



DISCOVER

ENGAGE

IMPACT



## POSITIVE PARENTING

**The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program is changing the lives of children and families right around the world.**

**The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program developed by UQ School of Psychology’s Professor Matt Sanders and his team gives parents the skills they need to raise confident, healthy children and teenagers, and to build stronger family relationships.**

Triple P is a system of training for accredited Triple P trainers to train and accredit Triple P practitioners who deliver a multi-level system of programs to parents, but it’s also both a resource library for parents, trainers and practitioners, and an online resource available direct to parents.

At a Government rollout-level, the program also involves the creation of communications materials based on evidence-based knowledge.

Its benefits can be dramatic and long-lasting.

“Triple P doesn’t tell people how to parent,” says Professor Sanders, “rather, it gives parents simple and practical strategies they can adapt to suit their own values, beliefs and needs.

“Children who grow up with positive parenting are more likely to develop the skills they need to do well at schoolwork, build friendships, and feel good about themselves.”

They are also much less likely to develop behavioural or emotional problems when they get older. And the parents who use positive parenting skills feel more confident and competent about managing day-to-day family life.

“They are less stressed, less depressed and have less conflict with their partners over parenting issues,” he says.

Triple P is distinctive in that it is not a ‘one-size-fits-all’ course. Rather, it is a system that offers increasing levels of support to meet parents’ different needs.

Parents can choose anything from one-off public seminars or online programs to more intensive group courses or individual counselling sessions, as well as self-help books and DVDs.

This allows Triple P to take a population-health approach. Giving all families in the community access to the right amount of help suitable for their particular needs means the impact of the program can be felt at a community-wide level.

Professor Sanders says that once attending a parenting program is seen by the community as not only normal, but desirable, then those families most in need of help will feel encouraged to access support.

This is why Triple P’s population-health approach was developed, to normalise and destigmatise help-seeking.

Triple P’s population-health approach has been developed over nearly four decades and draws on the pioneering work of Professor Sanders, director of The University of Queensland’s Parenting and Family Support Centre (PFSC), from a PhD thesis he developed at UQ.

A core team of research collaborators and students have since contributed to the

program’s evolution. The program has its origins in social learning theory developed in the 1960s and ’70s but also blends cognitive behavioural principles and public health approaches.

Through Triple P, parents develop skills and routines that help them raise happy and confident children, manage misbehaviour, set rules and encourage the type of behaviour that they appreciate.

They also learn to hold realistic expectations about themselves and their children, while making sure to take care of themselves as parents.

### International impact

So successful have Triple P’s multi-level system of programs been that, thanks to a unique partnership with UQ’s main commercialisation company, UniQuest, and Brisbane-based, privately owned publishing, training and dissemination company, Triple P International, the program has been delivered in 28 countries around the world, in 22 languages – including Farsi, Japanese and Mandarin.

Triple P has also been extended into a parallel system, Stepping Stones Triple P, for parents of children with disabilities. Both systems have been tried and tested in a number of culturally diverse populations.

Triple P programs are available for families of children from birth to 16 and tackle a broad range of issues, including school bullying and childhood obesity.

## Case study

In Brighton and Hove in the UK, a group of Arabic-speaking women are discussing their families' lives. In particular, they talk about the problems they are having with some of their children.

The women share experiences, role-play strategies to overcome issues, and assign themselves homework in a workbook written in Arabic.

It sounds simple enough, but these Group Triple P sessions are changing lives.

Triple P Provider Kafa Atar, who works for Brighton and Hove's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and runs the Group Triple P sessions, says that by helping parents encourage their children to be happy, make friends and do well at school, Triple P is helping to bridge the gap between two cultures.

"Our parenting style is very different," Ms Atar, originally from Iraq, says.

"We are scared of English culture... [but] One of the [Triple P] strategies is about praising children. This is very powerful. In our culture we don't praise children."

## The evidence says it works

The latest international research shows that learning and practising positive parenting not only increases the wellbeing of children and parents, it also improves the health of communities.

An independent evaluation of Triple P's population approach in the Irish Midlands, for example, found that across the population, parents and children experienced a range of health improvements after Triple P was made available free to parents of children aged up to eight.

Typically, research shows that parents become more confident in their role, use more appropriate discipline, are less stressed and depressed, and couple relationships improve.

Children become happier, less anxious, have better peer relationships, and children with conduct problems significantly improve.

A Washington State Institute of Public Policy economic analysis of Triple P estimates a benefit return of \$8.14 for every dollar invested in Triple P in the prevention of child maltreatment.

This analysis is based on a ground-breaking US Centers for Disease Control-funded trial in South Carolina, which found population-

wide delivery of Triple P across nine counties led to fewer child maltreatment cases, fewer hospitalisations due to child maltreatment, and fewer out-of-home care placements for children.

More than 288 papers evaluating Triple P have been published around the world. Almost half of these are independent evaluations.

**In summary, the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program is a scientifically researched family intervention strategy designed to assist parents to improve their parenting skills and build positive relationships with their children. And it works.**

[uq.edu.au/research/impact](http://uq.edu.au/research/impact)

## Timeline:

**1960s–'70s:** The intervention approach has its origins in social learning theory

**1979–81:** Professor Matt Sanders develops procedures for dealing with child behavioural and emotional problems through his PhD studies at UQ

**1982–95:** A clinical training and research operation develops in the UQ Department of Psychiatry, and core programs are designed and tested

**1993:** The developing system of programs gets a name: the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program

**1994:** Foundational clinical trials of core programs are completed

**1995:** The first Triple P resources are published

**1996:** The Parenting and Family Support Centre is established in the UQ School of Psychology

**1996–99:** A system of training and dissemination is developed to move from clinical research to a small operation to train allied health professionals nationally

**1997:** The Parenting and family Support Centre receives an Australian Violence Prevention Award for Triple P from the Australian Heads of Government

**2001:** Through UniQuest, Triple P is licensed to Triple P International Pty Ltd to drive international dissemination

**2002:** Teen Triple P is released for parents of adolescents

**2003:** Stepping Stones Triple P is released for parents of children with disabilities

**2004:** Professor Sanders receives an International Collaborative Prevention Science award from the US Society for Prevention Research

**2007:** Professor Sanders receives the Australian Psychological Society's President's Award for Distinguished Contribution to Psychology

**2007:** Professor Sanders receives a Trailblazers Award from the Parenting and Families Special Interest Group in the Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapy

**2007:** Professor Sanders is named Queenslanders of the Year

**2008:** First population trial is published

**2011:** Triple P Online is released, one of the first interactive online parent support programs in the world

**2013:** Professor Sanders receives a Top Innovator Award from UniQuest

**2017:** More than 146 randomised controlled trials of Triple P interventions have been conducted as well as 61 service evaluations of community-based delivery of Triple P; over 20 Triple P variants are available, translated into 21 languages other than English, and delivered in 28 countries to millions of families

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