paulson, Ph.D.

Tigard, Oregon

ABSTRACT

The Power of Positive Communication (PPC), produced by Educational Productions, is a CD-ROM based self-paced training experience that teaches early care and education professionals how to use positive communication skills. The goal of the program is to train adults to create a positive learning environment that in turn positively impacts children's outcomes. Fifty-seven individuals completed the *PPC* training as a self-paced, individualized learning experience for one unit of credit. The results were evaluated in two ways: subjects rated the instructional format and subjects completed a retrospective pretest analysis of training outcomes. Participants gave high ratings to the quality of the instructional format, and they indicated that the instruction had a positive impact on their ability to create positive learning environments for children.

INTRODUCTION

The Power of Positive Communication (PPC), produced by Educational Productions, is a self-paced training experience focusing on training early care and education professionals (ECEPs) in the use of positive communication skills. The instruction is presented on a computer-based CD-ROM. The CD-ROM delivers scaffolded interactive lessons that include video examples of teachers modeling strategies with children, as well as analyses by master teachers, practice exercises, and additional resources and readings. The goal of *PCC* is to train ECEPs to create a positive learning environment that in turn positively impacts children's outcomes.

The *PPC*, like all of Educational Productions' (EP) early childhood training resources, is video-based, using real-life segments from child care, pre-K, Head Start and K-2 classroom, and in family homes. Video-recorded sequences show highly trained teachers, child care providers and parents demonstrating ways to support children's language, emerging literacy and cognitive development, and how to foster the children's emotional well-being and positive social behavior. Careful editing and minimal narration direct the trainees' attention to key elements of the interactions, helping to sharpen their observational skills. Trainees also have opportunities to practice the evidence-based strategies with similar video-recorded situations.

Nilakanta and Ehlinger (2003) cite numerous studies of the impact of film, video, and other "motion media" on academic learning, professional development, and social and ethical development. "These tools have the potential to not just enhance human cognitive abilities but also socialize and cultivate the human mind. Motion media bring to life ideas and concepts traditionally left to our imaginations and thus help bring meaning and relevance to them." (p. 19)

A “No Child Left Behind: Scientific Research Report” (undated) reviews a document by the National Educational Telecommunications Association Center for Instructional Communications, a series of studies by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and other studies. The report concludes, “Not only does the use of video as part of a lesson plan help students understand concepts and retain information, but it also has the effect of increasing the students’ enthusiasm about the information presented to them and causes them to become more motivated to learn. Video’s ability to provide a unique learning experience, one which will engage the student in ways beyond traditional textbook and lecture, is at the heart of the scientific research that demonstrates that the use of video in the classroom improves learning, retention, and test scores.”

Underlying philosophy of EP’s training resources

Educational Productions (EP) produced *PPC* to reflect widely accepted principles and practices of relating to and educating young children. (EP, 2006) The complete EP library of video-based training materials is designed to increase the awareness and skills of ECEPs and parents, focusing on evidence-based practices for supporting development and learning in young children from birth to 8 years.

Theoretical basis

The guiding principles that underlie all EP video training are based on decades of theory and research into how children learn and develop and span the work of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky to many contemporary theorists. For example, Piaget’s work, expressed as a *constructivist* approach, explores the developmental stages and characteristics of children’s cognitive processes. It emphasizes the importance of dynamic interaction between the child and the environment as the child *constructs* what he know for himself, with the medium for learning being play. (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1990).

Closely related is the developmental-interactionist approach that is more comprehensively described in Biber (1981, 1984). This approach views children as developing human beings in whom knowing (the intellectual self) combines with feeling (the emotional self). “This interaction is important because the child is regarded as an active participant in his own growth. He learns by constructing and reconstructing what he knows as he encounters a variety of experiences and people that widen and enrich his knowledge. The teacher’s role is one of guiding, questioning, and enabling, rather than stuffing the child with facts and rewards for behavior.”

Educational Productions’ programming is consistent with and embodies the ideas of early and contemporary theorists:

- Children are born ready and able to learn.
- Families are the primary caregivers and teachers of their children.

- Children are individuals who develop at different rates.
- Children learn and construct knowledge through active exploration of their environment.
- Optimal development and learning take place in the context of caring, supportive relationships.
- Early learning and development are multi-dimensional and developmental domains are highly interrelated.
- Knowledge of child development supports appropriate expectations of children and is critical for early care and education staff.
- The individual developmental needs of children must be addressed.
- Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by family.

Guiding principles

Educational Productions video training programs recognize that a child's social emotional growth and well being are critical factors in their school experience and in determining how well they are able to succeed. They model and demonstrate these guiding principles, widely accepted practices that support children's learning and development. These include:

- Building trust and creating a safe environment to make way for optimal growth and learning;
- Supporting a child's sense of wonder and discovery, creativity and ability by providing a rich environment where children can explore and experiment with a variety of materials and engage with their peers;
- Individualization to meet children's diverse needs and abilities;
- Using guidance and discipline as tools to teach needed skills and confidence;
- A focus on a skill building approach that is presented to children in meaningful contexts built around their interests and developmental levels;
- Helping children gain experience and mastery with cognitive tasks, language learning and social situations by prompting, coaching, guiding and encouraging;
- Intentionally and positively describing the child's experiences in order to support his/her growing sense of confidence, motivation and self worth;

- Encouraging a trial and error approach to problem solving, with materials and with peers;
- An emphasis on positive relationships with parents to achieve the best support for children at home and at school;
- Working with families to understand each child's unique developmental issues and the influences that affect his or her ability to learn; and
- Reflection and planning to create the best possible program and to respond optimally to each child in the environment.

These practices are articulated in the benchmarks, guidelines and early learning foundations of states and national organizations, including:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Office of Head Start Bureau
- National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- Council for Exceptional Children, Division of Early Childhood
- National Association for Family Child Care

EPs' materials teach practices that are based on observing children and supporting them to reach identified goals consistent with their levels of development. This understanding assists staff to determine individualized learning experiences, activities, supports and interventions needed across various domains, including: cognitive, language, social-emotional and physical.

EPs' materials have a consistent emphasis on enriching language development and communication skills. These skills are also the foundation for cognitive and social-emotional learning. Children with language delays and disorders represent the largest group requiring special services and intervention in both regular education and special education programs (IDEA Child Count, 2002). Strategies taught in Educational Productions videos are appropriate and effective for children of all abilities. These strategies are also critical to assist English language learners to grasp language and concepts that enable them to progress in English language classrooms (Krashen, 1981).

Evidence supporting instructional objectives specific to *PPC*

Studies cited by Pianta (2005) show that interactions and emotional relationships formed between teachers and children determine the impacts of these environments on children's developmental processes. In general, findings suggest that high quality experiences are positively associated with children's concurrent academic and social skills. A recent study by Howes, et. al, (2005) associated higher quality emotional climates with children's gains in expressive and receptive vocabulary.

In an Early Childhood Research Collaborative Discussion Paper, Pianta (2006) cites numerous studies, most focusing on pre-k, kindergarten and first grade settings, which "establish that the kind of instruction and interactions with adults have reliable and detectable effects on children's achievement and social competence...for young children...Findings strongly support the view that for young children, experiences in classrooms *matter*, and that interactions between children and teachers are a primary mechanism through which classroom experiences have effects on development."

The PPC content uses the evidence-based principles and teaches specific teacher behaviors that provide guidance and encouragement to young learners. Children with "mistaken" behavior are taught appropriate behavior (Gartrell, 2004). The PCC principles of laying a groundwork of positive relationships, considering development, acknowledging the child's perspective, and mediating instead of mandating are also supported by Kostelnik, et. al., (2002).

METHODOLOGY

Context for the study

Evaluation data were gathered from students taking a distance-learning course that used PPC as the centerpiece of the instruction. Students who successfully completed the course earned one unit of continuing education credit from an accredited college or university. Because of the delivery mode, data from these distance-learning sources is relatively free of interaction with an instructor or other class members. Therefore, the learning demonstrated by these students can be more directly attributed to PPC rather than to interactions with their instructors or even fellow students.

***PPC* as used in the study**

PPC is a self-paced CD-ROM. Students used *PPC* as part of a one-credit distance learning college course at one of the 18 institutions offering it. Students participating in this study completed the assignments on their own timeline. No instructor or class interaction, other than check-in emails from the instructor of record, was required. Depending on the school through which they registered, subjects had either a full school term, or 120 days to complete the courses.

Each student received course materials by mail: The *PPC* CD-ROM and a course guide (syllabus and workbook). The course guide directed the students to complete activities on the CD-ROM and provided the grading rubric that would be used to evaluate their responses. The assigned activities included:

1. Writing reflections that draw on prior knowledge;
2. Viewing interactive video-based lessons demonstrating an overview of *PPC* strategies and techniques;
3. Documenting observations through analyzing video scenes;
4. Creating action plans for transferring new strategies into the classroom;
5. Expanding learning with field practice and/or observation experiences;
6. Researching for more related information or resources; and
7. Assessing and evaluating learners' growth and course effectiveness.

Seventy five percent of a student's final grade was based on the quality of the CD-ROM activities assigned in the course guide. Requirements for the other 25 percent of the grade varied across universities, e.g., additional readings, reflections, case histories, etc., but were always closely related to the CD-ROM content.

Students returned assignments, evaluations and loaned materials all together. Assigned activities were graded by one of the two instructors-of-record using the rubrics in the course guide. The instructors are identified in Appendix A.

Data from this distance learning course are used to evaluate the CD-ROM, *The Power of Positive Communication*, which was the course's central learning component. An overview of the course, syllabus, and instructional goals can be found in *The Power of Positive Communication Course Guide* (2005).

Participants in the evaluation

Fifty-seven subjects¹ used the *PPC* CD-ROM as the key component of a distance learning course they were taking for continuing education credit. **Table 1** lists the colleges and universities awarding the credit.

TABLE 1

Colleges and University participating in the PPC evaluation study (n = 57)

Ashland University (Ohio)	10
California State University, Dominguez Hills	2
North Dakota University	3
Ohio University	1
Portland State University (Oregon)	19
Seattle Pacific University (Washington)	1
Wayne State College (Nebraska)	21

Students enrolled through their local colleges or universities. The names of these institutions appear in **Table 1**. Their occupation profile appears in **Table 2**. All but eight of the students participating in the *PPC* evaluation were professional, degreed educators. Eight were teachers in training or care center staff. Thus the results of the evaluation can be generalized to people who have already completed considerable professional training prior to encountering the *PPC* CD-ROM-based training.

¹ It should be noted that the number of participants reported in various data tables in this study varies. This is because the evaluation data were gathered from EP records using the forms that were returned by participants. A few participants simply did not return all their forms and in the case of 7 who dropped out of the course, none of the forms and questionnaires were returned. Fifty-three students completed the retrospective pretest questionnaires, 49 completed the course evaluation questionnaire.

TABLE 2

Number and percent of students by professional position (n = 57)

Position	N	%
Early childhood classroom teacher	16	28%
Early childhood educational assistant	1	2
Child care center staff	2	4
Preparing to become classroom teacher	2	4
Preparing to become child care provider	3	5
Elementary teachers	11	19
Secondary teachers	4	7
Administrator	3	5
Specialist (music, speech/lang)	6	16
No answer	9	16

Data collection: Course evaluation

At the conclusion of the course all participants were asked to complete a course evaluation asking about their experience completing the course. The questionnaire asked the participants to respond to five statements listed below about their experience by responding to a five-point scale of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

1. Learning how to use positive communication with children will have an impact on my work with children.
2. This CD-ROM training was an effective and efficient way to learn.
3. The length and format of this CD-ROM training was satisfactory.
4. The learning objectives were appropriate for my training needs.
5. The learning objectives were clearly stated.

In addition, subjects were asked to respond to several open-ended questions:

1. How long (or alternatively, how many hours) did it take you to complete this training, including all exercises and assignments?
2. The most important thing I learned was...
3. I would like to know more about...
4. I would like another training in this format (Yes or No). Why or why not?

Data collection: Retrospective pretest questionnaire

Clearly, maintaining quality evaluation data is important and ever since the classic article on research on teaching by Campbell and Stanley (1963), evaluators have sought to evaluate programs using control or comparison groups. However, it has become clear that many programs find it difficult and expensive to maintain high quality data required by these classic designs (see, for example, Brooks & Gerish, 1998; see also Harty, 1997, and Newcomer, 1997). Thus, many social programs have begun to rely on performance measurement strategies rather than on the more complex and expensive control and comparison group strategies called for by Campbell and Stanley. These strategies ask the question, “Did the program accomplish what it set out to accomplish” (Pratt, McGuigan, & Katzev, 2001).

In a retrospective pretest study, students are asked to report their present level of knowledge, behavior, or attitudes, then asked to complete a second report in which they estimate their level of knowledge, behavior, or attitude before the program began. Some studies have estimated that retrospective analyses may produce a more accurate estimate of changes than the more traditional pretest–posttest designs. (See Pratt, McGuigan & Katzev, 2001; Goedhart & Hoogstraten, 1992; Terborg, Howard & Marshall, 1980)

The *PPC* retrospective pretest questionnaire asked respondents to respond to ten questions using a seven-point scale. The response indicated how they perceived their skills and knowledge **before** completing the program and **now** that they had completed the program. The exact text of the questions follows:

1. I recognize that using positive language strongly influences children’s behavior, motivation and ability to learn.
2. I recognize that using positive language—“do messages”—is a key part of successful classroom management.
3. I understand that “do messages” focus on the positive and encourage young children to behave appropriately.
4. To help children understand and follow my instructions, I use clear, concise “do messages” as frequently as I can.
5. I understand that children often need to hear instructions more than once, and I try to repeat, pause and give children time to process my messages.
6. I understand that nonverbal cues help all children make sense of the language they hear.
7. I try to include as many nonverbal cues as possible when I communicate with children.
8. I recognize that the language used in a classroom affects the “feeling tone” and has an impact on both children and adults.
9. I try to avoid using “don’t messages” (No! Stop! Don’t!) that focus on mistakes and tend to discourage children.
10. I look for opportunities to use “do” rather than “don’t messages,” especially with children whose behavior is challenging.

Grading

The instructors of record (see Appendix A) graded all materials. Students received letter grades, A-F, which were based on a 100-point scale. Points were allotted according to a rubric specific to each activity. Those passing the course received one unit of credit from the participating institution.

RESULTS

Reactions to the *PPC* format and design

Table 3 presents data from the course evaluation questionnaire. The participants were in strong agreement with statements describing the course as effective in achieving the learning goals (questions 1 and 2), that the CD-ROM format was effective (question 3), and that the objectives were appropriate and clear (questions 4 and 5).

TABLE 3

Mean and standard deviation of responses to course evaluation questionnaire *PPC* (n=49), (Not Agree = 1, Agree = 5)

Instructional Goal	Mean	S.D.
1. Positive impact on children	4.5	1.06
2. Training effective and efficient	4.3	1.08
3. Length/format satisfactory	4.1	1.24
4. Relevant to personal training needs	4.2	1.09
5. Objectives clear	4.6	0.95

Responses to the open-ended questions were found to be highly variable and did not lend themselves to straight-forward categorization. The following summarizes the responses generally.

How long did it take you to complete this training including all exercises?

This question changed about midway through the course delivery timeframe to:
How many hours did it take you complete this training including all exercises?

The original wording of this question failed to offer respondents a particular metric (e.g. hours or days) to use when casting their responses. As a result the responses were highly variable with some listing hours, others listing days, and still others being less specific. Those listing hours varied from a low of three hours to a high of 70 hours. Most fell into the range of 20 to 30 hours. Those listing a calendar range varied from three days to one year, most fell into the range of three or four months.

Although the responses would appear scattered and unusable for formal statistical analysis, it is very clear that the PPC format was sufficiently flexible to accommodate a wide variety of individual scheduling needs.

The most important thing I learned was...

The open-ended responses focused on the use of positive language in the classroom. Thirty five students specifically mentioned the advantages of positive language. One wrote, "Positive language is a critical part of classroom management." Seventeen of this group specifically mentioned the importance of using "Do Messages." One wrote, "Using do messages ...helps children cooperate."

The remaining respondents (all but three students answered this question) discuss insights that they found accruing from the instruction that have a positive impact on their performance in the classroom. The following is a sample of responses:

- "Why I needed to stop using time outs and try a different approach."
- "I can do it and I am already doing it!" (Three gave similar answers)
- "How to communicate will not only help the children to succeed but me also."
- "To guide children in what to do, instead of telling them what not to do."

I would like to know more about...

Most of those who answered this question (32 wrote answers) called for more practice materials or information on new approaches. Seven wanted information on techniques for use with older children and six were interested in special techniques for use with children with special needs, for example, babies born addicted to drugs.

Would you do another training in this format?

As an indication of how well the students liked the CD-ROM based instruction, they were asked to indicate whether or not they would like to take another class in the same format. Eighty-eight percent (43) answered that in fact they would like to take another course in the same format. Six indicated that they would not. In responding to the “why” portion of the question about whether they would take another course in the PPC format, most who answered “yes” commented that they liked the format and the flexibility to complete the course on their own schedule. Those answering “no” commented that they preferred the structure of traditional instruction to the CD-ROM based experience. Several noted that they would have liked the opportunity to ask questions and interact with the instructor.

One third of the respondents fell into a professional position category of “other”. (See **Table 2**.) For the most part these people were supervisory personnel. **Table 4** gives the response of the “other” category to the questions on the Course Evaluation Questionnaire. Ratings by supervisory personnel who had completed *PPC* were similar to those of all subjects. Among the more interesting results is that those in a supervisory position indicated that they would use what they had learned when they in turn trained their own staffs.

TABLE 4

Mean and standard deviation of supervisory personnel to evaluation questionnaire *PPC* (n=16), (Not Agree = 1, Agree = 5)

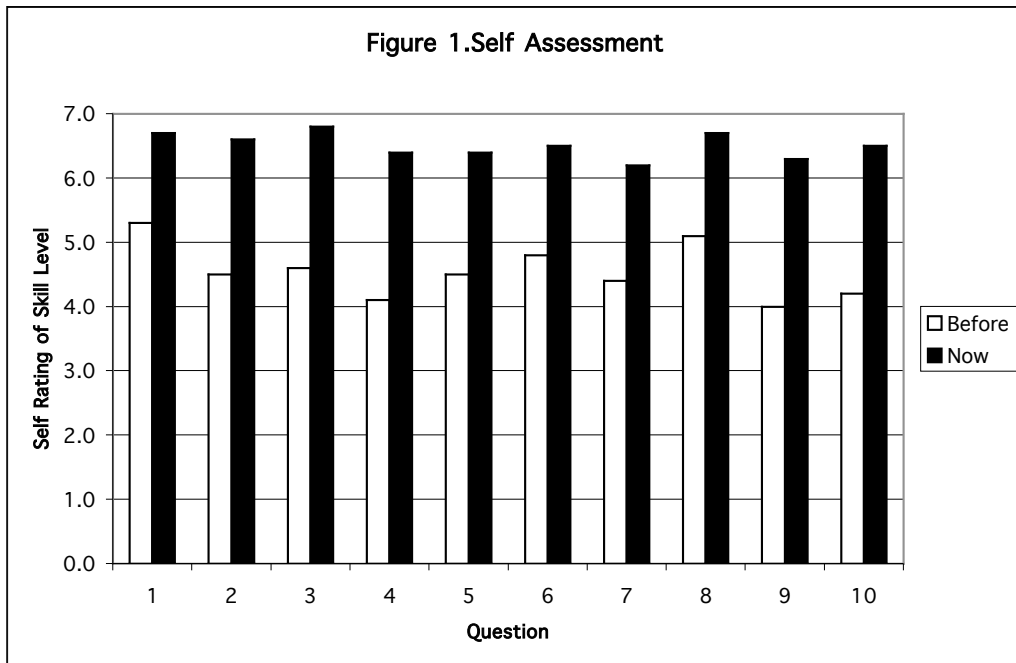
Instructional Goal	Mean	S.D.
Positive impact on children	4.6	0.15
Training effective and efficient	4.2	0.91
Length/format satisfactory	3.8	1.24
Relevant to personal training needs	4.1	1.06
Objectives clear	4.7	0.60

Self-Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Table 5 presents data from the retrospective pretest (Before) and posttest (After) conditions. **Figure 1** summarizes the same data graphically.

TABLE 5
Mean, standard deviation, and difference of self-assessment of skill level
questionnaire After and Before PPC (n=53)
(Agree with positive outcome = 7, Disagree = 1)

Instructional Goal		After		Before		Diff
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1. Use positive language	6.7	0.80	5.3	1.20	1.4	
2. Do message		6.6	0.81	4.5	1.22	2.1
3. Positive focus		6.8	0.75	4.6	1.26	2.2
4. Frequent D. M.		6.4	0.90	4.1	0.84	2.3
5. Repeat message		6.4	0.84	4.5	1.17	1.9
6. Nonverbal		6.5	1.03	4.8	1.38	1.7
7. Include N. V.		6.2	0.92	4.4	1.27	1.9
8. Feeling tone		6.7	0.81	5.4	1.44	1.6
9. Avoid “don’t”		6.3	0.96	4.0	1.68	2.2
10. Opportunity		6.5	0.89	4.2	1.48	2.3



Retrospectively the students claim a fairly high degree of knowledge and skills in the 10 instructional goals areas presented in the *PPC* training. On every question, the students showed a sharp increase in their pre-and post-assessment of their skills or knowledge relating to each instructional goal. This includes those questions that indicated that students were aware of the area's importance (Questions 1, 2, 3, 5,6) and that they acted upon the specific goal area in their interactions with children. (Questions 4,7,8,9,10).

This evaluation uses self-report data from the students themselves. This raises the questions of whether outside observers might note similar positive outcomes. Two individuals in a supervisory position to several students filed anecdotal reports in which they describe positive learning outcomes they noticed after their employees completed the *PPC* training. Their complete statements will be found in Appendix C.

DISCUSSION

This study looks at learning outcomes resulting from a CD-ROM based training used in the context of a distance learning course. The distance learning format supported the fact that subjects responding to the questionnaires had fully completed the learning activities presented on the CD-ROM. In other words, EP has documentation that all respondents had in fact completed the learning activities.

Subjects were in agreement with statements that the training would have a positive impact on their work with children. Moreover they reported that the training was very efficient in supporting this outcome. They reported that learning objectives were not only clear but that they were relevant to their personal training needs.

Overall, the 88 percent of subjects who indicated they would like to take another CD-ROM based course liked the self-paced nature of the class. This was clearly reflected in the wide range of the number of hours or days required to complete the course. Yet, within the context of highly variable time, they reported specific learning relevant to both the program's objectives and their personal needs.

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APPENDIX A: Instructors of Record

Lynn Reer, Ph.D.

Lynn Reer taught English as a second language to children and to adults for many years. She has directed programs in Spain, Greece and Brazil, as well as in the United States, serving students from many language backgrounds. Lynn has a deep background in communication styles across cultures which she brought to her work developing and coordinating Bilingual/ESL education for Western Oregon University and for Lewis & Clark College, Portland, Oregon. In addition, Lynn consults with school districts on the linguistic, cultural and academic aspects of working responsively with English language learners.

Academic Credentials

Ph.D. Georgetown University
M.A. University of Michigan
B.A. Oberlin College

Cynthia Cosgrave, M.A.

Cynthia Cosgrave holds a B.A. in education and a M.A. in bilingual and bicultural education from the University of Massachusetts. Among positions held in Massachusetts and with Portland Public Schools are site resource teacher (pre-K-12), ESL teacher and resource teacher and Title VII Coordinator, ESL/Bilingual Resource Teacher for Staff Development. Cynthia is also a long time teacher trainer in teaching methods, curriculum, diversity, language acquisition and related topics and is currently adjunct instructor of continuing education at Portland State University and Lewis & Clark College.

Academic Credentials

M.A. 1975, B.A. 1971 University of Massachusetts

APPENDIX B: Instructor of Record's Comments

The following comment is from Cynthia Cosgrave, one of the instructors of record for the PPC courses that are the subject of this evaluation

The students I worked with who took the PPC course had diverse educational backgrounds with varying levels of experience working with children. They took the course through partner universities for a range of credit options: some for graduate level professional development credit, others for non-credit CEUs. Courses had a range of requirements for completion, but for each one the key learning experience were the lessons and practice opportunities on the CD-ROM.

I believe that PPC is an exceptional learning tool. It presents authentic experiences that allowed all students, regardless of their educational backgrounds, to see and reflect on teacher and student relationships in new ways that encouraged them to adopt or modify their communication strategies. Uniformly, they could see the value and effectiveness of using positive communication to increase children's understanding, help them build language skills and foster cooperative behaviors. It is a magical experience to read and learn about a concept and then see it in action. PPC is a virtual learning lab that students can visit as many times as they want until they master the material. Their self-evaluations at the end of the course showed that they experienced growth in their knowledge and skills.

APPENDIX C: PPC User Comments

The following comments are those of individuals who purchased PPC to use in their educational environments. They presented PPC in their preferred training mode.

An Instructor's evaluation of practicum students after completing PPC

This comment is from an instructor in a community college. She used PPC with her practicum class to present information and provide learning activities for the group. She guided her students to work through many exercises on the CD-ROM together.

I first reviewed The Power of Positive Communication CD, completing exercises and activities to see how students might respond to them. I determined that this training tool could be very valuable in a practicum course I teach.

Spring of 2005 was my first time to use the CD. The class included 20 students working toward an AA in Early Childhood Education. The experience level ranged from none to many years in the field. As a group, we spent approximately 1-1/2 hours in three different classes working through learning activities on The Power of Positive Communication. This amount of time only allowed for using some of the video-supported interactive exercises on the CD. I estimate that we completed about a third of the learning experiences included in the CD's lessons.

My experience: To be perfectly honest, I had mixed emotions throughout the three weeks I was using the CD. I thought the format and exercises were better than the kinds of learning activities I had used previously, but I wasn't sure if more than a handful of students were invested as I hoped they would be. However, as part of the class, I spent many hours each week observing students in their student teaching practicum.

In the weeks following our work with The Power of Positive Communication, I observed and heard students using strategies and techniques taught on the CD! (I think the expression "the proof is in the pudding" applies here.) When I met privately with students following my observations, it was a mutually affirming experience to be able to say, "Wow! I noticed how clearly you explained to that child what you wanted her to do." Students frequently commented that they were practicing the skills and techniques they learned from our work with the CD, and that they were using them not only with children in their classes but with their children at home.

Follow-up: Prior to and since using The Power of Positive Communication, I have used video training programs, and I can honestly say that the interactive learning experiences on the CD resulted in more student engagement and more in-depth discussion than video alone. I believe that this CD does a remarkable job of providing a critical piece of the background students need to be able to understand and practice positive guidance.

In informally evaluating student performance after using the CD, I know it was an extremely effective tool. The focus is on building skills and students are able to identify their strengths and areas where they need more work. They learn how to use new skills in a variety of situations and have guided practice with exceptional video clips to try out what they are learning.

Recommendation: Although my own use of *The Power of Positive Communication* was in a technical college class, I think the CD would be a fantastic investment for child care centers to use with staff, either individually or in staff meetings. I know each state has its own regulations, and I believe in some instances, the use of the CD could easily be documented and used as continuing education hours.

A Supervisor's comment on the results of using *PPC* for staff training

*This comment was made by an Education Coordinator in a large Head Start program. She assigned the *PPC* training as a self-paced study experience to all staff. Each person was given time to work on the CD-ROM lessons and completed the training over several weeks.*

*(Note: the instructor comments refer to *InspireWorks!* This is the trade name under which *PPC* is marketed.)*

We have used *InspireWorks!* for at least two years....the most dramatic change was when we first received it. I asked that every staff member from cook to bus driver view the program and complete all the exercises and learner logs. At first, many complained because they were unfamiliar with how to save their work in the computer. Once we tackled that hurdle, the complaints dwindled and folks were enjoying their lessons on *InspireWorks!* Best of all, I could hear daily, how their new knowledge was implemented in the classroom. Much more positive redirection, almost no negative communication. I was amazed! Now that I'm thinking back, I think maybe it's a good time for a "group review."

About Educational Productions

Educational Productions develops video-based training that teaches evidence-based practices for working with children from birth to 8 years. These practices support early learning and development across domains and are in alignment with state and national standards. Our materials are used for preservice and inservice training of early care and education staff and for parent education.

To receive a demonstration copy of the CD-ROM *The Power of Positive Communication*, call **800-950-4949**, or request a copy at **www.edpro.com**.