Enhancing Self-Regulation in Parents: Implications for Evidence-based Parenting Support

Master Class

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The University of Queensland
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Disclosure statement

• The Triple P-Positive Parenting Program is owned by the University of Queensland. UQ licensed Triple P International Pty Ltd to disseminate the program worldwide

• Royalties are distributed to the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences, School of Psychology, PFSC and contributory authors

• Professor Sanders is the founder, lead author and a consultant to Triple P International
At a glance

Take outs
Q and A

Promoting Self regulation

Engaging parents and preventing dropout

Parenting in the context of diversity

Q and A
Promote self-regulation to ensure better tailoring to needs
“Nearly every major personal and social problem affecting large numbers of modern citizens involves some kind of failure of self-regulation, albeit in the context of broader social influences”.

What is self regulation?

Self regulation defined by Karoly (1993) as:

...those processes, internal and or transactional, that enable an individual to guide his/her goal directed activities over time and across changing circumstances (contexts). Regulation implies modulation of thought, affect, behavior or attention via deliberate or automated use of specific mechanisms and supportive metaskills.
• An individual’s capacity to self-regulate their cognitions, emotions and actions is a crucial skill, and an emergent developmental competency for children.
• SR has major impact on almost every part of children’s lives.
• Discovering how to enhance SR skills concurrently in parents and children provides a unique, multigenerational context for improving human capability and for overcoming opportunity-limiting problems related to poor SR.
Self regulation and parenting

The capacity to self-regulate is a fundamental process underpinning the maintenance of positive, nurturing, non-abusive parenting practices that promote social and emotional well being of children.
Self-regulatory approach is fundamental to flexible delivery

- Parental self-regulation
- Self-management
- Self-efficacy
- Personal agency
- Problem solving
- Self-sufficiency
- Minimally sufficient intervention
- Reduced need for support
Self regulation and context underpins ability to parent their children well

- Has a clear sense of purpose
- Knows what behaviours, skills and values to promote as a parent
- Has realistic expectations
- Self-monitors automatically, rather than consciously or deliberately
- When personal standards/values are violated she brings her current behaviour under personal control
- Tunes into own actions and searches for explanations
- Uses knowledge to develop plans
- Carries out plan and revises as needed
- Expects to be successful and bring about good outcomes
- Is reflective, capable of identifying strengths and weaknesses, without being unhelpfully self critical
- Reflections increase self efficacy
- Mostly enjoys the process
Practices that promote parental self-regulation

Building a Collaborative Relationship

- Convey respect in an emotionally supportive context
- Build an optimistic outlook (“Change is possible”)
- Let go of control through a “guided” participation model of support
- Avoid reinforcing self-defeating behaviours and dependency
- Establish positive expectancies that promote self-regulation (“You can do it”)
Using specific techniques to enhance SR

- Encourage self-reflection about goals and plans (“So what have you decided to do”)
- Prompt self-appraisal (“How did that go”?)
- Ask parents to share their rationales for their decisions, plans, and actions
- Praise unprompted use of specific self-regulatory skills (e.g. planning, pausing, reflecting)
- Apply principles of the “minimally sufficient” level of support (decreasing prompts, praise/external reinforcers)
- Foster flexibility by reinforcing parents for generalizing parenting skills across settings, tasks, siblings, time
Parental Self-Regulation

- Teach Self-management
  - Encourage goal setting, self-monitoring, values checking
  - Use modeling, prompting, reinforcement and fading

- Promote Psychological flexibility
  - Teach about “causes” of problems
  - Train “sufficient” exemplars
  - Train “loosely”
  - Reinforce generalization/discrimination

- Coach Emotion regulation
  - Teach about escalation traps
  - Stress coping/management
  - Mindfulness/breathing “in the moment”

- Address unhelpful cognitions
  - Address attributional bias
  - Change unhelpful cognitions
At a glance

Promoting Self regulation

Engaging parents and preventing dropout

Parenting in context of diversity

Take outs Q and A

Q and A
Responding to cultural diversity

- Identifying barriers
- Training of professionals
- Testing culturally adapted programs
Cultural relevance and acceptability of program content

• Resistance occurs more often at the practitioner level rather than at the parent level.
• Often related to not understanding the flexibility of program and self regulation approach used
• Tailor examples, question practitioners.
• Practitioners who initially voice concerns often become greatest advocates.
Strategies considered Useful by Parents of Different Cultures

Strategies are Culturally Acceptable

Parent N = 146, Practitioner N = 60

Acceptability

Developing Positive Relationships
Encouraging Desirable Behaviour
Managing Misbehaviour

CALD/ATSI
Caucasian
Parent
Practitioner
Responding to cultural diversity

- Identifying professional barriers
- Training of professionals
- Testing culturally adapted programs
Competency-based training across diverse cultures
35 countries, 22 languages

TRAINING DELIVERED IN:

- Argentina
- Curacao
- Japan
- South Africa
- Australia
- Denmark
- Luxembourg
- Sweden
- Austria
- France
- Mexico
- Switzerland
- Belgium
- Germany
- The Netherlands (bes islands)
- Turkey
- Canada
- Hong Kong
- New Zealand
- United Kingdom (england, scotland, wales)
- Chile
- Iran
- Romania
- United States
- Costa Rica
- Ireland
- Singapore

Forthcoming:
- Brazil
- China
- India
- Indonesia
Same training in different cultures

- 7975 professional training courses run worldwide since 2001
- 108,056 training places
- 100,000 unique practitioners
- 35 countries (as at 11/18)
- Reaching 7 million children
Responding to cultural diversity

- Identifying professional barriers
- Training of professionals
- Testing culturally adapting programs
Culturally Appropriate
A win/win for parents and children

A culturally-adapted parenting programme for Māori families has increased parents’ confidence, reduced conflict between partners and improved children’s behaviour, according to results released last week.

The Ministry of Health-funded study, conducted by the University of Auckland and the Ngati Hine Health Trust, examined outcomes from Te Whānau Pou Tawhiti, adapted from the Triple P (Positive Parenting Programme), rated by the United Nations as the best parenting programme in the world, based on research evidence, over two weeks.

Parents took part in two discussion groups where they learned a variety of positive parenting techniques. Te Whānau Pou Tawhiti encouraged families to share ideas about whānau/parenting, and learn from other whānau about how they interacted with their tamariki/children.

- Collaborative partnering process was successful in producing brief, culturally acceptable parenting intervention

- Program seems a valuable “light touch” intervention that could be used as universal early prevention parenting program

- Findings presented in Wellington to Minister Peeni Henari
Process

1. Establishment of collaboration with Māori partnership organisation
2. Review evidence on programme effectiveness
3. Review evidence on cultural adaptation
4. Assess cultural acceptability of existing programme
5. Adapt programme
6. Evaluate adapted programme
7. Scale up programme
• Triple P principles linked to the tikanga of the local iwi (tribe)
• Culturally appropriate methods used to welcome participants into the group through karakia (prayer), mihi whakatau (welcome) and whakawhānaungatanga (getting to know each other).
• Culturally appropriate examples to illustrate within session exercises.
• Pausing, reflecting
### Outcomes at follow up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome measure</th>
<th>Cohen d Effect size at Follow up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Problems</td>
<td>ECBI Intensity $d = .53$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ECBI Problem $d = .73$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDQ</td>
<td>Emotional symptoms $d = .88$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer problems $d = .82$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysfunctional parenting (Parenting Scale)</td>
<td>Laxness $d = .4$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over reactivity $d = .46$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self efficacy</td>
<td>PTC Setting $d = .33$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PTC Behaviour $d = .32$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting conflict</td>
<td>PPC Extent $d = .54$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PPC Problem $d = .72$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Quality</td>
<td>RQI $d = .54$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Importance of consumer and end-user engagement throughout (from R and D through to scale up)
• Connecting positive parenting skills and principles to cultural values throughout
• Make no assumptions about cultural connectedness of individual parents or practitioners
We’ve only just begun

Cultural adaptation in a global context

- World population: **7.55 billion**
- World population of children aged 0-14 years: **1.95 billion**
- **145 million** children are born each year (372,000/day or 250/minute)
- World population from less developed countries: **6 billion**
- **36/206** (15.5%) countries have contributed to the published evidence base on Triple P
United Nations
Sustainable Development Goals
Promoting Family Personal Agency to reduce environmental destruction

• Approximately 90% of marine ecosystems are being overfished or fished at capacity
• 8 million tonnes of plastic waste is dumped into the ocean each year
  • Plastic waste poisons ecosystems
• Without the support of marine ecosystems, coastal communities struggle to maintain their way of life
Nature And Significance

- Over 3 billion people rely on protein from marine ecosystems to survive
- 60% of the world’s populations live within 100km of a coast
- Marine resources contribute hundreds of billions of dollars to the economy every year
- Our oceans sustain the livelihoods of 10-12% of the human population
Coral reefs are being degraded by:

- Overfishing
- Fishing using cyanide and dynamite ("bombing" fishing)
- Pollution from sewage and agriculture
- Massive outbreaks of predatory starfish, invasive species
- Sedimentation from poor land use practices
Consequences

- Depletion of fish stock from our oceans
- Damage to coastal reefs
- Destruction of economies of coastal regions
C-CRES Project Location

Selayar is located in Sulawesi, Indonesia. 80% of pop reliant on marine resources.
A guide for promoting family level change, for use by villages seeking to foster ecologically sustainable behaviors in families in coastal households of Indonesia.
## Program materials

### Exercise 5  Setting personal goals

1. 
2. 
3. 

### Track your goals here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you reach Goal 1?</th>
<th>Did you reach Goal 2?</th>
<th>Did you reach Goal 3?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
<th>Day 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Getting rid of garbage
- Set a golden example
- Use teachable moments to show my family how to get rid of garbage

### Protecting against destructive fishing
- Buy safe fish/healthy fish
- Talk about safe fishing to my family

### Helping my family be healthy and environmentally friendly
- Use bigger water bottles
- Encourage my family to not smoke cigarettes
Summary of findings

- Increased collection and disposal of plastic waste
- Use of larger vs smaller water bottles
- More likely to check source of fish
- Collected 100 bags of plastic and with recycled or used them to make ornaments
- Cleaned up their village
- Greater problem solving skills
- Life satisfaction
- Action had more impact
- Greater empowerment and personal agency
100 bags of plastic collected and donated to local village. Plastic was (A) sorted and properly disposed of (B) sold at garbage banks.

Bontolebang Village nominated for cleanest, healthiest village in Indonesia.
Applications that create personal agency

- Parenting a child with a disability
- Parenting after natural disaster
- Parenting in the context of separation and divorce
Inclusive and equality of access
IS STATEWIDE DELIVERY OF STEPPING STONES TRIPLE P EFFECTIVE?

RESEARCH PROGRAM FINDINGS AT A GLANCE
SEPTEMBER, 2018

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Prepared by:
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MONASH University
THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Summary of key findings

- Improvement in children’s behavioural and emotional problems
- Reduction in negative parenting styles
- Parenting stress reduced. Less for social disadvantaged parents
- Outcomes similar to those achieved in RCTs
- Parents took less time off work
- Relatively high level of participation (38% vs 10%)
- Parents came through disability services and agencies
- Enthusiastic organisational adoption
Parenting in the context of parental relationship difficulties

- Family Transitions Triple P-5 session sessions
- Can be combined with
  - Triple P Seminars
  - Triple P Discussion Groups
  - Primary Care Triple P
  - Group Triple P
  - Standard Triple P
  - Triple P Online
  - For 0-12, Teen and Stepping Stones Triple P
Promoting a Smooth Transition Through Divorce
- Putting the needs of children first
- Being aware how one’s own actions impact on children
- Developing an effective co-parenting relationship
- Communicating appropriately with children
- Setting up life as a single parent

Emotional Self-Regulation Skills
- Taking responsibilities for one’s own emotions
- Expressing feelings in ways that do not harm others
- Managing anger, anxiety, depression and stress

Taking care of yourself
- Co-Parenting Skills
- Expressing thoughts and opinions in ways that do not harm others
- Having child-related discussions
- Developing a parenting plan
- Responding to anger

Problem Solving Skills
- Defining a problem and setting goals
- Considering alternative solutions
- Negotiating and compromising
- Making decisions and accepting consequences

Balancing Work, Family and Play
- Building a new family identity
- Increasing social support
- Requesting assistance or help when needed
- Setting priorities
- Developing new romantic relationships

Parenting Skills
- Developing positive parent-child relationships
- Encouraging desirable behavior
- Teaching new skills and behaviors
- Managing misbehavior
Outcomes

↓ Fewer behavioral and emotional problems (ECBI: $d=.43$)

↓ Dysfunctional parenting practices (PS: $d=.29$)

↓ Parental Expressed and Trait Anger (STAXI; $d=.22$)

↓ Parental depression ($d=.74$), anxiety ($d=.42$), stress ($d=.86$), acrimony ($d=.35$),

↑ Relationship quality ($d=.33$)
Parenting in the context of trauma and distress
Parenting in the context of traumatic events

Natural disasters
- Floods
- Tsunami
- Bush fires, wild fires
- Earthquakes

A traumatic event is an incident that causes physical, emotional, spiritual, or psychological harm. The person experiencing the distressing event may feel threatened, anxious, or frightened as a result.

Human disasters
- Terrorism
- Violent crime
- Sexual assault
- School shootings
- Serious motor vehicle accidents
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normalizing common social and emotional reactions of children and parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Behaving younger than you would expect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clinginess and difficulty separating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sleep disturbances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased irritability and anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flashbacks to the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Specific fears (e.g. rain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoidance of activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A sense of danger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulty concentrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sadness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Upset for no apparent reason</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identifying Parent traps #1: Encouraging too much talk about the event

- Too much attention to children’s fears and distress can be unhelpful.
- Talking about the disaster can become a way for children to gain special time with a parent.
- It can send a scary message to children: “Mum and Dad are still worried. There is something to be worried about.”
Parent Trap #2: Discouraging all talk

• Parents sometimes do this after a traumatic event because they think that it will help the family get back to normal more quickly

• It can also give children scary messages:
  – “Mum/Dad is still too upset to even be able to talk about it”
  – “There is something wrong with me” (if I haven’t gotten over it)
Parent Trap #3: Being very protective

- When parents are very protective long after the danger has passed, this tells children that there is still something to worry about.
- Children can believe the danger is current.
Parent Trap #4:
Talking to children about your own fears and distress

• Many parents are distressed themselves
• Sharing our concerns demonstrates that it is normal to feel scared and upset after a disaster
• Is ok within limits
Parent Trap #4:
Talking to children about your own fears and distress

- It can become something else for children to worry about
- Most children cannot resolve parents’ worries and shouldn’t have to
Creating expectancies for change: Natural course of children’s responses

• Children often experience distress following a disaster (days/weeks)

• Most children will return to their pre-disaster pattern within 3 months

• Different children will be on different ‘recovery timetables’ (even within the same family)

• Some children may experience an increase in distress in the next few months as the family is faced with extra stress (e.g. financial burden)
The 1-year anniversary
Children need to learn that:

- Although dangerous things can happen, the world is not always a dangerous place
- Their family is safe
Take-home messages

- Low intensity interventions (seminars and primary care) are helpful in the aftermath of disaster
- Parents responses help lay the foundations for children’s resilience and coping
- Children learn a lot about managing their emotions from parents
Promoting engagement and participation of parents
How do we promote movement along the engagement trajectory?

- Becomes aware of Triple P
- Intends to participate
- Enrolls or registers
- Attends first session
- Participates fully in program activities
- Completes all sessions

Movement along program completion trajectory
Hard to reach parents and targeted engagement strategies

• Fathers in general
• Single parents, teen parents, minorities, refugees, parents living in extreme poverty, and Indigenous parents
• Foster parents, step-parents, adoptive parents, kinship carers (including grandparents)
• Parent with serious mental health or substance abuse problems
• Parents of children with chronic health problems
• Parents with disabilities and chronic health conditions
Need to create “pull demand” to engage parents
Strategies for improving participation

Normalize participation
- Use “Stay Positive”
- Create pull demand
- Peer to peer testimonials/social contagion
- Professional/opinion leader advocacy

Target normative developmental transition
- Transition to childcare/school/high school
- Establish participation targets
- Incentives for practitioners for recruitment efforts

Increase consumer engagement
- Build relationships with consumers
- Use consumer preference data
- Link parents participation to valued outcomes
## What’s new

### New Programs to be disseminated

- Revised *Every Parent Survival Guide* Video-all levels
- *Resilience Triple P* (Level 5)
- *Lifestyle Triple P* seminar series (level 2)
- *Fear Less Triple P* (Level 4)
- *Positive Early Childhood Education Program* (PECE)
- *Baby Triple P* (Level 4)

### Some Programs in development

- *Building Bridges Triple P* (Level 3)
- *Life skills Triple P* (Level 5)

### New Books

- *Handbook of Parenting and Child development Across the Lifespan.* Springer.
Evidence-based parenting support works best when:

- A multilevel system of parenting support is used
- Programs are used to empower parents to tackle their own problems
- In a context of reflective practice and routine evaluation of outcomes
Great outcomes for children, parents and communities

THIS CAN BE DONE AT SCALE
Thank you for your attention

for more information

pfsc.uq.edu.au (R & D)
triplep.net (training, dissemination, implementation support)
tprn.net (research network)

Twitter @drmattsanders