



**YALE CHILD  
STUDY CENTER**

*Where discovery inspires care*

# The Science of Parenting and Parent-Based Treatment for Childhood Anxiety Disorders

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Yale Medicine | Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

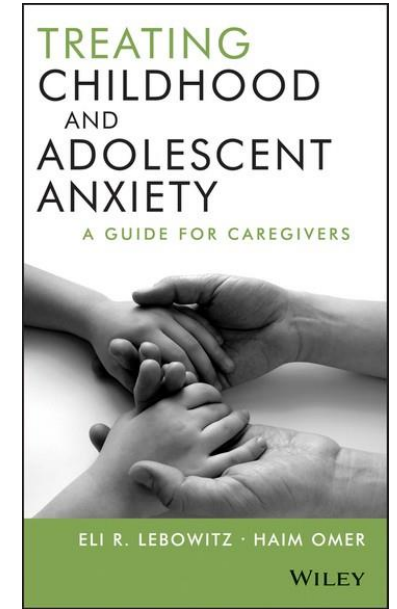
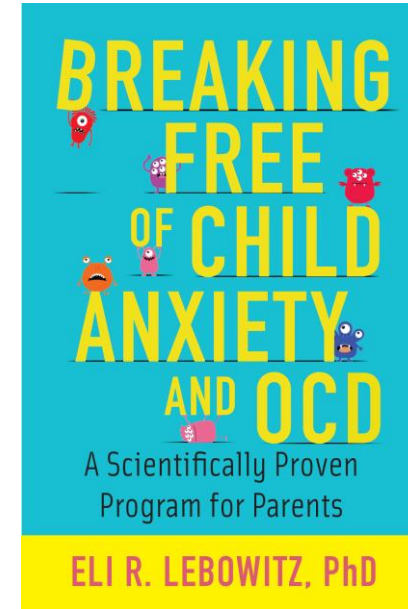
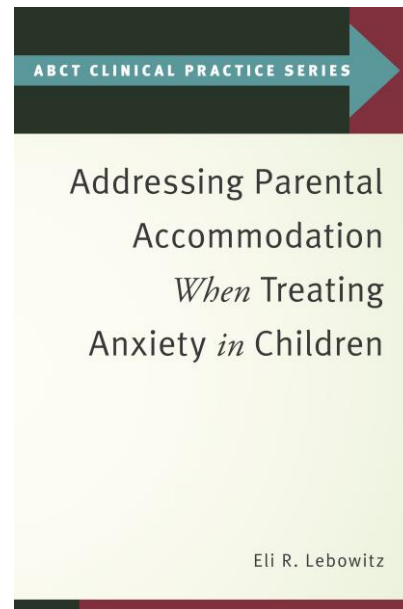
# Disclosures

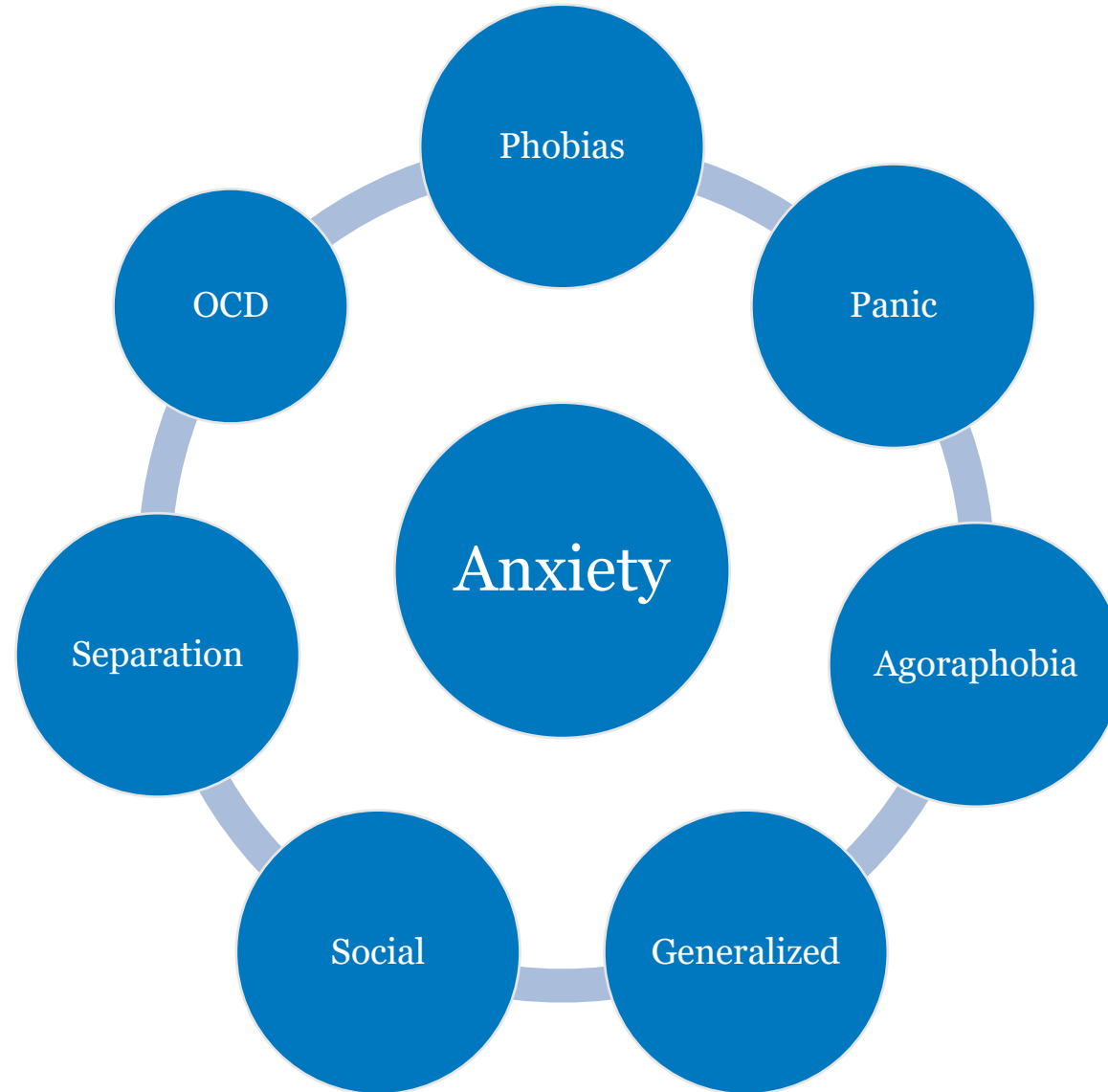
Neither I nor my spouse have, nor have had in the past 12 months, a financial relationship with manufacturers of products or providers of services or with any medically related commercial interests relevant to this planned educational activity

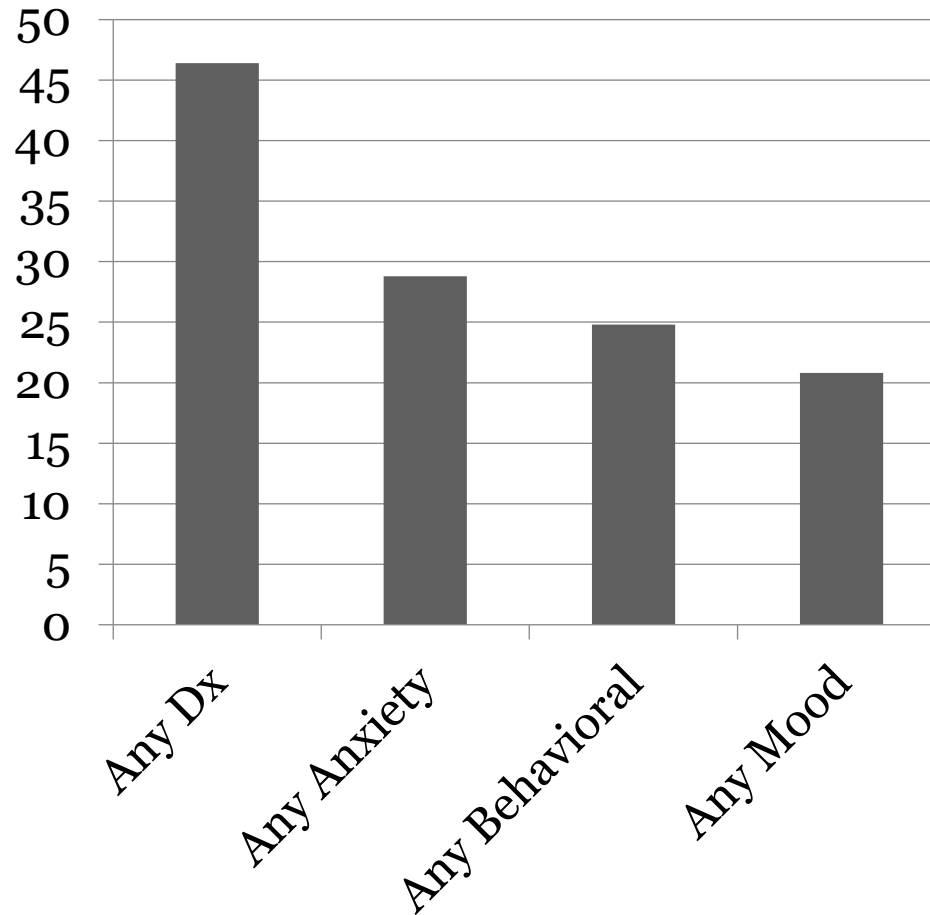
Funding sources:

Royalties (Wiley, Oxford, others)

Grants: NIMH, NARSAD, NCATS







Lifetime  
Prevalence 28.8%

75% Onset before  
age 21

Median onset age  
11

Kessler et al, Archives of General Psychiatry, 2005

# Well-Established Treatments for Childhood Anxiety Disorders



Cognitive-  
Behavioral  
Therapy



Medication

# Current Treatments Efficacious in Approximately 50% of Cases



# Does Involving Parents Benefit Outcomes?



Most studies have not found that parent involvement benefits child anxiety outcomes relative to CBT alone







# Parents Are Attuned To Child Fear Cues

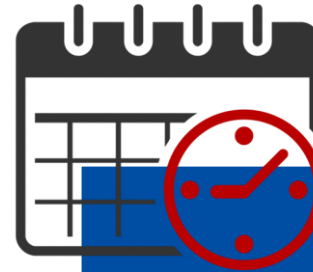


# Family Accommodation



## Participation

- Answer repeated questions
- Sleep near child
- Perform checks



## Modification

- Return early from work
- Drive special routes
- Maintain rigid schedules

# Family Accommodation

Present in ~95% of parents of anxious children (especially mothers)

Shimshoni et al., 2019; Benito et al., 2015; Storch et al, 2015

Associated with more severe anxiety symptoms

Norman et al, 2014; Lebowitz, et al., 2016

Associated with more severe impairment for child and family

Thompson–Hollands et al., 2014

Predicts poor treatment outcome

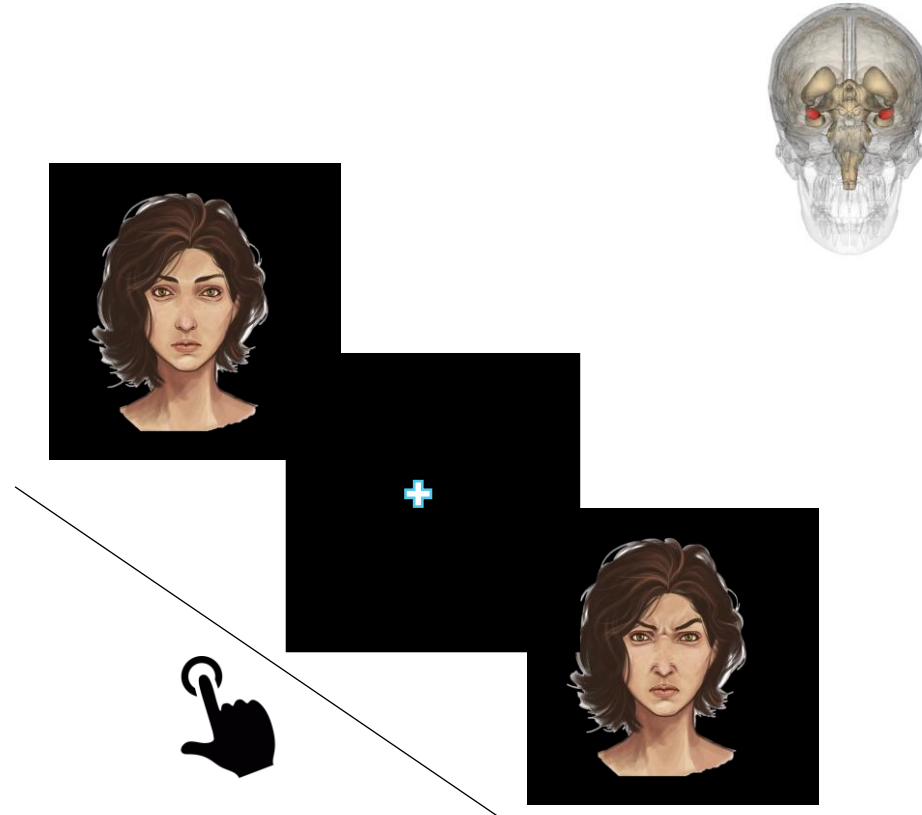
Kagan et al., 2016; Turner, et al., 2017

Leads to additional problems (e.g., sleep related problems)

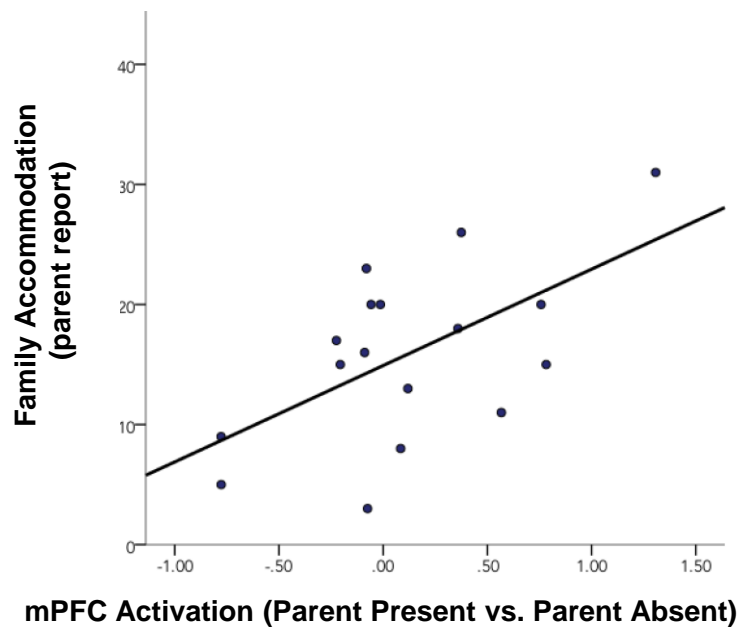
Lebowitz & Shimshoni, 2019



Child scanned twice: with mother present  
and when mother is absent



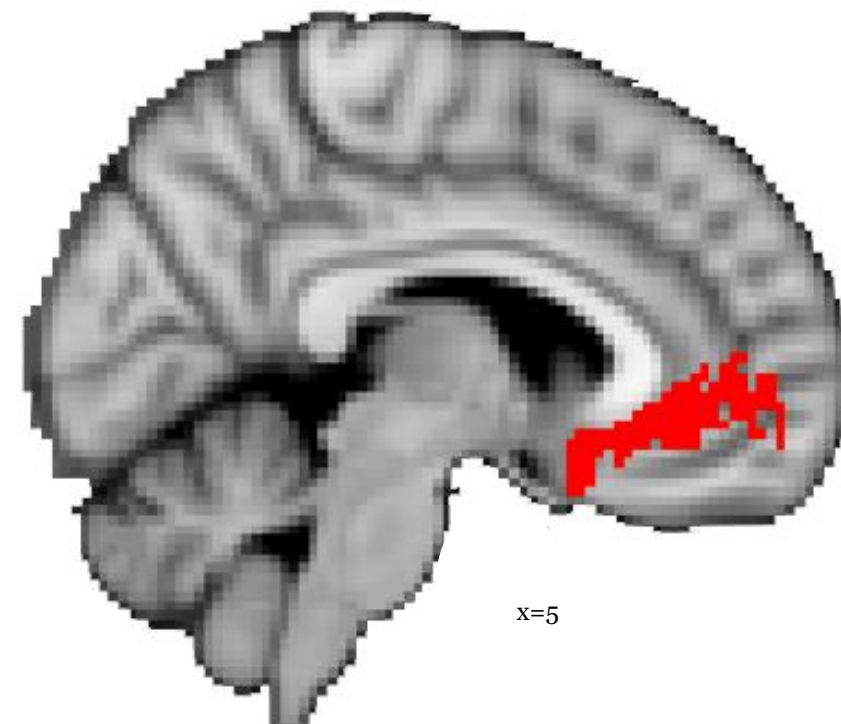
# Family Accommodation and mPFC Activation in Clinically Anxious Children



More activation in parent's  
absence

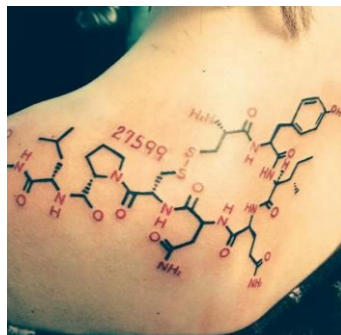
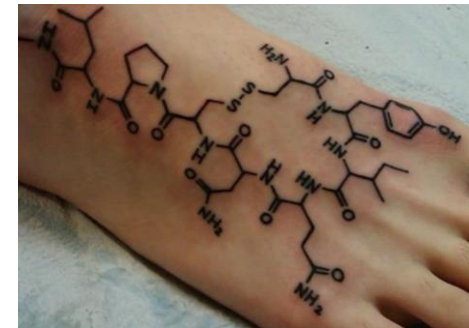
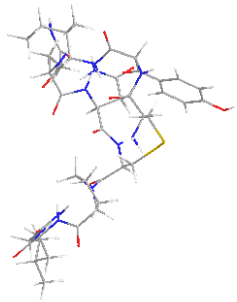


More activation in parent's  
presence



$r=.584, p=.014$





**The only  
Oxytocin Nasal  
Spray on Amazon  
that contains  
real Oxytocin**

Other brands only contain ingredients they believe to accelerate Oxytocin but do not actually contain any Oxytocin

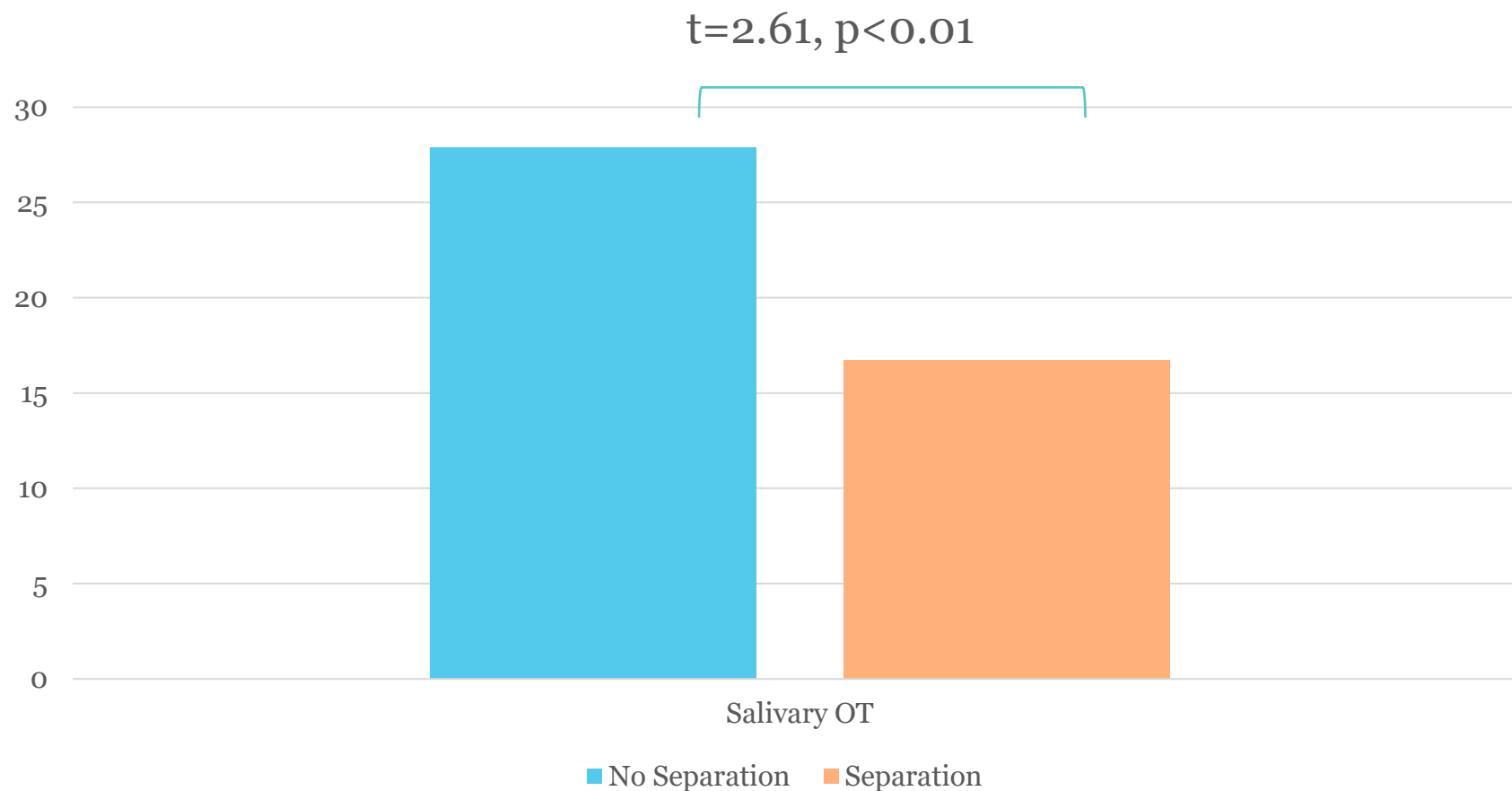
**10 IU of Oxytocin  
in each spray**

 **OXYLUV**  
Nasal Spray



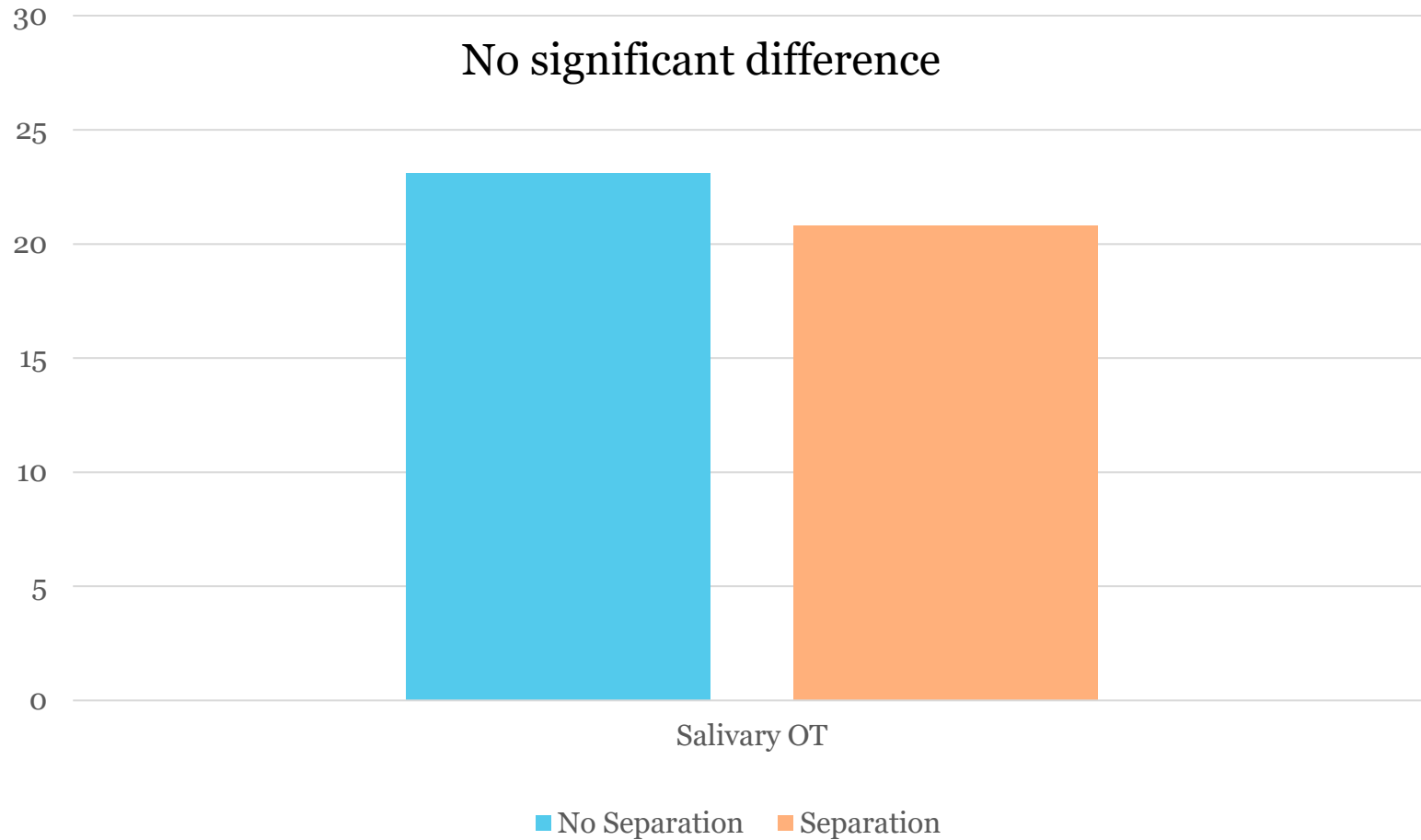
# Oxytocin

# Lower Salivary Oxytocin in Youth With Separation Anxiety





# After Mother-Child Interaction

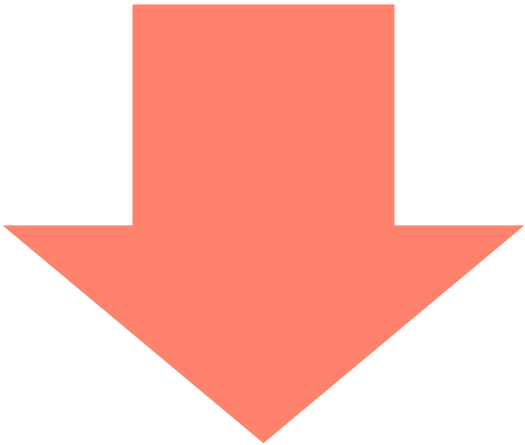


# SPACE

Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions

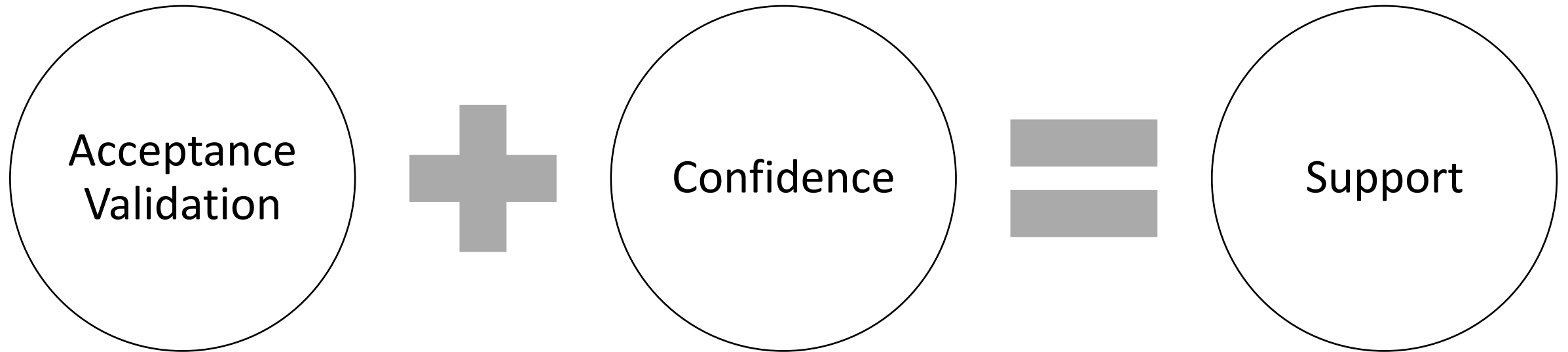


Increase  
Support

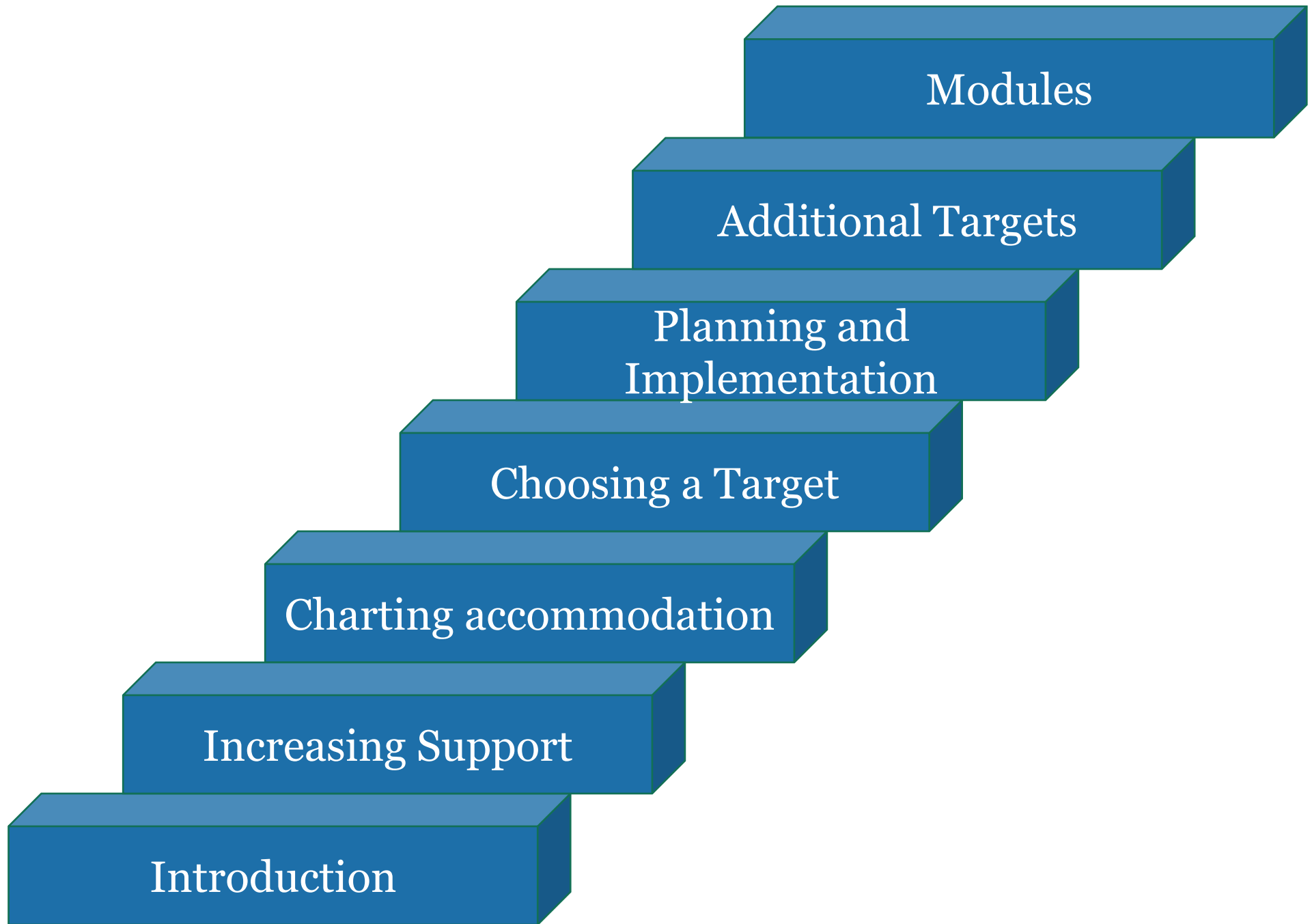


Decrease  
Accommodation

# Support







# Session Modules



Assessed for eligibility (n=259)

- Excluded (n=135)
- Not meeting inclusiong criteria (n=86)
- Declined to participate (n=29)
- Other reasons (n=20)

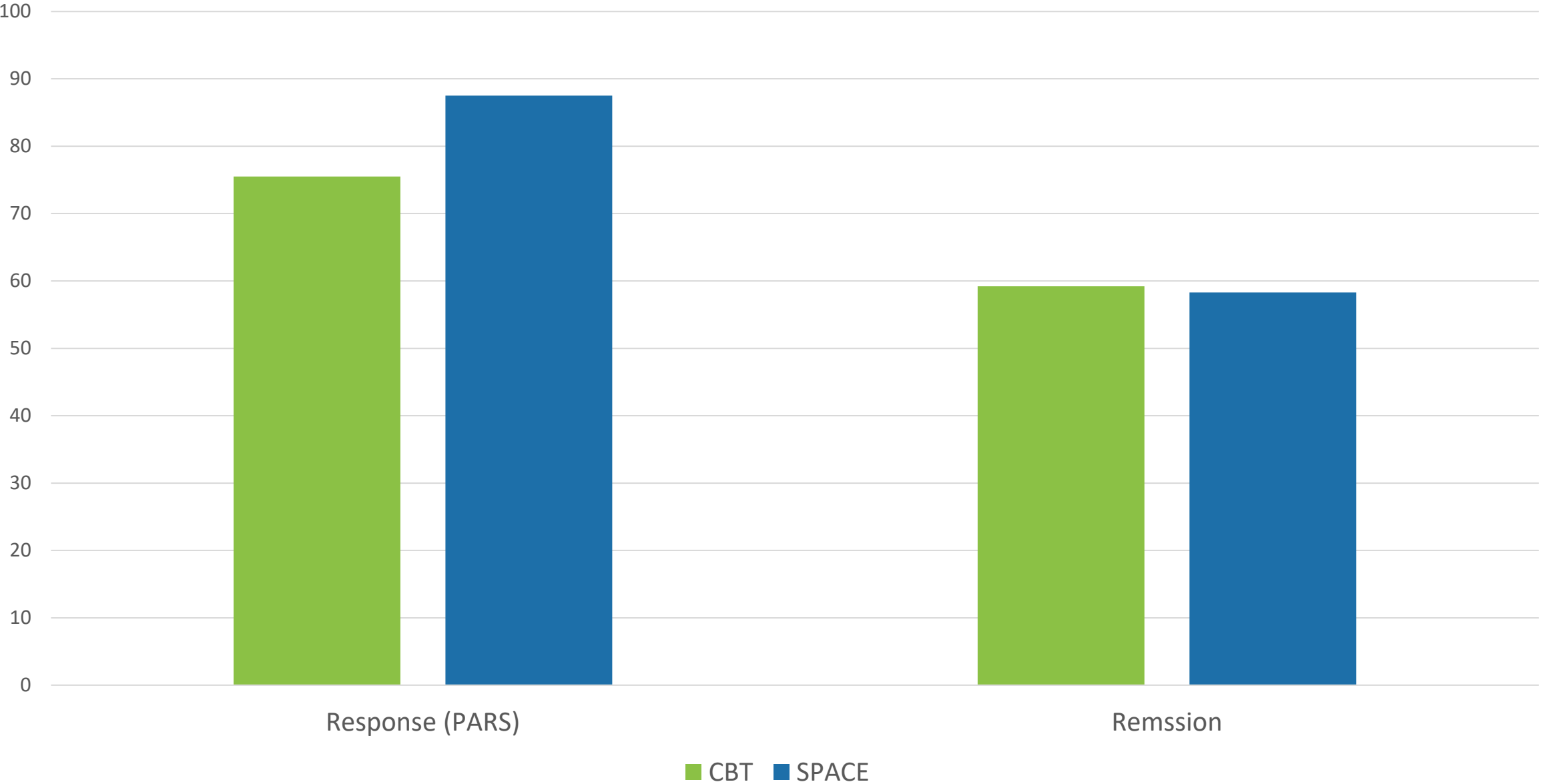
Randomized (n=124)

Allocation

Allocated to CBT (n=60)

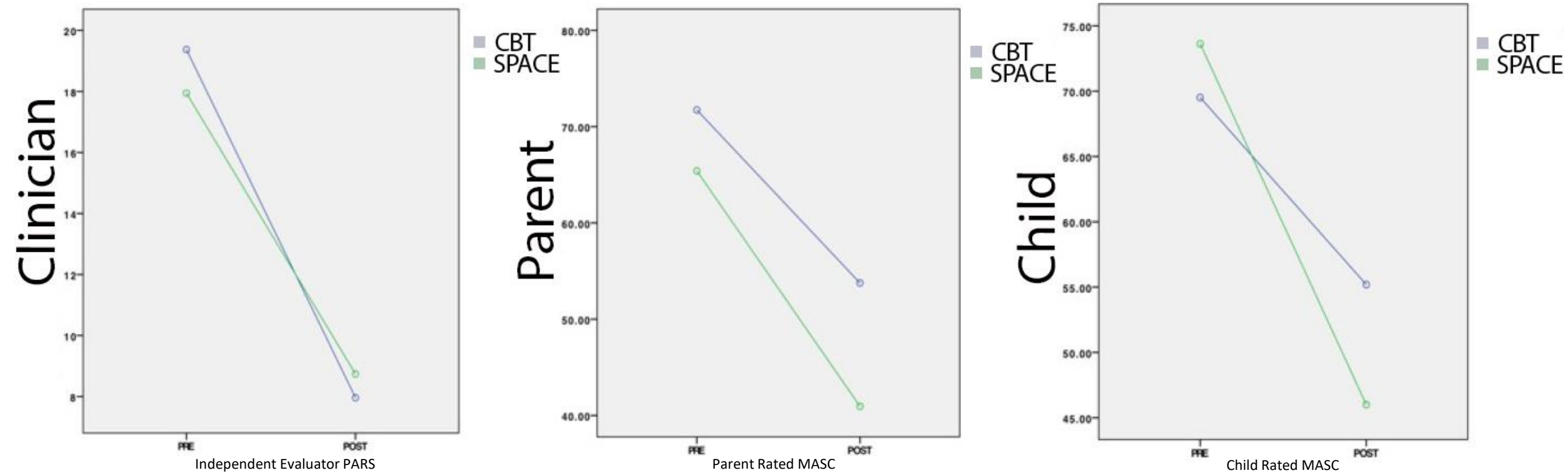
Allocated to SPACE (n=64)

# Response and Remission

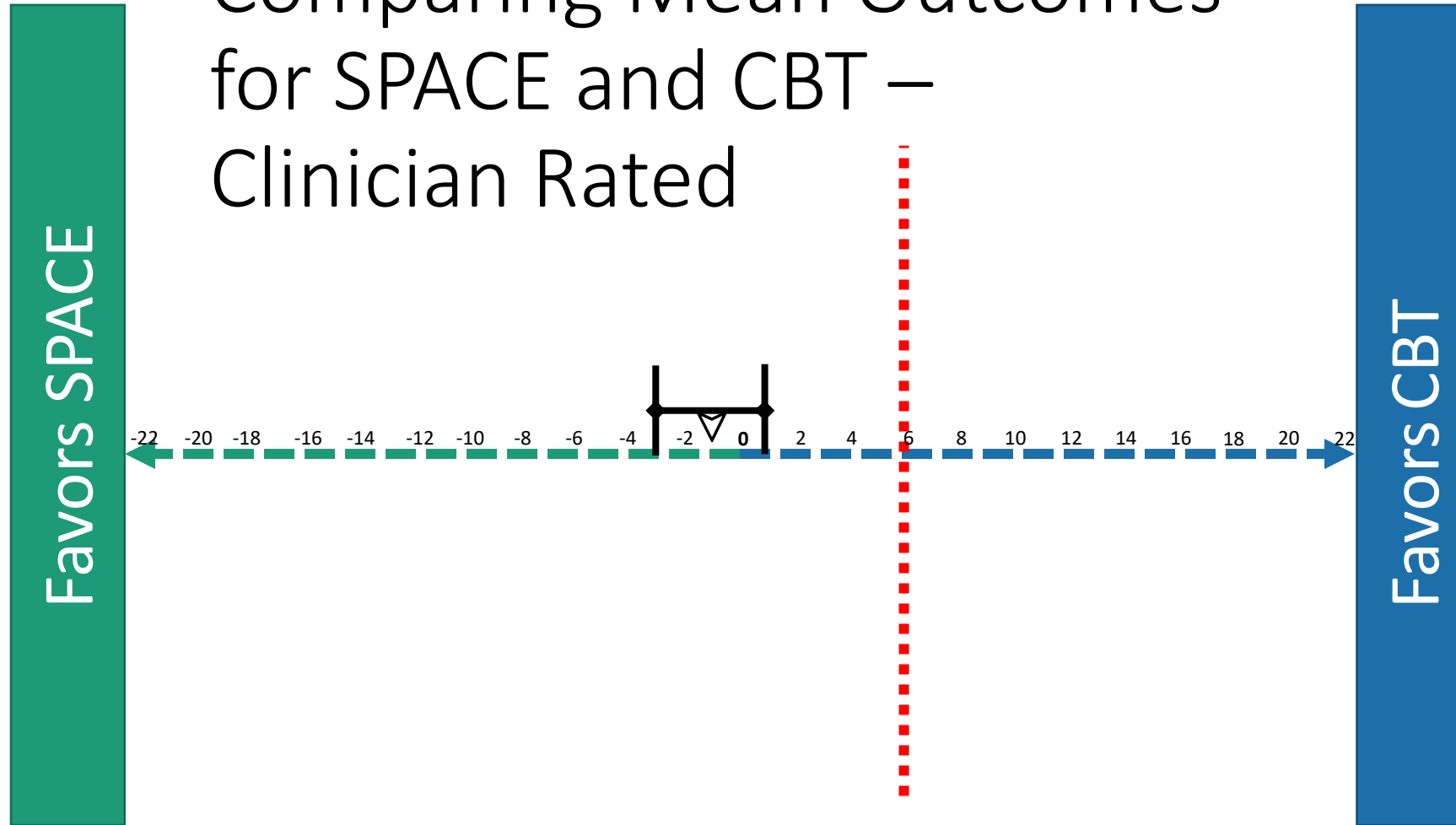




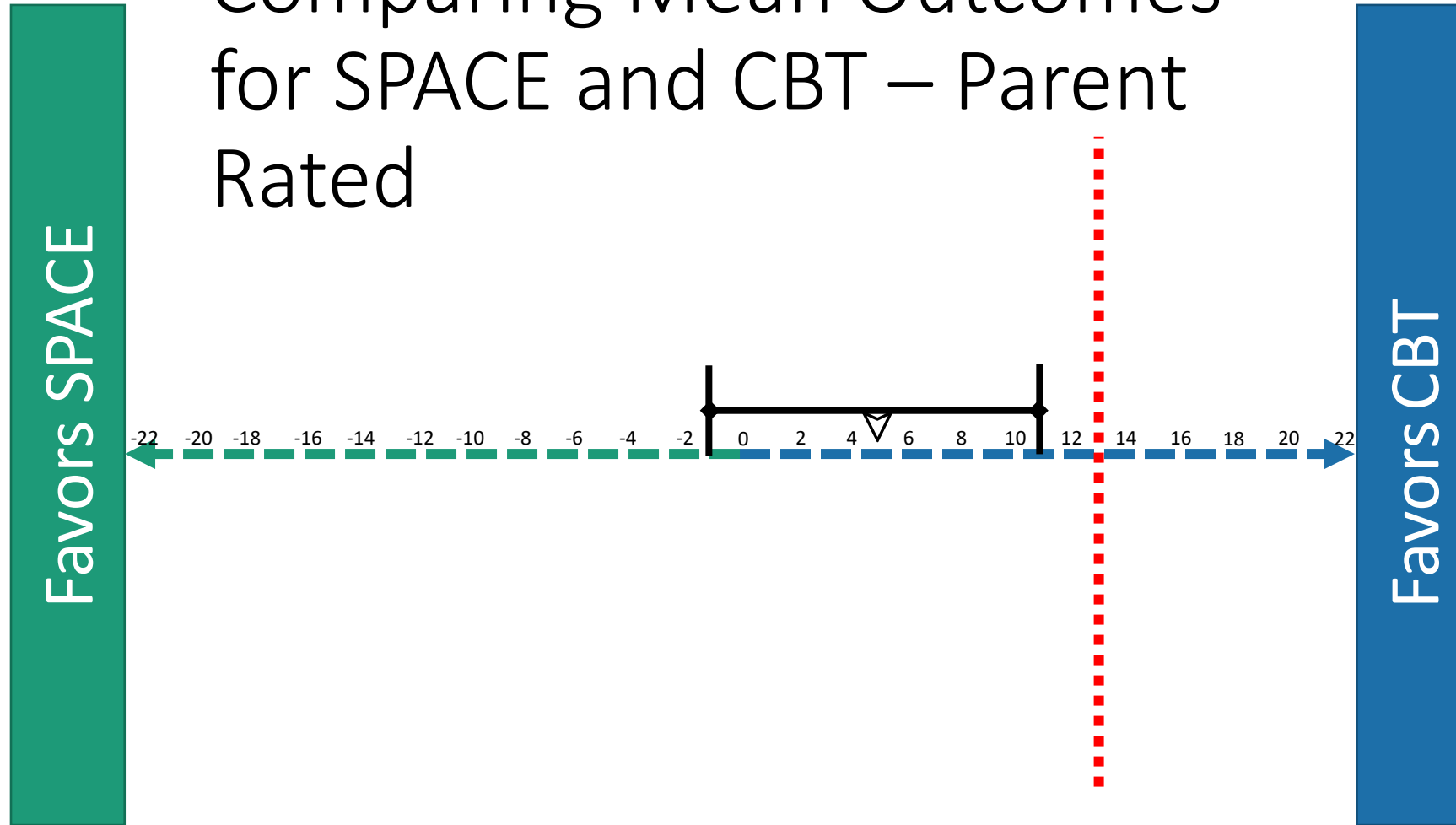
# Secondary Outcomes



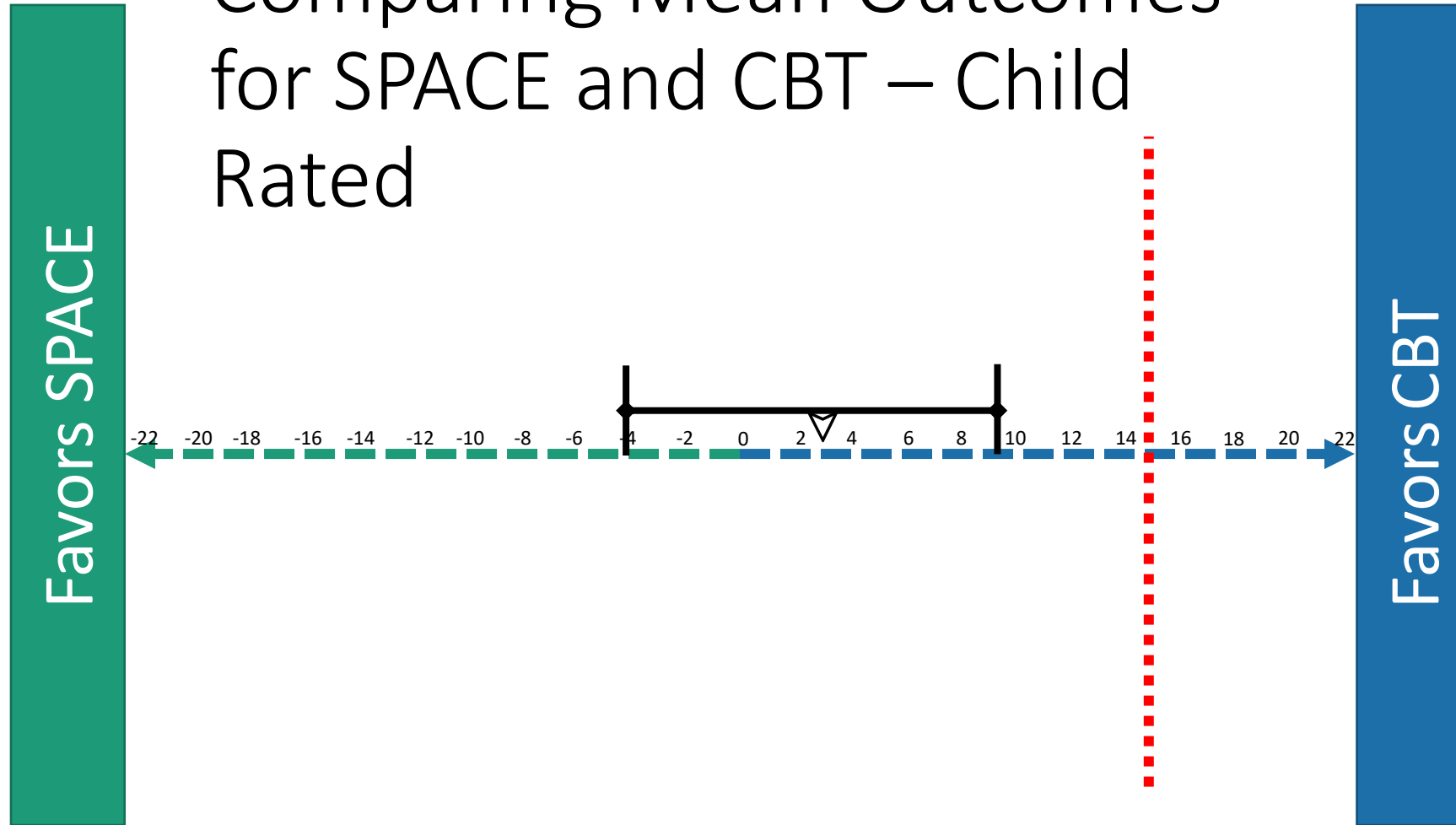
# Comparing Mean Outcomes for SPACE and CBT – Clinician Rated



# Comparing Mean Outcomes for SPACE and CBT – Parent Rated



# Comparing Mean Outcomes for SPACE and CBT – Child Rated



# Summary

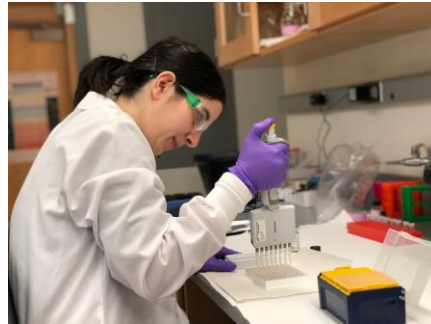
- Children respond to anxiety by seeking protection and regulation from caregivers
- Caregivers respond to child anxiety through family accommodation
- Family accommodation maintains child anxiety over time
- Reducing family accommodation leads to improved child anxiety
- SPACE is an efficacious parent-based treatment for child anxiety
- SPACE increases supportive parental responses and reduces family accommodation

# Future Directions and Next Steps

- Additional clinical trials of SPACE are required and underway
- Studying family accommodation in other childhood disorders (mood, behavior, eating, autism)
- SPACE-ARFID is an adaptation of SPACE for childhood ARFID / picky eating
- Applying principles of SPACE to highly dependent adult children ('Failure to Launch')
- Studying SPACE in children with autism and anxiety

# Thank You

Wendy Silverman  
Linda Mayes  
Carla Marin  
Yaara Shimshoni  
Meital Orbach  
Alyssa Martino  
Tess Anderson  
Grace Hommel  
Jim Leckman  
Robert King  
Hilary Blumberg  
Dylan Gee



Haim Omer

Yale University

Department of Psychology

Dylan Gee



National Institute  
of Mental Health

Daniel Pine

# Thank You

To learn more about SPACE and training workshops visit:

[www.spacetreatment.net](http://www.spacetreatment.net)



