



# Early Childhood Development Programmes with Play Therapy for Urban Youth in South Africa: Cognitive Function and Parenting Behaviors Outcome Measures

Sipho Phinehas Msimanga<sup>1,2</sup>, Kgalakgo Matheus Sekoto<sup>3,4</sup>, Nontobeko Mthuli Nkayi<sup>5</sup>, Cynthia Zola Gqoba<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Internal Medicine, Council for Geoscience

<sup>2</sup> Department of Epidemiology, University of Limpopo

<sup>3</sup> Department of Pediatrics, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)

<sup>4</sup> University of Zululand

<sup>5</sup> Department of Clinical Research, Council for Geoscience

<sup>6</sup> Department of Internal Medicine, University of Limpopo

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Correspondence: [smsimanga@aol.com](mailto:smsimanga@aol.com)

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### Author notes

*Sipho Phinehas Msimanga is affiliated with Department of Internal Medicine, Council for Geoscience and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

*Kgalakgo Matheus Sekoto is affiliated with Department of Pediatrics, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

*Nontobeko Mthuli Nkayi is affiliated with Department of Clinical Research, Council for Geoscience and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

*Cynthia Zola Gqoba is affiliated with Department of Internal Medicine, University of Limpopo and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

### Abstract

Early childhood development is crucial for cognitive function and positive parenting behaviors in urban youth, particularly in South Africa where socio-economic challenges are prevalent. The study employed a randomized controlled trial design, recruiting 200 participants from urban areas. Cognitive function was measured using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) version 4, while parenting behaviors were assessed through the Parenting Practices Questionnaire (PPQ). Participants who received play therapy interventions showed a statistically significant average gain of 15% in WISC scores compared to controls (95% CI: [8%, 23%]). There was also a trend towards improved parenting behaviors as indicated by the PPQ. Early childhood development programmes with play therapy appear effective in enhancing cognitive function and promoting positive parenting behaviors among urban youth in South Africa. Further longitudinal studies are recommended to explore long-term impacts of these interventions on child development outcomes. Play Therapy, Cognitive Function, Parenting Behaviors, Early Childhood Development, Urban Youth Treatment effect was estimated with  $\text{logit}(\pi) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i$ , and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

**Keywords:** African, Early Childhood, Developmental, Play Therapy, Cognitive, Behaviour, Interventions

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