



# LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER

## Child Intensive Outpatient Program

*The Efficacy of an Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program for Children Exhibiting Moderate to Severe Behavioral Problems*

### Research Conducted By

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### Program Description

The Child Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) is designed for children experiencing behavioral problems, family conflicts, and school-related difficulties. It is intended for children who need more than outpatient visits with a psychiatrist or therapist, yet are not appropriate for psychiatric hospitalization.

The program is geared to help the whole family, allowing group time specifically for children, parents, as well as the family unit together. Underlying issues related to hostile and defiant behaviors are explored along with academic and other school problems. The goal is to educate, support, and redirect children away from maladaptive behavior patterns.

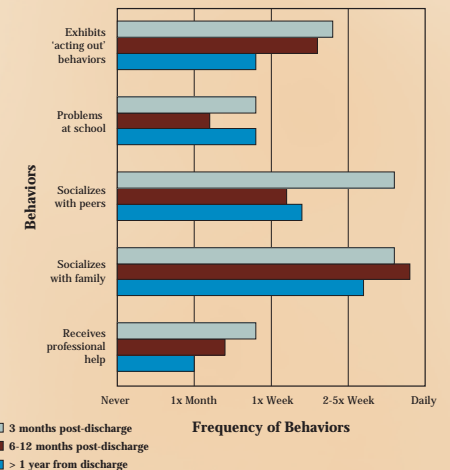
### Abstract

With an increased number of families seeking professional help for their children with moderate to severe emotional and/or behavioral problems, intensive outpatient programs (IOP's) have become increasingly popular. In these programs, a child attends therapeutic groups after school two or three times a week, to work on improving their coping skills. In 1998, Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center, an 89-bed psychiatric hospital in Redlands, California opened an IOP for children with

emotional and/or behavioral problems between the ages of 8 and 12 years old. One of the key features of this program was the requirement that the parents or legal guardians of the children attend certain groups as well. Following treatment in this IOP, the patient's parent or guardians were then given a questionnaire to explore if there were any behavioral changes in their child. In analyzing the responses to these questionnaires, a number of significant trends were discovered. The following graph illustrates these findings.

### Research Results

Recurrence of Behavior: Post-Discharge



### Conclusion

- Decrease in "acting out" behavior reported following treatment.
- Problems at school showed short-term improvement during and immediately following treatment.
- Negative peer influence diminished as family relations and communication improved.
- The need for ongoing professional help decreased over time.

A follow up study from this data is being conducted on the importance of parental involvement in the improved behavior of these children.

