

## Effectiveness and Feedback From Participating Parents – Parent Behaviour Management Program

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## Why Behaviour Management?

- o Strong research & theoretical base
  - Effectiveness for reducing problem behaviours and increasing adaptive behaviours
  - Application of basic behaviour principals (reinforcement etc) and social learning theory
  - Bidirectional relationship between maladaptive parenting and child functioning and/or risk factors
  - Multidirectional when factor in environment etc
- o Strengthens relationship between parent & child
  - Benefits for both child *and* parents
- o Collaborative process
  - Working in partnership with parents

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## Why work with parents?

- o Empower parents to be their own experts
  - Reduce parenting stress
- o Parents as agents of change
  - Influence on child's environment
  - Targets multiple influences on development of problem behaviour
  - Quality of interactions more important than specific strategies
- o Research support for improving functioning in children
  - Proactive positive parenting practices can be protective against other risk factors

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● ● ● | **Who takes part?**

- Otago paediatric population (aprox 150,000)
- Referrals from paediatrician
  - Typically complex cases, comorbidity is the rule
  - Heterogeneous population
    - Mostly DSM-IV diagnosis, including ASD, ID, ADHD, ODD, developmental delay
    - Compliance issues, e.g., toileting, sleep, medication/treatment compliance
    - Adjustment issues
- Preliminary assessment interview
- Often concurrent individual follow-up, additional assessment and intervention

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● ● ● | **Format of the course**

- 6 x 2-hour weekly sessions
- Based on work by Forehand, Long, Barkley, & Patterson
- Benefits of group format
  - Parental contributions – group dynamic
  - Easier to flag issues
  - Encourages fathers participation
  - Reduces stigma & sense of isolation
  - Emphasise general principals for application to wide range of issues – toolbox approach
- ?cost effectiveness

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● ● ● | **General structure of sessions**

- Review of problems, goals & progress
- Deliver new material
- Modelling, role playing, problem-solving of application of new material
- Use of videos, whiteboard exercises, powerpoint presentations
- Provide handouts for reference
- Set homework tasks

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● ● ● | **Session content**

- Session 1
  - 1. Identifying presenting problems, setting goals
  - 2. Influences on the development of children's behaviour
    - Behavioural contingencies
    - Parent, child, and family factors

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- Session 2
  - 1. Encouraging desirable behaviour
  - 2. "Shining the spotlight"
    - i. Use of positive attending, reinforcement and effective commands

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- Session 3
  - 1. Strategies for setting behaviour rules
  - 2. Implementing reward contingencies and programs

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- o Session 4
  - 1. Effective discipline strategies for managing challenging behaviour
    - i. Use of planned ignoring
    - ii. Logical consequences
    - iii. Time Out
    - iv. Grounding

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- o Session 5
  - 1. Troubleshooting for at-risk times and generalising outside of the home
    - i. Planning and prevention

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- o Session 6
  - 1. Toolbox concept for long-term maintenance of gains
  - 2. Stress management for parents

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● ● ● | **Study rationale**

- Efficacy vs. effectiveness
  - Lab vs. "real world"
  - We know the foundations of the program are supported in research, but are they working in our setting with our population?
    - Diversity of clients
    - Complexity of cases
    - Practical applications
    - Clinician responsibility to monitor progress and ensure 'best fit'.
    - What to focus our attention on

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● ● ● | **Current study**

- Preliminary evaluation
  - Compared families completing the program ( $n = 16$ ) with wait-list controls ( $n = 18$ ) across 2 years
  - Measured pre- and post-functioning on a variety of domains, including:
    - Parental report of discipline strategies
    - Parental report of parenting stress
    - Parent report of child behaviour
    - Quality of observed parent-child interactions

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● ● ● | **Outcomes**

- Once the effects of pre-functioning scores were controlled for the following effects of the intervention were observed:
  - Parents reported a reduction in the verbosity of their discipline
  - Reduction in observed:
    - Parent negative affect
    - Parent rejection and invalidation
    - Child withdrawal
  - Increase in observed parent scaffolding

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- No significant changes in:
  - Parent reported child behaviour
  - Parenting stress

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- A high level of consumer satisfaction was reported
- Majority of parents indicated:
  - Program helped them deal more effectively with their child's behaviour
  - They would be likely to recommend the program
  - They perceived the service to be of a high quality
  - Homework assignments were useful

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### What do we make of these results?

- We saw immediate changes in parents interactions with their children
- First steps towards something bigger?
  - Parent as first indicator of change (social learning theory)
  - Reducing negativity first makes room for improvement in quality of interaction
  - Quality of interactions linked to longer-term behavioural outcomes
  - Children did withdraw less

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- Results may reflect content and format (order) of program and when outcomes assessed
  - Changes observed in quality of interactions which were the focus of the early part of the course
  - Parenting stress and reducing negative behaviours were presented later, thus less rehearsal
  - Timing of assessment may have reduced likelihood of observing significant change

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● ● ● | **Future directions/issues**

- We need to think about how we conceptualise the effectiveness of a clinical intervention
  - Symptom reduction vs. impairment reduction
  - Parental expectations
  - Parental self-efficacy
  - Coping skills for the future
  - Consumer satisfaction

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● ● ● | **Further research**

- Retention/dropout rates
- Measuring adherence
- Understanding the processes and mechanisms of change to help tailor further intervention

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● ● ● | **New directions at POPD**

- Follow-up/maintenance session
  - 7-week program
- Enhanced content on parental stress management
  - 1 session exclusively focussing on strategies for reducing and coping with stress
- Increased inclusion of modelling via role plays and opportunities to problem-solve around applications for each family

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