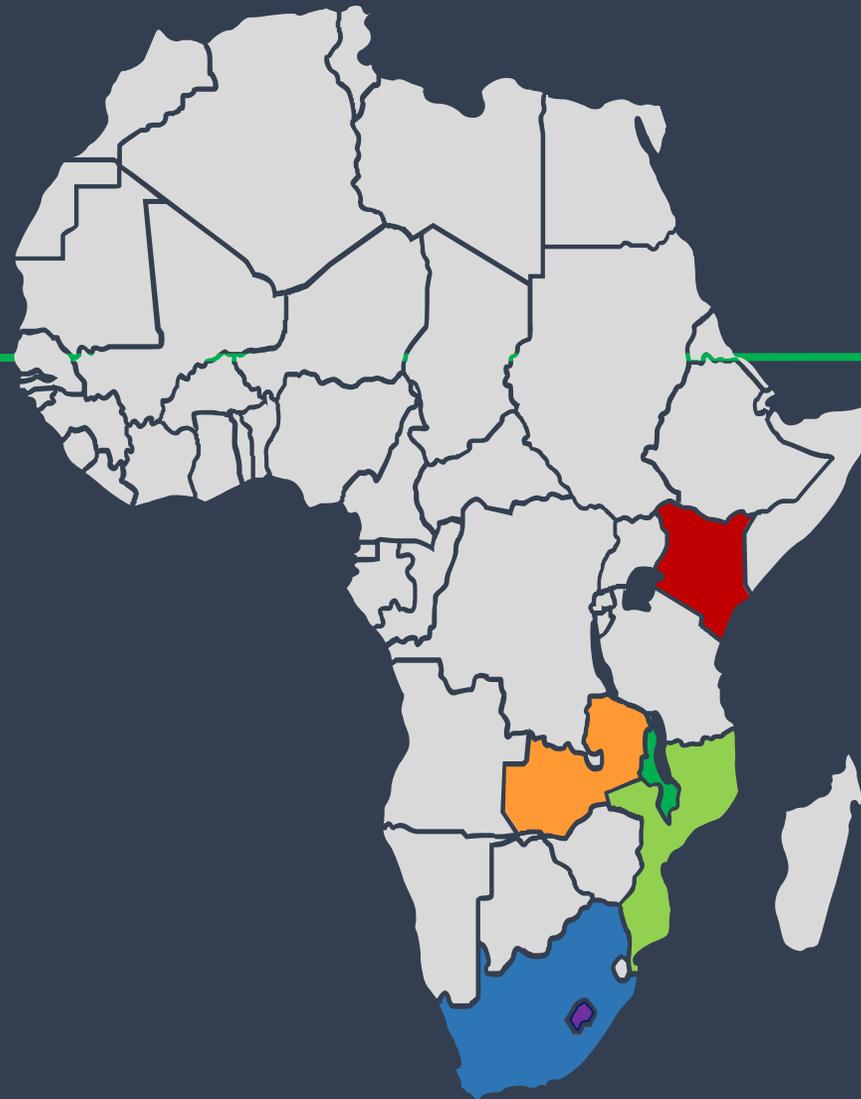


# The benefits of Early Book-Sharing Targeting risk factors for aggression in early childhood



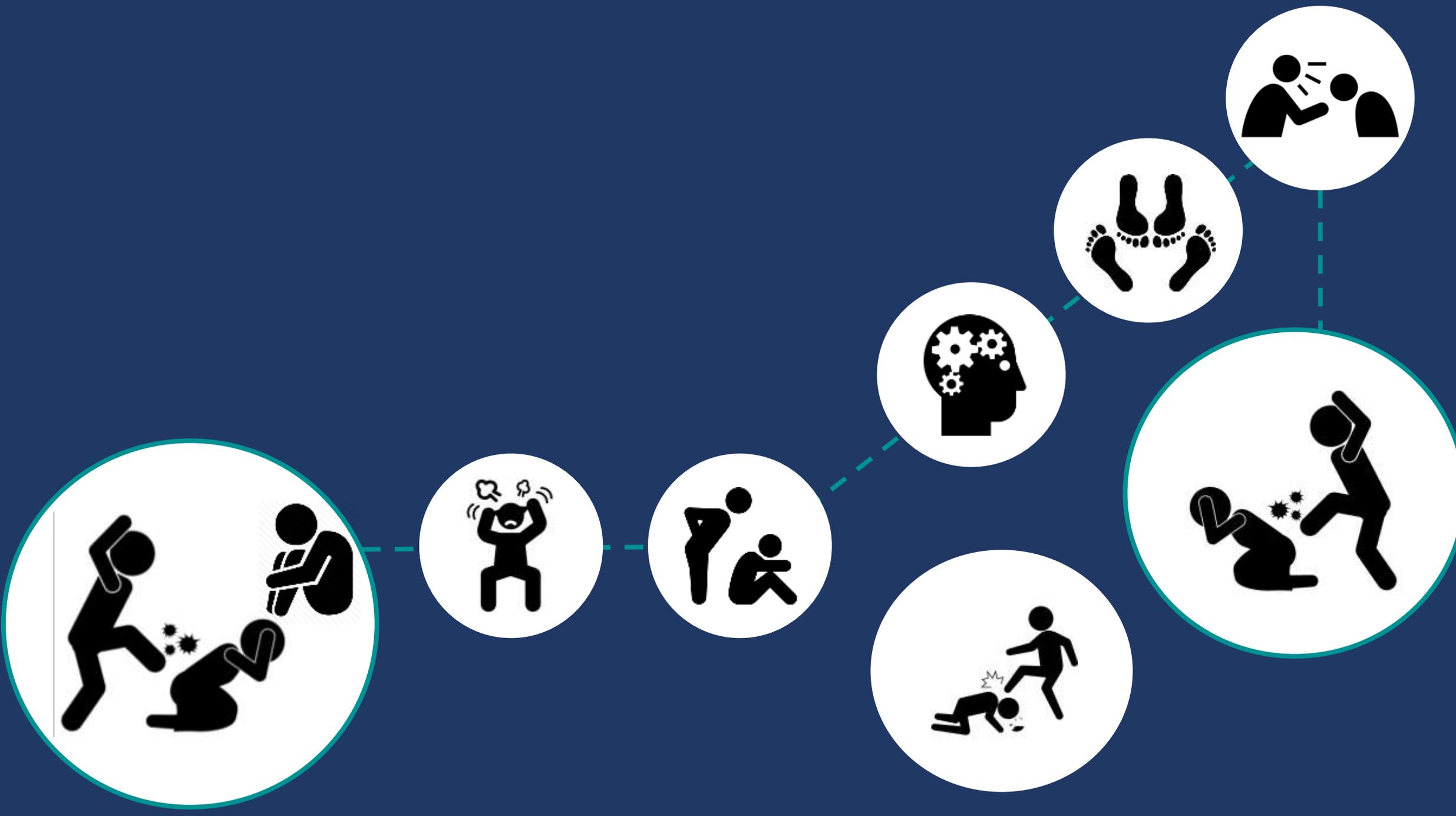
Nick Dowdall, Mark Tomlinson,  
Peter Cooper, Sarah Skeen,  
Marguerite Marlow, Jackie  
Stewart, Frances Gardner, Lynne  
Murray



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Institute for Life Course Health Research  
Department of Global Health, Stellenbosch University





# What is book-sharing? (and why is it our focus)



# Dialogic Reading / Picture Book-sharing

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- Dialogic Reading
  - Active
  - Bidirectional relationship
  - Fluid exchange between two partners
- Booksharing involves extensive labelling of objects, questioning, commenting about the pictures, complex “decontextualized talk”
- Three decades of positive evidence supporting booksharing
  - Frequency of early book sharing predicts child literacy and language

# Core elements of dialogic reading

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- Active child participation
- Pointing and naming
- Follow the child's lead (emphasize the stimuli to which child attends)
- Active questioning (first "where", then "what" & "who")
- Elaborations and active linking of book content to the child's real world

# Techniques

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- Pointing and naming
- Questions (What/Where/How)
- Following the interest of the child
- Using Actions



Book is “tool” to promote interaction between caregiver and child



## Dialogic “linking” and elaboration

*Caregiver sees child looking at illustration of caregiver brushing child’s hair in the book. She points to and names the object and action*



## Dialogic “linking” and elaboration

*Caregiver enacts the action by pretending to brush her own child’s hair, continues to name the action while doing it, repeated a few times*



## Dialogic “linking” and elaboration

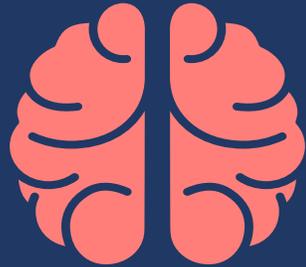
*Child then brushes his own hair, caregiver continues to name action.  
May point to action in book again to end sequence of “linking”*

# What we consider book-sharing



# Multiple Benefits

**Cognitive  
Competence**



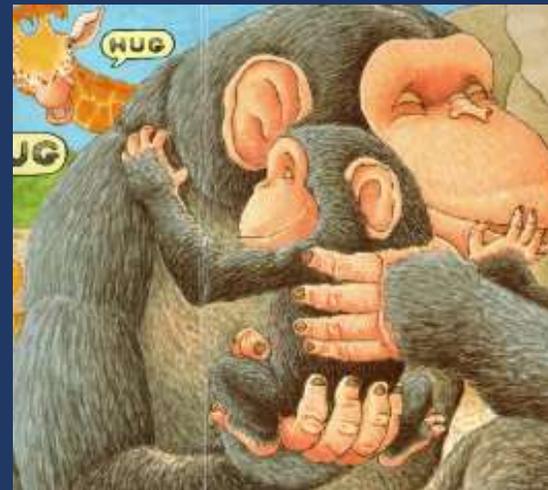
**Language  
Development**



**Socio-emotional  
development**



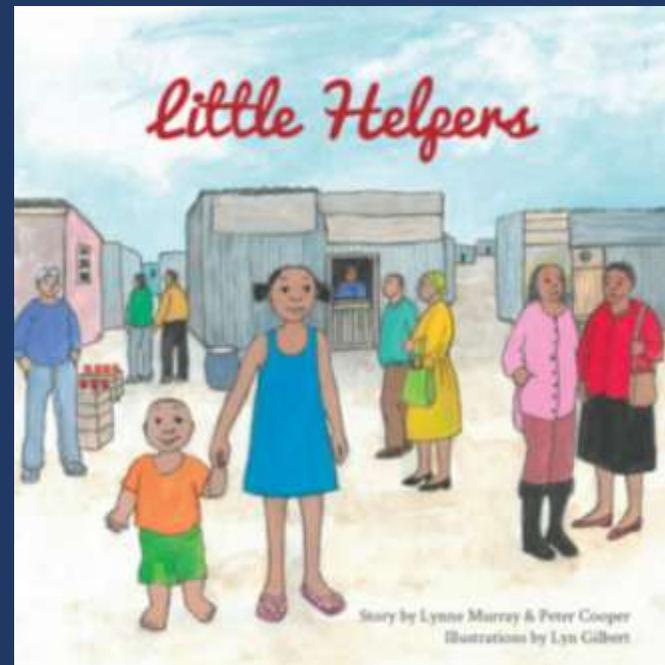
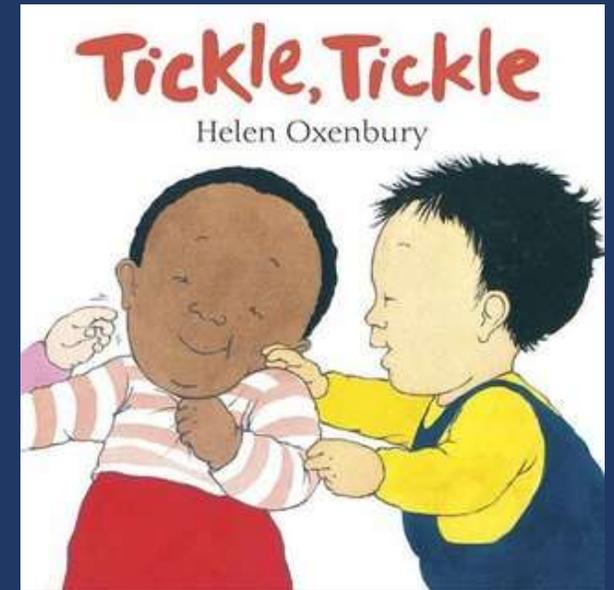
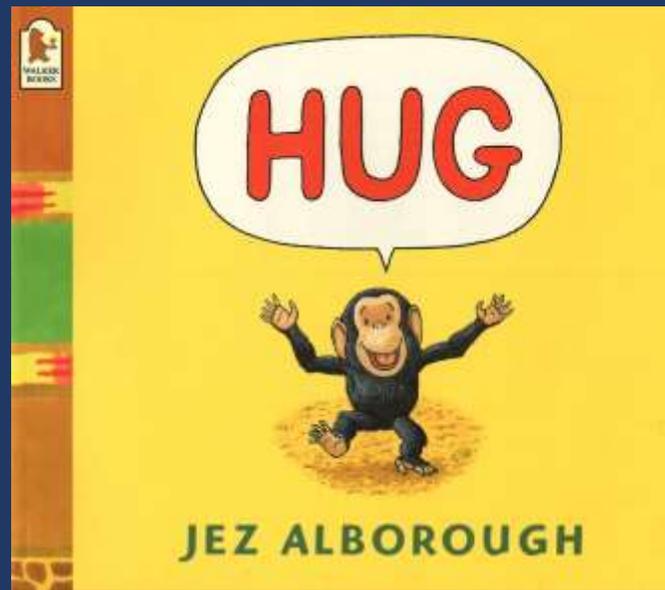
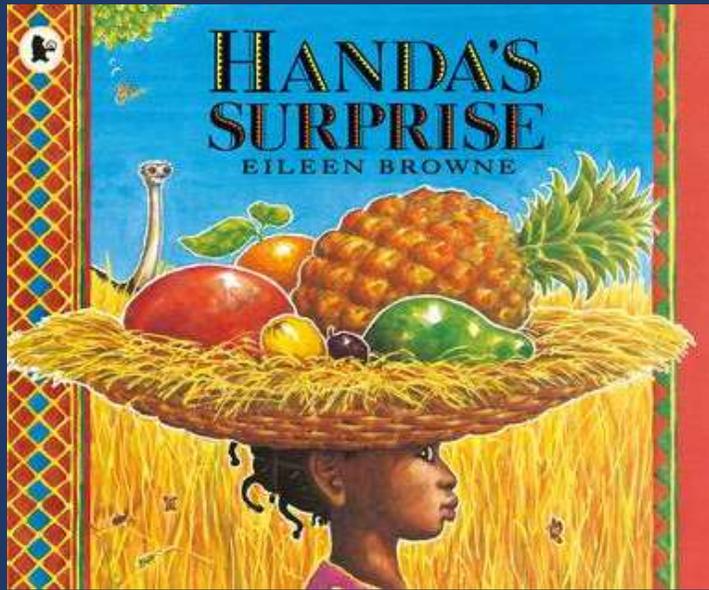
**Caregiver sensitivity  
and responsiveness**



# Programme Delivery



Group presentation → group discussion and activities → one-on-one sessions



## RCT of book-sharing, Khayelitsha (South Africa)

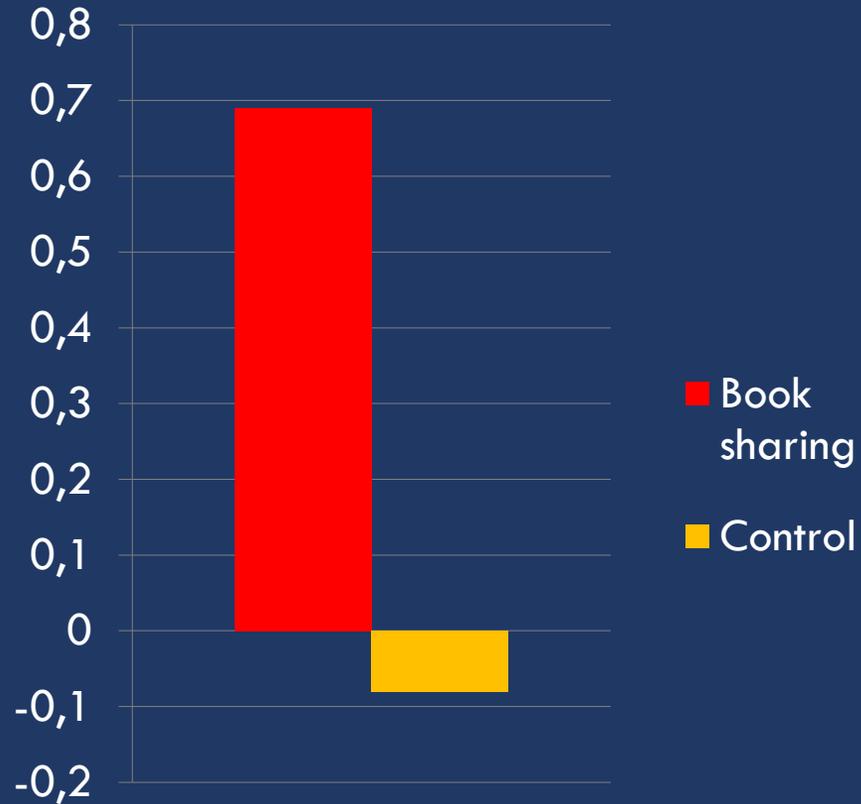
91 families, 14-16 month old children, randomised to:

- 8-week programme in book-sharing (n=49)
- No intervention control group (n=42)

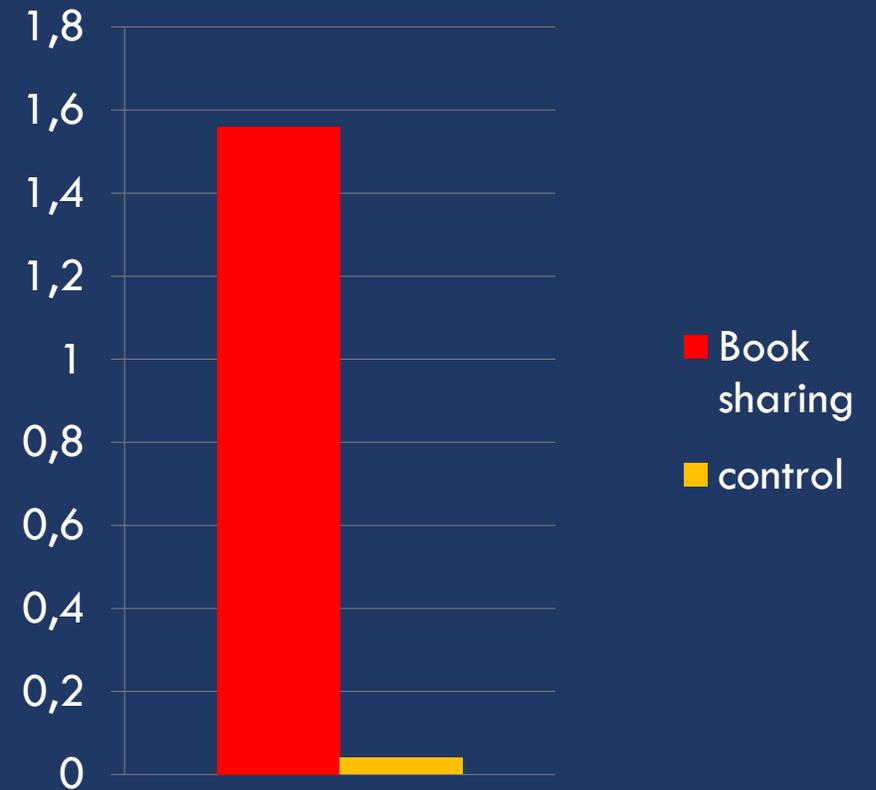
Main Outcomes:  
Child Language and Attention



# Effects on Parental Sensitivity and Reciprocity

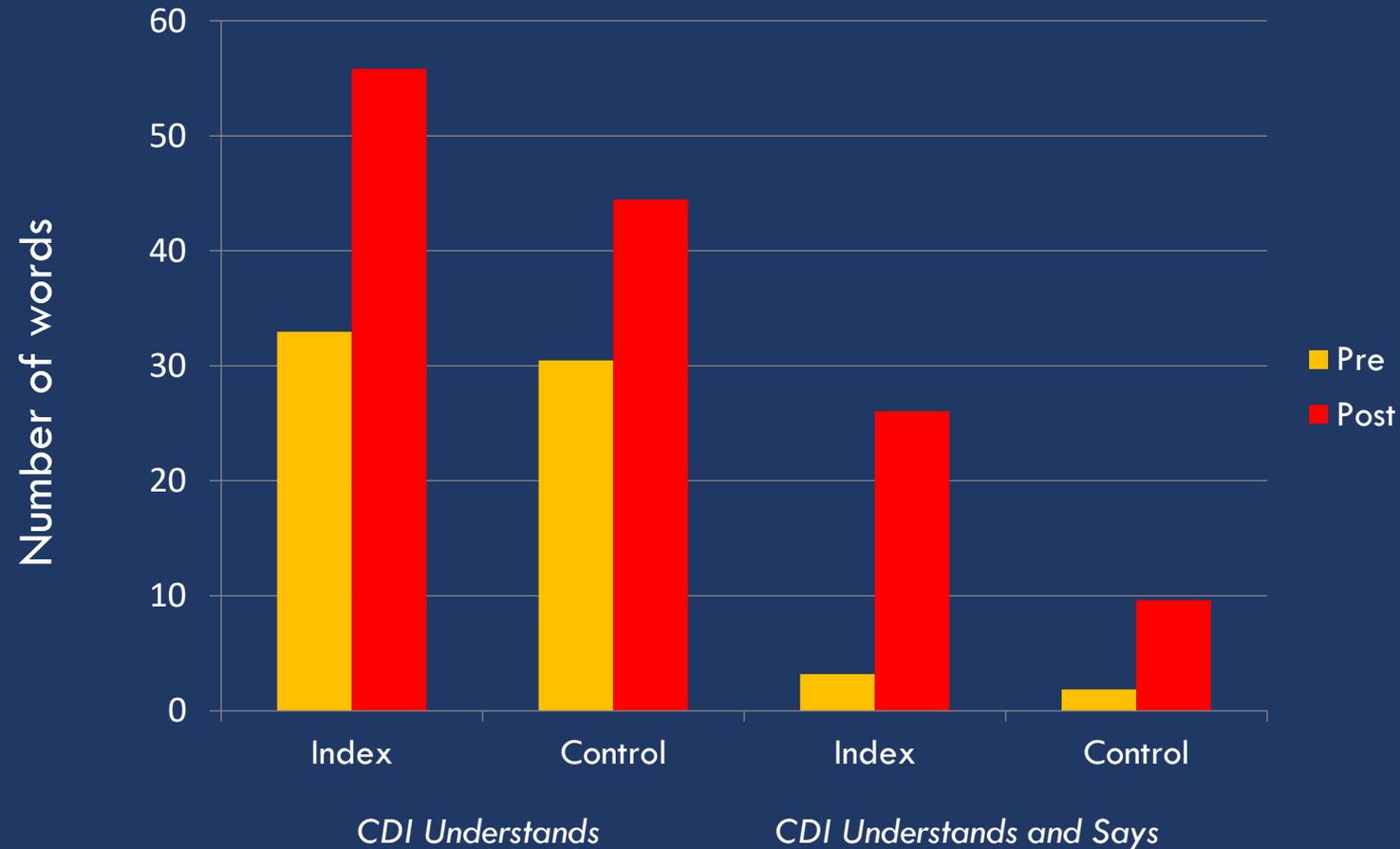


Sensitivity (d=0.78)



Reciprocity (d=0.45)

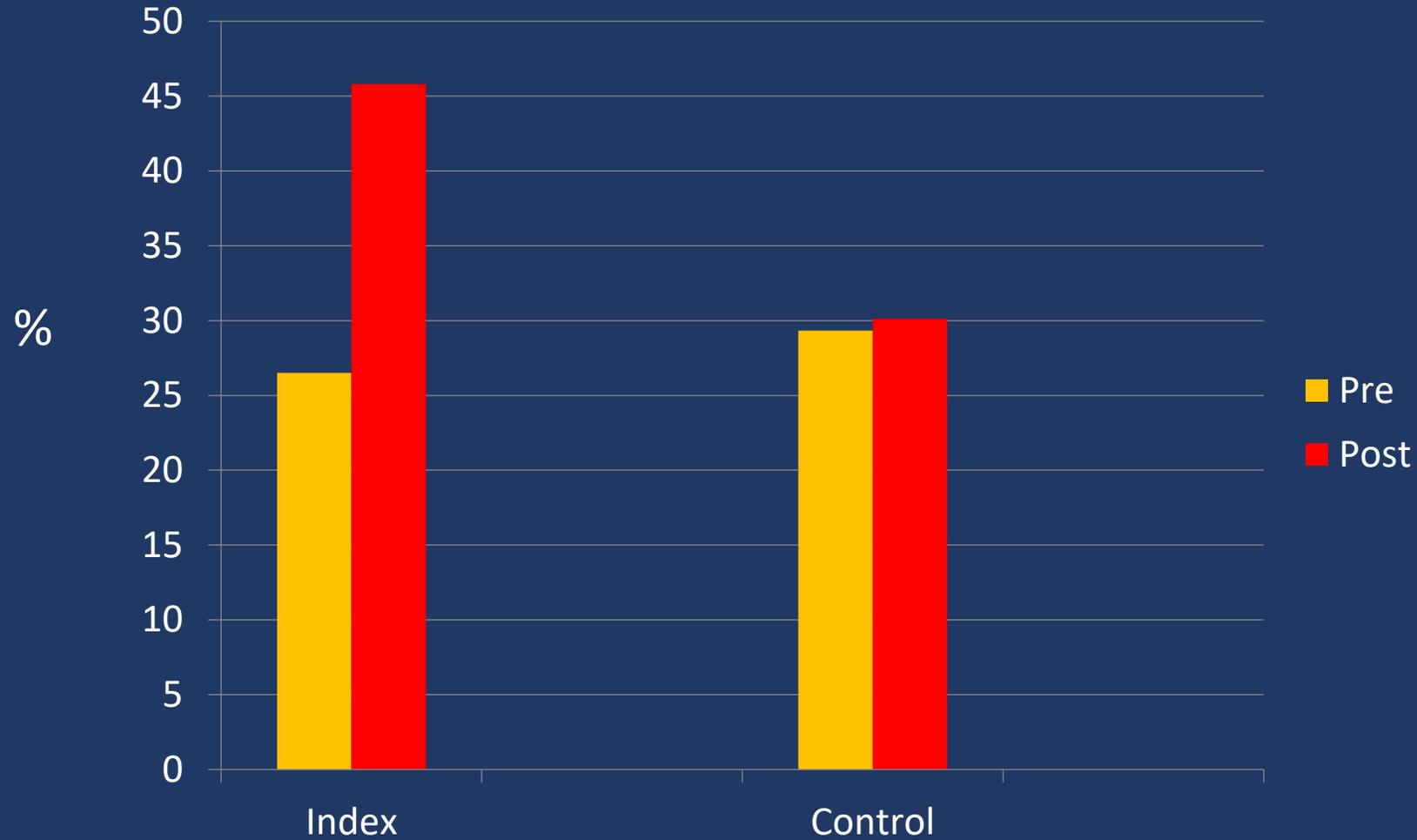
# Parental Report on Infant Language (CDI)



CDI Understanding:  $t(80) = 3.25, p = 0.002; d = 1.21$

CDI Understands & Says:  $U = 357.50, z = 4.43, p < 0.001; d = 0.98$

# Infant Attention (ECVT)



Attention:  $t(80) = 4.91, p < 0.001, d = 1.10$

# Benefits of Early Booksharing (BEBS)

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- Based on our earlier work with 14 month olds:
  - BEBS - focus on promoting parenting skills relevant to child social understanding and aggressive behaviour
- Materials and content were revised for the BEBS study

Funded by Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI)

# Benefits of Early Booksharing (BEBS)

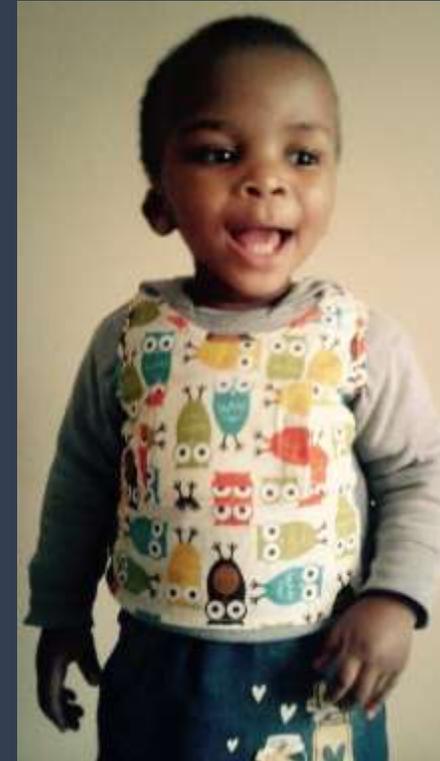
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- Training is extended to include book content with themes about:
  - Emotions
  - Intentions
  - Perspectives
  - Prosocial behaviour and child socio-emotional development

# Main Results

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- Impact on child language and attention
- Impact on home language environment (LENA conversational turns)
- Impact on sensitive parenting and reciprocity (serve and return) in book-sharing and free play
- Impact on caregiver complex cognitive talk (mental state talk)
- Reduction in harsh verbal parenting



# Minimal impact on:

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- Child theory of mind
- Child behaviour (defiance, aggression, pro-social behaviour)
- Caregiver reported harsh physical discipline



# Possible interpretations

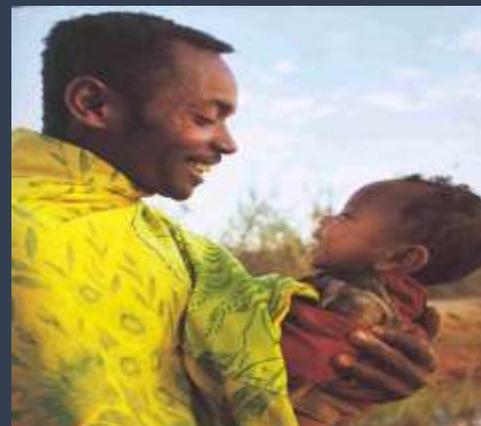
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- Positive findings very encouraging – particularly harsh verbal parenting
- Disappointing findings on child behaviour
- However – intervention did improve parenting behaviours known to predict theory of mind, aggression, pro-social behaviour
- Possible that the 6-month window post-intervention not long enough for observable changes to be seen – 12 month or later follow up

# Possible interpretations

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- Also possible that intervention would need to address difficult child behaviour more directly
  - Embedding behaviour management techniques such as time-out, establishing of routines, and strategies such as ignoring and distraction
- A successful intervention may require both positive reinforcement and non-violent discipline techniques



**Thank  
you  
Danke**

**Enkosi. Dankie. Kiitos! Zikomo kwambiri! Asante sana, Ye dewaese pii!  
Merci beaucoup! cảm ơn bạn! Obrigado! Cam on! Kea leboga,  
Siyabonga! спасибо**