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Child maltreatment: qualitative review of theoretical and methodological trends in intervention programs with an attachment perspective

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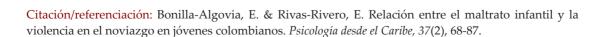
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Abstract

This review provides a qualitative comparative analysis of theoretical and methodological aspects of 27 studies in which the results of the implementation of programs involved in child maltreatment are presented with an attachment perspective. The studies were examined following the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network. It was found that the programs promote the development of maternal sensitivity, mentalization or reflective functioning and empathy, however, the underlying mechanisms are not differentiated according to the type of abuse to intervene. Likewise, it was found that despite the recognition of the mother's violent childhood experiences as one of the main predisposing factors for child abuse, it is a variable that is scarcely considered in the programs examined. These findings indicate the importance of developing intervention programs that consider a cumulative ecological risk perspective.

Keywords: Child abuse, intervention programs, attachment perspective, systematic review.



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Introduction

Research indicates that the measures adopted to reduce the incidence of child maltreatment cases, specifically in Latin America and the Caribbean (PAHO and UNICEF, 2017), have not been sufficient and that it is necessary to deepen the understanding, dissemination and contexts in which the phenomenon is presented and reworked and, above all, interdisciplinary work to achieve more effective interventions (Grinberg, 2015; Loredo-Abdalá et al.) However, a relevant study by Bakermans-Kranenburg et al. (2003) presents a meta-analysis with effective results in modifying insensitive parenting and insecure attachment. Other authors have recently conducted a meta-analysis (van IJzendoorn et al., 2019) with a general synthesis approach determining that the background with the largest effect size was parental experience in child abuse, partner violence, and parental personality. Regarding the intergenerational transmission of child abuse, Bérubé, Blais, Fournier, Turgeon, Forget, Coutu, and Dubeau (2020) found that mothers with a severe history of abuse have more difficulty recognizing the child's emotions, reducing sensitive response and generating continuity in this behavior.

Subsequently, the search led to the identification of two types of programs: programs focused on risk factors (Casillas et al., 2015; Temcheff et al., 2018), and programs of universal application (Pisani-Altafim and Martins-Linhares, 2016). In these studies, there was a greater tendency to describe common programs components (Temcheff et al., 2018), as well as the effectiveness of factors in programs implementation (Casillas et al., 2015). However, from the perspective of Sprague-Jonesa, Singh, Rousseau, Counts, and Firman (2020), there is a need to promote programs based on protective factors.

A different position is found in another meta-analysis, in which the authors identified more significant effect sizes in programs components than in contextual factors or structural elements (Gubbels, van der Put, Assink, 2019), an aspect on which van der Put, Assink, Gubbels and Boekhout (2018) agree, pointing out that parenting represents a representative effect size.

The foregoing highlights the need for a qualitative study focused on methodological and theoretical aspects, which favors a better understanding of the main intervention variables, theoretical trends and main measurement instruments. For this, a Comparative Qualitative Analysis (ACC) (Melendez-Torres, Leijten & Gardner, 2019) is used, making use of the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network, an instrument that allows recognizing the level of evidence



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and degree of recommendation of the studies. Vlahovicova, Melendez-Torres, Leijten, Knerr & Gardner (2017), point out the importance of understanding how rearing programs work, given the complexity of the interrelated components involved, a position in which Put et al. (2018) also agree.

This review sets the context for research into the risk factors associated with child maltreatment over the period 1984-2020. It accounts for the development of knowledge in relation to this phenomenon and allows us to affirm that the experience of parental childhood abuse, a risk factor currently associated with child abuse, is hardly included in the programs reviewed here. Additionally, an evaluation of the level of evidence and degree of recommendation is presented, which contributes to strengthen the structure and implementation of the programs. Finally, this review points out the need to advance in studies that allow a better definition of mediation models and potentially divergent precursors in the different types of abuse.

Empirical Background

Victimization of children occurs mainly in the context of marital violence (Li et al., 2020). Some risk factors have been identified, consumption of psychoactive substances, family isolation, social exclusion and socioeconomic inequality (Vial and others, 2020; García-Panal and others, 2016; Aguiar and others, 2015; Salinas-Quiroz and Posada, 2015; Pulido and others, 2013; WHO, 2009).

A search conducted during the period 1984-2020 determined that most relationships involving child abuse are associated with low rates of mother-child interaction (Bousha and Twentyman, 1984). It is also noted that mothers with a history of child abuse tend to be over-responsive to their children when faced with stressful stimuli (Bauer & Twentyman, 1985).

On the other hand, it is found that the social conditions associated with adolescent pregnancy can affect the mental health of mothers (Koniak-Griffin & Lesser, 1996). Therefore, it is important to strengthen the quality of functional social support, in order to promote the development of self-esteem and positive affiliation with the fetus (Koniak-Griffin, 1989).

Therefore, it is necessary to consider the trade-offs between context and maternal sensitivity in less stable and more stressful settings (De Wolff & van Ijzendoorn, 1997; De Falco et al., 2014).



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Thus, it has been found that child abuse is more likely to occur when mothers are depressed, consume alcohol, care for more than one child, or have been separated from their own mothers before age 14. This predisposition is greater in mothers who also have low social support (Kotch et al., 1999; Firk et al., 2018).

In addition, Paz Montes et al. (2001), indicate that parents' cognitions mediate verbal and physical aggression directed at children. In this sense, mothers' assessment of children's behavior will be influenced by their own cognitive processes (Milner, cited in Paz Montes et al., 2001, p. 1017).

Research by MacKenzie, Kotch, and Lee (2011) suggests that the total risk burden in early childhood is related to the mother's cognitions about her new role and the indicators of the child's cognitive functioning. In this way, it is possible to state that child abuse can be considered both a risk factor in itself and evidence of the cumulative risk faced by families (Baldwina, Biehala, Allgarb, Cuswortha & Pickettb, 2020; Gubbels et al., 2019; MacKenzie, Kotch, Lee, Augsberger & Hutto, 2011).

In addition, one of the individual risk factors identified as having the greatest impact on the type of bond established between infant and caregiver relates to the caregiver's mental health (Di Venanzio et al., 2017; Sockol et al.).

These results show the need to propose early interventions considering prenatal accompaniment (Myors et al., 2018) that favor the development of the parents' reflexive functioning (Rutherford et al, 2015; Smaling et al., 2015; Mountain et al., 2017; Camoirano, 2017), and secure attachment in the mother-child dyad (Moore et al., 2016; Nieto et al., 2017; Mountain et al., 2017; Plotka & Busch-Rossnagel, 2018).

Method

A qualitative documentary review was carried out (Manterola, Astudillo, Arias & Claros, 2013), making use of the adaptation for studies in basic psychology (Villada & Chaves, 2012; Fernández & Villada, 2015) of the criteria of the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network [SIGN] (Harbor & Miller, 2001; Primo, 2003), in order to recognize and compare qualitatively the evidences that support the theoretical and methodological constructs on which the studies included in this review are supported. According to Manterola and Zabando (2009), works of this nature must address four important aspects: 1. The



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designs, 2. The setting or scope, 3. The levels of available evidence and 4. The degrees of recommendation of the investigations. Together these four aspects allow the ranking of the available evidence and strengthen the studies and therefore their theoretical constructs, by indicating the degrees of recommendation thereof (Goenaga, 2016).

Inclusion criteria

- 1. Studies on empirically validated child abuse intervention programs.
- 2. Studies directed at mothers or the mother-child dyad.
- 3. Studies carried out from the perspective of attachment.

As proposed by Blanco and Rodríguez (2007), an intervention program was considered to be any "activity aimed at the solution of a practical problem that we address with the essential help of a conceptual structure" (p. 27). It is also understood that these interventions fall within the framework of primary health care levels (promotion, prevention, care and rehabilitation), as well as prevention levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) (Vignolo et al., 2011).

Instrument

The review of the selected articles was carried out through an information entry form, which discriminates aspects of interest related to article identification data; objectives, type and design of the investigation; information on the sample and the instruments used; information analysis procedure and results. Subsequently, this information was consigned in a systematization matrix that made it possible to compare both the theoretical foundation and methodological structure of the studies and the structure and methodology of the intervention programs. The analysis achieved in each of the studies was subjected to the SING criteria (Harbor & Miller, 2001; Primo, 2003). The relevance of this instrument is considered given the possibility it offers to emphasize methodological and design aspects (Fernández & Villada, 2015) and after a qualitative comparative analysis exercise, present approximations on the level of evidence on which the studies were based and their degree of recommendation (Melendez-Torres et al., 2019). The criteria that should be considered to define the level of evidence and grade of recommendation for a study, according to the SING, are described in Table 1.



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Degrees of recommendation	Levels of evidence: Scientific evidence comes from	
A Good	I.a: systematic reviews, meta-analysis, controlled and randomi- zed experiments.	
Good	I.b: at least one randomized controlled experiment.	
D	II.a: at least one well-designed, non-randomized, controlled prospective study.	
B Moderated	II.b: at least one quasi-experimental, well-designed study.	
	III: well-designed, non-experimental descriptive studies, such as comparative, correlation or case-control studies.	
C It is based on expert opinion	IV: documents or opinions of experts and/or clinical experie ces of prestigious authorities.	

Table 1. Levels of evidence and degrees of recommendation

Source: Own construction based on information presented in Harbour and Miller (2001) and Primo (2003).

Procedure

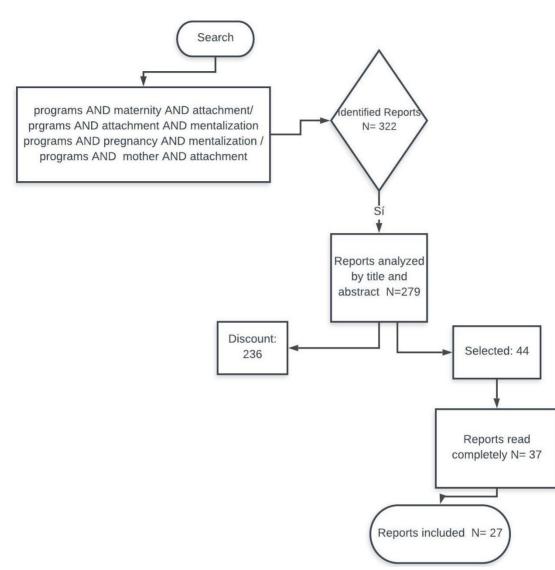
The article search was carried out between August and November 2018 and was updated between August and September 2020. The search for the studies was conducted on the Web of Science, NCBI (PubMed), Springer, Cambridge Core, PsycNet APA, and Scopus databases. The filters that were used in each of the searches covered research reports published in English between 2014 and 2020. Search descriptors included: "programs and maternity and attachment"; "programs and attachment and mentalization"; "programs and pregnancy and mentalization"; and "programs and mother and attachment".

Once the refinement filters were used (observation window, area and type of document), 322 reports were identified to be analyzed by title and abstract, thus resulting in 44 reports for complete reading independently by the researchers. 27 of them were selected to be included in this qualitative review (see Figure 1: search flow chart). For each article, a record sheet was constructed based on the SING guidelines which led to a comparative qualitative analysis and the identification of the levels of evidence on which the studies are based and their degrees of recommendation.

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Figure 1.





Results

The results are presented according to three categories overall results, theoretical trend and variables and measurements. Based on these findings and following SING guidelines (Harbour & Miller, 2001; Primo, 2003), the level of evidence and degree of recommendation for studies is presented. The studies/programs included in this qualitative review are 27 in total and are presented in Table 2.

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Program	Authors
Mother-Child Education Program (MOCEP)	Ponguta et al., 2020
Parents under Pressure (PuP)	Barlow et al., 2019
Lighthouse Parenting Programme	Byrne et al., 2019
Promoting responsiveness, emotion regulation and atta- chment in young mothers and infants PRERAYMI	Riva et al., 2019
Before You Were Born (BYWB)	Vazquez & Bergin, 2019
Community HUGS	Ericksen et al., 2018
Psychodynamic-oriented video feedback	Manna & Boursier, 2018
Mom Power Parenting Intervention	Rosenblum et al., 2018
The Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)	Pethica & Bigham, 2018
Mothering from the Inside Out (a mentalization-based in- tervention for mothers in addiction treatment)	Suchman et al., 2017
Steps Toward Effective and Enjoyable Parenting – STEEP	Suess et al., 2016
Play with Our Children- POC	Brahm et al., 2016
Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up- ABC	Yarger et al., 2016
Parents under Pressure –PuP	Barlow et al., 2016
Pro-kind (Adapted from Nurse-Family Partnership -NFP)	Sierau et al., 2016
Parent-Child Clinical Services Program	Ziv et al., 2016
Primary Care – Video Intervention Therapy -PC-VIT	Facchini et al., 2016
Mothering from the Inside Out (a mentalization-based therapy for mothers enrolled in mental health services)	Suchman et al., 2016
The Peek-a-Boo ClubTM	Bunston et al., 2016
Promoting responsiveness, emotion regulation and atta- chment in young mothers and infants PRERAYMI	Riva et al., 2016
The Baby Bond	van der Walt et al., 2016
Tuned In Parenting –TIP	King et al., 2015
Mom Power	Muzik et al., 2015
Ulm model	Pillhofer et al., 2015
Positive Parenting and Sensitive Discipline - VIPP-SD	Pereira et al., 2014
My Baby & Me	Guttentag et al., 2014
Parent-Child Psychological Support Program	Pons-Salvador et al., 2014

Table 2. Intervention programs with an attachment perspective

Overall results

The identification of the main intervention variable made it possible to organize the studies according to the problems addressed in maternal mental health, other risk conditions and child development.

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Mother's mental health

These programs were oriented toward the intervention of postpartum depression, anxiety, intellectual disability and parental stress, posttraumatic stress disorder, and consumption of psychoactive substances. Table 3 presents a relationship between the programs and their main results.

Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results
PuP (2019)	The parents were receiving treat- ment for a drug or alcohol pro- blem and were caring for a child under 2.5 years of age. Exclusion criteria: the baby was not currently residing with the main caregiver, pregnant women, active and con- tinuous domestic abuse or active suicidal psychosis or ideation.	Significant improvements were found in emotional regulation and measures of depression, anxiety and stress, however, no significant differences were found for psy- chopathology and parental stress.
BYWB (2019)	At the end of the 90-day treatment, the women completed 12 sessions in each of the five groups paren- ting education, women's issues, prenatal education, bonding and attachment, and development. In addition, they completed 12 hours of individual therapy. The pro- gram is based on the fact that pa- renting education has been shown to improve behavior problems in children and decrease parental stress.	Parental stress decreased in pregnant women who SAA; the amount of substances consumed had no significant effect. In com- petencies, isolation and depres- sion, there were significant diffe- rences and health and attachment were close to significance.
Community HUGS (2018)	It focuses on four tasks that seek to improve parent attachment re- lationships and behaviors; these relate to the parents' IWMs for at- tachment, new animated experien- ces, and the therapeutic relations- hip. The interventions are divided into 10 weekly sessions of approxi- mately 60-90 minutes in duration.	In the study there were significant improvements for parental stress, parenting outcomes, and the mo- ther-child relationship; moderate results in depression and anxiety. The pilot study only showed sig- nificant changes in post-treatment for maternal self-efficacy and a decrease in anxiety, stress and de- pression.

Table 3. Overall results. Maternal mental health



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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results
Mom Power Parenting Intervention (2018)	It aims to improve sensitive and educated parenting, reduce men- tal health problems, and promote positive and balanced attributions towards the child. It uses a mul- ti-family group format to encou- rage participation and retention of participants, provide social su- pport, and connect parents to other services.	The program allowed a change in the typology of the represen- tations, evidenced by an increase in balanced representations and a decrease in unbalanced ones. As well as a significant increase in parental reflexivity.
Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) (2018)	It aims to improve the interactive behaviors of parents. It is a short- term intervention that can de- monstrate its effectiveness in three or five sessions. It uses video comments which in- volves showing parents a video of their own interaction with their children and reflecting on what made the interaction successful.	A perception of greater security to be heard by their children was fos- tered, there were improvements in interaction reflected in play and in less intrusive behavior, there was also greater interest in exercising more sensitive discipline.
POC (2016)	It aims to strengthen the positive interaction between caregiver and child during learning and play as it improves skills and promotes the development of children from 0 to 48 months. Is achieved through group sessions of 2.5 hours including 14 couples to favor interaction following the child's indications and interests and promote reflection on this; home visits individual interviews.	POC was positively associated with maternal sensitivity for mo- thers of older children but not for those of younger children also with a lower level of parental stress. There were no significant differences between the groups in terms of maternal depression.
Parent-Child Clinical Services Program (2016)	It seeks to alter the representations of the parents. PPP and Dyadic Psychotherapy were included, dyadic work is done with a parent, child, and doctor to help parents reflect on the emotional significan- ce of their child's behavior.	There were significant correla- tions between maternal insight and sensitivity. The program had effects on improving sensitivity and decreasing intrusive beha- vior, but not with the constructs of hostility and separation. Likewi- se, the children responded more positively in the interaction with their mothers.



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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results	
MIO (2016)	It is a 12-session manualized in- dividualized therapy to enhance the ability of RF parents in the pa- renting role. In session the mother determines the focus of the discus- sion. If the child is not the imme-	The RF remained at a pre-men- talization level. The child-cente- red RF increased from baseline to post-treatment, potential RF was moderately increased and egocen- tric RF no increase. Maternal stress decreased for personal distress and difficult children but not on the interaction scale. For general psychiatric distress and depres- sion, the magnitude of change was of average effect. There were no significant changes over time in maternal sensitivity, child par- ticipation, and dyadic reciprocity.	70
MIO (2017)	sion. If the child is not the imme- diate subject the therapist will re- mind him when the time is right.	Compared to standard programs the most significant MIO results are observed in the potential RF; a higher quality of renderings de- veloped but this is not remarka- ble. The mother-child interaction had moderate results as did the mothers' substance abuse. There were no significant effects for ma- ternal psychiatric symptoms or child attachment status.	IENT: QUALITATIVE REVIEW OF THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL 5 IN INTERVENTION PROGRAMS WITH AN ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIVE Diana Marcela Bedoya-Gallego, Laura Carolina Jiménez-Pérez, Maira Alejandra González-Gaviria, Ana Rita Russo de Vivo,
Mom Power (2015)	MP is a manualized multifamily intervention, of 13 sessions (3 indi- vidual sessions and 10 group ses- sions) focused on improvements in self-care / mental health and pa- rental competence in mothers with experiences of trauma or abuse and psychopathology (depression with / without PTSD).	Significant reductions were found for the clinical symptoms and diagnoses of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. As well as for maternal helplessness and impotence. The improve- ments in parental reflexivity were only at the trend level.	CHILD MALTREATMENT: QUALITATIVE REVIEV TRENDS IN INTERVENTION PROG Diana Marcela Bedoya-C Maira Alejandra Gon

SAA: substance/alcohol abusing; RF: reflective functioning, IWM: Internal Working Models, PPP: Parent-Child Psychotherapy Program.

With regard to the exercise of motherhood changes in maternal sensitivity, reflective functioning, parental representations, parenting practices and other associated constructs such as hostility, intrusiveness and attachment are alluded to. However, the results are presented in terms of trends and it is not clear whe**K72C**

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ther the improvement in these aspects depended in any case on the decrease in psychopathological symptoms. Except in the results of the BYWB program, in which it is evident that after its implementation parental stress decreased from 229.72 (43.37) to 217.57 (39.17) (Vazquez & Bergin, 2019) stress that contrary to the hypothesis of the researchers it was not superior to the normative group.

With regard to the use of psychoactive substances results were found in the adaptation of the Mothering from the Inside Out (MIO) program, the Parents Under Pressure (PuP) program and the Before You Were Born (BYWB) program. For this population the MIO program produced moderate effects on potential reflective functioning and parental representations, while the PuP program produced improvements in relation to depression, anxiety and parental stress, however, these results were not related to improved substance use or mother-child interaction. For its part, BYWB potentially affected the risks of relapse to substance use and the use of child abuse since it decreased isolation and depression and increased parental competence, in this regard Vazquez & Bergin (2019) argue that this may be due to the willingness to access the program, which favors the perception of achievement and hope as well as less social pressure and access to the substance so that the treatment itself becomes a support scenario, that is, plays a role in stress or depression reduction.

Other risk conditions

Programs aimed at intervening in work-related conflicts, exposure to violence, traumatic experiences, poverty, early motherhood, and their relationship to severe or negligent maternal responses were considered. In Table 4, a relationship between the programs and their main results is presented.



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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results		
MOCEP (2020)	Reports improvements in ma- ternal knowledge, disciplinary style, and socio-emotional de- velopment. It was implemented in 25 group sessions of 3 hours each. The curriculum includes topics on child development, the importance of play in deve- lopment, parenting practices, health and hygiene, and mater- nal empowerment. The program combines lectures, practical de- monstrations, and homework to complete	Compared with CG the use of severe discipline in parenting practices was reduced. It also reduced the stress of the parents in relation to high attendance at the program versus low atten- dance, therefore, mothers expe- rienced social support, female empowerment, decreased indi- vidual distress and better prag- matic knowledge of the child. The emotions and behaviors of the children did not show reduc- tion in their difficulties after the intervention.		72
Lighthouse Parenting Programme (2019)	It is designed to foster parental curiosity about the child's world and reflection on their own thou- ghts, feelings, and reactions. It is a 20-week intervention that works with attachment in each session. The metaphor is that parents are a beacon, providing a soft, watchful light for their child's journey.	The treatment produced favora- ble effects on parental sensitivity, self-efficacy and stress, however, the results were not statistically significant. No significant impro- vement was achieved in mentali- zation and global distress levels.	: QUALITATIVE REVIEW OF THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL N INTERVENTION PROGRAMS WITH AN ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIVE	Diana Marcela Bedoya-Gallego, Laura Carolina Jiménez-Pérez, Maira Alejandra González-Gaviria, Ana Rita Russo de Vivo, Jorge Enrique Palacio Sañudo
PRERAYMI (2019)	The dyads were recruited from three escort services in Milan. The inclusion criteria were spea- king and understanding Italian; between 14 and 21 years old; ab- sence of maternal psychopatho- logy, uncomplicated delivery, and healthy, full-term babies. Maternal mentality was assessed from a 5-minute videotaped free play session. Mothers' speech was transcribed and comments were made that did not refer to the baby's mind or emotion and that included an internal sta- te term that refers to the baby's mind or emotion.	The intervention helped improve the quality of maternal mindsets, mother-infant interaction styles, and maternal ability to adequa- tely assess the infant's develop- mental level. Thus, the sensiti- vity increased and the maternal control style decreased, the coo- perative style of the children also improved. Demonstrated its effectiveness regardless of other risk conditions .	CHILD MALTREATMENT	DLOGÍA e el Caribe 1): 59-91,

Table 4. Overall results. Other risk conditions

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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results
Psychodynamic- oriented video feedback (2018)	Provides support and prevention for mothers with high potential dyadic risk due to constant le- vels of WFC. Through a program defined in this way, identifying specific risk conditions reinforce the response capacity of mothers towards their children.	The most beneficial aspect of the program was called the "dis- ruptive effect" in that it allowed mothers to accept the image of themselves reflected in the vi- deo, recognize their child's signs and achieve greater identifica- tion with their child.
STEEP (2016)	To support the development of secure attachment, enhance ma- ternal sensitivity, encourage mo- thers, and promote the develop- ment of effective social support, the implementation process fo- cused on IWMs to reflect on va- rious influences on themselves, as well as their potential influen- ces on parenting.	The STEEP group was 3.1 times more likely to develop a secure attachment compared to the GC. Comparison between groups for disorganized attachment revea- led an average effect in favor of the STEEP group at both 12 and 24 months. Only at 24 months were STEEP mothers more likely to understand and assess the needs of their children.
The Peek-a-Boo ClubTM (2016)	Reworking in a positive way re- lational ruptures and attachment difficulties resulting from expo- sure to family violence. 11 ses- sions were divided into 8 wee- kly groups of 2 hours, 1 meeting group and individual sessions before and after the group.	Mothers reported significantly more socially competent and less troubled children. 10% of the participants showed a significant improvement in general functio- ning and enjoyment of the MPAS interaction and 3% showed in the quality of MPAS attachment, the participants did not show signi- ficant changes or deterioration in the absence of hostility.
ABC (2016)	Teaches parents to care for their children when they are in dis- tress; Responding in a sensitive way through sessions, 1 and 2 idea that children need care, 3 and 4, encourage sensitive beha- vior, 5 and 6 help to identify and respond to children's signals, 7 and 8 favor the exploration of the parenting experience. Sessions 9 and 10 opportunity for coaches to consolidate achievements.	For sensitivity there was a me- dium effect while for intrusive- ness there was a significant re- duction. The results were more pronounced during the first half of the treatment.

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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results	
PuP (2016)	Intensive support and timely as- sessment and decision-making for vulnerable pregnant women. It refers to women with domes- tic abuse, drugs or alcohol or between 14 and 35 years and are between 18 and 28 weeks of ges- tation. Prenatal evaluation and intervention focuses on the mo- ther's mental state and well-be- ing, including the social context, they are evaluated after delivery (two months), using the CARE in- dex and the HOME.	A better development and quali- ty in the relationship of care, va- lues, expectations and maternal skills was achieved. As well as better functioning in the capacity to regulate emotions in the mo- ther and better integration with the wider social context.	
Pro-kind (2016)	It focused on improving ma- ternal prenatal health, family functioning, parental skills, and financial self-sufficiency to en- hance child development and reduce child abuse.	A marginally significant effect on social support was observed. The program did not have significant effects on mother-infant satisfac- tion, maternal skills, school de- velopment in mothers and birth control. The children in the IG showed higher levels of mental development.	IHEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL WITH AN ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIVE O. Laura Carolina Jiménez-Pérez, O. Laura Rita Russo de Vivo, Jorge Enrique Palacio Sañudo
PRERAYMI (2016)	It seeks to improve the mo- ther-child relationship in the baby's first year of life, increa- sing maternal responsiveness and reflexivity and mother-child dyadic emotional regulation. It is based on three different approa- ches: video intervention, develo- pmental counseling and psycho- logical counseling.	The adolescent mothers of the IG showed an increase in the sensi- tivity style and a decrease in the control style. The effect of the intervention was greater at 3 to 6 months than at 6 to 9 months; thus there was improvement in the cooperative style, but not in the compulsive, complacent and difficult child style. There was no significant effect between the effect of the intervention and the quality of maternal attachment.	CHILD MALIFREATMENT: QUALITATIVE REVIEW OF THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICA TRENDS IN INTERVENTION PROGRAMS WITH AN ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIV Diama Marcela Bedoya-Gallego, Laura Carolina Jiménez-Pérez Maira Alejandra González-Gaviria, Ana Rita Russo de Vivo Jorge Enrique Palacio Sañud

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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results
Ulm model (2015)	Short-term intervention consis- ted of 7 sessions of 1.5 h duration and a duration of approximate- ly 3 months. They were carried out in the participant's home to record the mother-child inte- raction and identify signals and responses to explain the baby's needs and competencies to the mother and help her understand her child's signals.	In none of the groups, the mean sensitivity reached the adequate level according to the CARE-In- dex. The risk status showed that the average socio-emotional de- velopment was significantly hi- gher in the high-risk group than in the moderate-risk group.
VIPP-SD (2014)	Short-term intervention that im- proves sensitivity and discipline using video feedback. In the first session a mother-child interac- tion profile is developed. In the following four sessions the diffe- rence between attachment and exploratory behavior is exami- ned, "speaking for the child", the "chain of sensitivity" and the im- portance of sharing emotions, em- pathy and understanding of the child as disciplinary strategies.	Severe discipline decreased in the IG but not in the GC. The changes occurred only under the most stressful conditions.
Parent-Child Psychological Support Program (2014)	Supports parents during the first 18 months of the baby's life to pro- mote protective systems in chil- dren. 6 individual visits of 45/60 minutes are made from 3 months of age to 18 months or 24 months if prolonged. In these, the develo- pment of the child and their inte- raction with objects and with the main caregiver are evaluated.	The results indicated that at least three visits were needed to pro- duce significant changes in the CAP. It was observed that the proportion of children with secu- re attachment was higher when the family made four visits to the program and when the mothers' CAP scores were reduced in the subsequent evaluation.

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Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results
y Baby & Me (2014)	Designed for parents of vulne- rable children, it includes mo- dules that teach interactive skills for responsive parenting. The high-intensity intervention be- gan during the third trimester of pregnancy and continued until the child reached 30 months of age completing 55 sessions with individual Indians. The low in- tensity provides basic informa- tion on the development of the child through printed informa- tional material.	Maternal behaviors such as con- tingent response capacity, qua- lity of verbal stimulation and frequency of verbal scaffolding were the most sustained over time. There was little evidence of differences between adolescents and adult mothers. It was found that the high intensity children showed better results in the in- volvement with their environ- ment, expressive language and complexity of playing with toys. There were no significant diffe- rences between infant cognition and language assessment.
		rences between infant cognition
• •	GI: intervention group, MPAS: Materr tial Inventory, WFC: The Work-Family	
emotiona ver, there nfant relat l. With res in attachr	ed better results in sensitivity, I regulation and integration v were no favorable effects on re- tionship satisfaction, mothers' a spect to child related outcomes a nent, social skills, reduction of p agement with their environmen	vith the wider social context. ducing maternal hostility, mo- school performance and birth significant improvements were problem behaviors, mental de-
developm	ent	
ng, and hea s an evalua	were aimed at prenatal stimula althy child development. Only the ation of its effects favorable rest afant interaction, which in turn	he <i>Tuning in Parenting</i> program ults are related to an improve-

Child development

The programs were aimed at prenatal stimulation, child mental health, well-being, and healthy child development. Only the Tuning in Parenting program makes an evaluation of its effects favorable results are related to an improvement in carer-infant interaction, which in turn influences children's capacity for expression and exploration. However, it had no effect on maternal emotional well-being. Table 5 presents a relationship between the programs and their main results.



Programs	Characteristics of the intervention	Results
The Baby Bond (2016)	The program effect is measured by stimulating the chemosensory system, auditory, somatosensory, vestibular, neural and visual, these were self-administered in the com- fort of their own home where they have access to the environment and the necessary instruments.	The PAI result revealed no signi- ficant differences between groups while the MAI revealed a signifi- cant increase for the control group indicating that The Baby Bond program did not have significant- ly more bonding benefits than the alternative stimulation program.
PC-VIT (2016)	Supports the sensitivity and awa- reness of caregivers to promote children's mental health. In su- pport of the purposes of the in- tervention, two more WBVs were added at 2 and 4 months, during these there was a medical visit of 15 to 20 minutes in which a video clip was recorded for feedback of 40 to 45 minutes. The subject of the video recording changed with the age of the baby.	All participants rated the inter- vention as helpful in improving their ability to better understand their own and their infants' beha- viors. They reported feeling more confident as parents and more aware of their abilities.
TIP (2015)	Enhance maternal reflexivity in the mother-child relationship to develop a sensitive attunement to the signals of babies and the ade- quate capacity to respond to the- se signals. It was carried out in a group of four to six mothers for 2 hours a week for 9 weeks simulta- neously their children attended a group of babies.	The participants showed more returns and reciprocal feelings of the initiative of their children, thus, they encouraged the explo- ration of the environment and allowed the expression of a varie- ty of emotions, in addition, they offered adequate comfort when necessary. There were no signifi- cant effects on depression, anxie- ty, and stress.

Table 5. Overall results. Child development

PAI: Prenatal Attachment Inventory MAI: Maternal Attachment Inventory

Theoretical trend

The most frequently cited reference in relation to the conceptualization of maternal sensitivity is Mary Ainsworth, who maintains that it is the capacity that the mother has to respond to the needs and demands of the child according to the moment of development in which the child is, and do it precisely, appropriate, rapid and contingent manner. Likewise, it is pointed out that the capa
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city of response demands, in turn, an interpretative capacity of the need that is at the base of the demands. This approach gives rise to the relationship of sensitivity with other constructs, such as, maternal attachment, internal representations of work in mothers and reflexivity. Finally, it is noted that the mother's response constitutes a model for her children to develop a capacity for self-regulation at both the cognitive and behavioral levels.

On the other hand, mentalization is presented as the mother's capacity to reflect on the child's inner states like thoughts, emotions and intentions and with it, the understanding of their behavior as well as the mental states of herself. This process is in turn associated with a capacity for regulation of affect and superior functioning within the social world. As a result, mentalization favors that the mother recognizes her limitations in order to always know what her child is thinking and, therefore, be more available to seek to tune into her signals. The authors argue that, as a whole, sensitivity and awareness are determining factors in the attachment and self-image system that the child incorporates.

The relationship between mentalization and reflexivity clarifies that reflective functioning is the observable and measurable manifestation of the capacity to mentalize, allows access to the internal working models of parents or parental representations and their application in insightful attitudes related to the child's behaviors and feelings. This suggests that when mentalization or reflective functioning intervenes sensitivity improves. Only two of the programs (Byrne et al., 2019; Riva et al., 2019) specified the differences in the approach to these variables even when they are theoretically recognized as overlapping concepts and established connection paths between them, for example through the mental mentality, interface concept between the representational and the behavioral level (Meins as cited in Riva et al., 2019).

Finally, empathy was referred to as a mother's capacity and ability that favors her understanding of the child's internal states but the differences between empathy and maternal sensitivity are not established.

It can therefore be seen that the programs observe different manifestations of child abuse without making a distinction between the mechanisms underlying each one which influences both the definition of the dependent variables and the selection of the measurement instruments.





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Variables and Measurements

In terms of the instruments used, it was identified that the most used questionnaire was *The Parenting Stress Index Short Form* [PSI/SF] (Abidin, 1995), referenced in eight of the studies (Barlow et al., 2019; Byrne et al., 2019; Riva et al., 2019; Brahm et al., 2016; Ericksen et al., 2018; Manna & Boursier, 2018; Riva et al., 2016; Muzik et al., 2015) and whose reliability varied between .72 and .95.

The most measured variable in the studies was maternal depression, the most used instruments for its measurement were: *The Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale* [DASS] (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) (Ericksen et al, 2018; Suchman et al., 2016; Muzik et al., 2015), with reliability ranging from .73 to .81; *The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale* [EPDS] (Cox, Holden, & Sagovsky, 1987) (Ericksen et al., 2018; Brahm et al., 2016; Muzik et al., 2015), with reliability levels between .87 and .88; and *The Postpartum Depression Screening Scale* [PPDS] (Beck & Gable, 2001) (Rosenblum et al., 2018; King et al., 2015; Pons-Salvador et al., 2014), with reliability levels between .93 and .99.

The most widely used semi-structured interview in measuring internal parental work representations was *The Working Model of the Child Interview* [WMCI] (Rosenblum et al., 2009; Zeanah & Benoit, 1995) (Rosenblum et al., 2018; Suchman et al., 2017; King et al., 2015) with an inter-class correlation coefficient [*ICC*] ranging from .62 to .92. Likewise, the most referenced semi-structured interview for identifying reflective parental functioning was *The Parent Development Interview* [PDI] (Slade, Aber, Berger, Bresgi, & Kaplan, 2003) (Byrne et al., 2019; Ponguta et al., 2020; Vazquez & Bergin, 2019; Suchman et al., 2017; Suchman et al., 2016; Riva et al., 2016), with an ICC ranging from .77 to .93.

The most widely used structured observation strategies were Ainsworth et al. (1978), *The strange situation attachment procedure* (Suchman et al., 2017; Brahm et al., 2016; Pillhofer et al., 2015; Guttentag et al, 2014) with an ICC of .72, and *The CARE-Index* (Crittenden, 2008) (Barlow et al., 2019; Riva et al., 2019; Manna & Boursier, 2018; Ziv et al., 2016; Suchman et al., 2016;) with an ICC of .83 for infant behavior and .88 for maternal behavior.

Finally, the most referenced instrument for the measurement of child development specifically in cognitive functioning and language was *The Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development Screening Test* (Bayley, 2006) (Suchman et al., 2017; Pillhofer et al., 2015; Pons-Salvador et al., 2014). Regarding this instrument, the



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PSICOLOGÍA DESDE EL CARIBE studies examined do not present reliable data and it should be noted that the lack of this information was a characteristic aspect of most of the studies examined.

Levels of evidence and degrees of recommendation

There is evidence of a methodological trend of an experimental and quasi-experimental nature, in this way most of the studies are randomized controlled trials, which resulted in that, of the 27 studies reviewed, four had a level of evidence Ia and eight Ib, in that sense, the research supporting these studies favors their recommendation. The classification of studies by level and degree of recommendation is shown in Table 6.

Study	Level of evidence		Level of recommendation	
Ericksen et al., 2018	I. a			
Suchman et al., 2017	I. a			
Sierau et al., 2016	I. a			
Suchman et al., 2016	I. a		Its scientific evidence comes from me-	
Ponguta et al., 2020	I. b		ta-analyzes, systematic reviews, and	
Barlow et al., 2019	I. b		controlled trials with or without ran-	
Riva et al., 2019	I. b	A	domness. There is 'good' research-based	
Rosenblum et al., 2018	I. b		evidence to support the recommenda-	
van der Walt et al., 2016	I. b	1	tion.	
Yarger et al., 2016	I. b	1		
Pereira et al., 2014	I. b	1		
Guttentag et al., 2014	I. b]		
Riva et al., 2016	II. a			
Pillhofer et al., 2015	II. a			
Suess et al., 2016	II. b			
Brahm et al., 2016	II. b		Its scientific evidence comes from pros-	
Byrne et al., 2019	III		pective controlled studies, quasi-ex-	
Vazquez & Bergin, 2019	III	В	perimental studies, or well-designed non-experimental descriptive studies.	
Ziv et al., 2016	III		There is 'moderate' research-based evi-	
Bunston et al., 2016	III		dence to support the recommendation.	
Muzik et al., 2015	III			
King et al., 2015	III			
Pons-Salvador et al., 2014	III			
Manna & Boursier, 2018	IV		Its scientific evidence comes from do-	
Pethica & Bigham, 2018	IV		cuments or opinions of experts and / or	
Barlow et al., 2016	IV	C	clinical experiences of prestigious au- thorities. The recommendation is based	
Facchini et al., 2016	IV	1	on expert opinion or a consensus panel.	

Table 6. Levels of evidence and degrees of recommendation

Source: Own construction based on the analysis of studies and the guidelines of the *Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network* [SING] (Harbour & Miller, 2001; Primo, 2003).



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Discussion

The background to this study demonstrates or reinforces the idea that, in order to mitigate child abuse, it is essential to intervene in a variety of variables since the causes of child abuse are not only due to the dyadic mother-child relationship but also to individual, family and social conditions, in other words, the context in which this relationship is built (WHO, 2009). Respectively, they can be considered the violent childhood experiences and the suffering of mental disorders of the mother, the care of several children and the low social support and conditions for the mother (Kotch et al., 1999; Firk et al., 2018; García-Panal et al., 2016; Aguiar et al., 2015; Salinas-Quiroz & Posada, 2015; Pulido et al., 2013). Conditions that may involve stress and that undoubtedly influence the exercise of motherhood as they become risk factors associated with abusive behavior towards children (de Wolff & Van Ijzendoorn, 1997; de Falco et al., 2014).

In this sense, this systematic review identified a predominance of studies aimed at intervening in the conditions defined in this study as "other risk factors", including work-family conflict, exposure to violence, traumatic experiences, poverty and the relationship of these with negligence. maternal situations or responses. The results show improvements in maternal sensitivity, maternal competencies, dyadic emotional regulation, integration with the broader social context by the mother, attachment bonds, social competencies, mental development and expressive language of the child. However, despite the intervention, hostile maternal behavior and experiences of dissatisfaction in the mother-infant relationship persisted suggesting the risk of relapse into negative parental behavior.

Although to a lesser extent, programs aimed at maternal mental health care were also found specifically with regard to anxiety, depression, stress and post-traumatic stress disorder. Results showed improvements in terms of maternal sensitivity, reflective functioning, parental representations, and parenting practices. However, it was not clear whether the improvements were related to the decrease in psychopathological symptoms.

In general, it was found that the programs are characterized by being structured between 7 and 20 sessions, oriented to the development of parental competencies, mainly in the mother-child dyad.



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Risk factors especially individual ones have been shown to have greater implications for the style of the mother-child bond (Di Venanzio et al, 2017; Sockol et al., 2014; Nieto et al., 2017), which reveals the importance of attending to these conditions starting with the prenatal period (Myors et al., 2018; Rutherford et al., 2015; Smaling et al., 2015; Camoirano, 2017; Moore et al., 2016; Nieto, 2017; Mountain et al., 2017; Plotka & Busch-Rossnagel, 2018).

In relation to the above, a relevant aspect to mention is that despite the recognition of the mother's violent childhood experiences as one of the main predisposing factors of child abuse (MacKenzie, Kotch & Lee, 2011; MacKenzie, Koth, Lee, Augsberger & Hutto, 2011; van IJzendoorn et al., 2019) this is a variable that is only intervened in two programs (Byrne et al., 2019; Riva et al., 2019). This shows the relevance of developing intervention programs in which, in addition to considering the current conditions of the context in which the dyadic relationship develops, there is a perspective of cumulative ecological risk which allows recognizing the predisposing conditions in the intergenerational transmission of abuse (Bérubé et al., 2020).

The mentioned in the previous paragraphs, could well be related to the lack of conceptual delimitation found with respect to the concepts of sensitivity, mentalization, reflective functioning and empathy; this difficulty was also found by Boorman et al. (2019). McLaughlin (2017) distinguished between two types of adverse experiences in childhood threatening experiences involving harm or threat of harm and deprivation experiences involving the absence of expected input from the environment, showing that depending on the type of experience the effects on development vary. Consequently, children exposed to threat present alterations in emotional development while children exposed to deprivation manifest deficits in cognitive functioning. In this sense, recognizing that the consequences are determined by the type of abuse, it is necessary to advance in studies that allow the identification of the underlying mechanisms in the different forms of manifestation of abuse which will contribute in a greater clarity to define the most relevant intervention variables. In this regard, van IJzendoorn et al. (2019) propose that research on the background of child abuse deserves further development especially with regard to mediation models and the potentially divergent precursors in the different types of abuse.

Finally, with regard to the procedures for analyzing the information it is found that the results revolve around the p values and in some cases in effect size



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measures, however, no confidence intervals are established that would allow the results named as marginal or with a significant trend to be analyzed more clearly, an aspect that according to Ato et al. (2013) is a criticism that has been related to the research reports since approximately 1999. In addition, as Bardenes-Ribera and Frías (2017) point out incorrect interpretations regarding the p-value affect the understanding of the differences between statistical significance and clinical significance and the decisions regarding the practice derived from there; this fact is evident in most of the programs because, despite the fact that the results are not statistically significant, the qualitative evaluation that the participants make of them reveals an improvement in the difficulties they experience in the exercise of their motherhood.

Given the nature of this study, it should be noted that its main limitation is related as expressed by Melendez-Torres et al. (2019) for this type of analysis with the provisionality and openness of the data presented, that is, future research can deepen the results or develop them further since what it is about is to present the most effective interventions through the description of its components. In this sense, its impact is at the contextual level, that is, it allows the adoption, development or elimination of components of interventions in practical or clinical settings, in order to enhance their impact, "this heterogeneity means that the scope of the benefit of the implementation of programs is uncertain" (Meléndez-Torres et al., 2019, p. 194), so the conclusions, although exhaustive, do not allow recommendations or decisions to be made for the exercise of public health procedures.

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