Challenges and new directions in the implementation of evidence-based parenting interventions

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Overview

Future directions

Confronting Challenges

Why parenting is so important

Self regulation and life success
Effects of early family experience can last a lifetime

- The quality of family life and in particular parenting has a pervasive long term impact on children’s well being and development
- Early family based experiences lay the foundation for life long learning
- Self-control at age 3 predicts health, wealth and criminality 30 years later (Moffitt et al, 2011)

Parenting influences many aspects of development:

- School attainment
- Peer relationships
- Obesity
- Antisocial behavior/drug use
- Sexuality/HIV
- Preparedness
- Secure attachment
- Emergent language
- Emotion regulation
- Social skills
- Early literacy
- School readiness
- School attainment
- Peer relationships
- Obesity

Early years

Preschool transition to school

Adolescence

Middle childhood
Five Key Principles of Positive Parenting

- Positive learning environment
- Consistent assertive discipline
- Reasonable expectations
- Taking care of oneself
- A safe and engaging environment
A common pathway to diverse outcomes

Positive parenting

Child social, emotional, behavioral problems

Risk for later problems (academic failure, substance abuse, delinquency)

Child Maltreatment

Child well being

Success at school, work, and in relationships
The benefits for children

- Conduct problems
- ADHD
- Internalizing problems
- Peer relationship problems
- School problems
- Risk of anti-social behavior and substance abuse
- Heath related behavior

- Improved social and emotional skills
- Positive relationships with parents, siblings, and peers
- Enhanced emotion regulation
- Greater school readiness
The benefits for parents

- Positive interaction
- Consistency
- Teamwork
- Self efficacy
- Problems solving
- Positive relationships with children
- Better functioning work

• Coercive, inconsistent parenting
• Child maltreatment
• Negative attributions
• Parental distress
• Marital conflict
• Occupational stress
• Work family conflict
How effective is Triple P?
Child and parent effects
N=17,577 families

Building the foundations for a public health approach to parenting support takes time.
A wide range of parents benefit

- For mothers, fathers, and grandparents
- Socially disadvantaged parents
- Parents experiencing separation and divorce
- Parents with difficulties controlling their anger
- Parents with serious mental health concerns
- Ethnically diverse parents, indigenous parents
Different cultures
25 countries, 18 languages

Cultural acceptability and effectiveness of parenting strategies documented in diverse cultures

- Australia, New Zealand
- Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong,
- Iran, Turkey
- UK (Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, Wales)
- Ireland
- Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, France, Austria
- United States, Canada,
- Panama, Curaçao, Chile
- South Africa, Kenya, Namibia and Panama.
Child benefits + Parent benefits = Family life that positively supports children’s development = Children succeed in life
Future directions

Why parenting is so important

Confronting the challenges

Self regulation and success in life
The capacity to self-regulate is a fundamental process underpinning the maintenance of positive, nurturing, non-abusive parenting practices that promote good developmental and health outcomes in children.
Why self regulation is so important

Self regulation capacity

Positive life outcomes
- Academic achievement
- Income, savings behaviour
- Physical and mental health
- Better interpersonal relationships
- Happiness

Negative life outcomes
- Aggression
- Criminal behaviour
- Depression
- Impulse control problems such as binge eating and alcohol abuse
Using a self regulation framework to change behavior

Parental Self regulation

Self-management
Self-efficacy
Personal agency
Self-sufficiency

Minimally Sufficient Intervention

Reduced need for support
Parental self regulation in action

- Has a clear sense of purpose
- Knows what behaviors, 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 her own actions and searches for explanations
- Uses her knowledge to develop options and plans
- Carries out plan and revises plan as needed
- Expects that she can bring about good outcomes
- Is reflective, capable of identifying strengths and weaknesses, without being unhelpfully self critical
- Reflections increase her self efficacy
- Mostly enjoys the process
Future directions

Why parenting is so important

Confronting the challenges

Self regulation and success in life
The single most important thing we can do as a society to improve the social, emotional, educational and physical well being of children (and to reduce child maltreatment) is to increase the skills, confidence and knowledge of parents in the task of raising children as a whole of population level
Achieving population level change
Glasgow et al (2001)

Create leverage using the RE-AIM formula
Reach X Efficacy X Adoption X Implementation X Maintenance
Not a “one size fits all” approach

- Intensive family Intervention
- Broad focused parenting skills training
- Narrow focus parenting skills training
- Brief parenting advice
- Media and communication strategy

Breadth of reach vs. Intensity of intervention:

- Level 1: Media and communication strategy
- Level 2: Brief parenting advice
- Level 3: Narrow focus parenting skills training
- Level 4: Broad focused parenting skills training
- Level 5: Intensive family Intervention
Population level change can be achieved through parenting

Population-Based Prevention of Child Maltreatment: The U.S. Triple P System Population Trial

Ronald J. Prinz • Matthew R. Sanders • Cheri J. Shapiro • Daniel J. Whitaker • John R. Lutzker

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Abstract The prevention of child maltreatment necessitates a public health approach. In the U.S. Triple P System Population Trial, 18 counties were randomly assigned to either dissemination of the Triple P—Positive Parenting Program system or to the services-as-usual control condition. Dissemination involved Triple P professional training for the toll on society. CM results in costs associated with utilization of administrative services and systems (e.g., child protective services, foster care, judicial system), child treatment services (e.g., healthcare, mental health, educational systems), long-term impact (e.g., psychological and health problems in adulthood), and next genera-
Population level effects

- Lower rates of child out-of-home (foster care) placements
- Lower rates of hospital-treated maltreatment injuries
- Slowed growth of substantiated maltreatment cases

Washington State Institute for Public Policy examined Triple P benefits and costs in the context of the child welfare system

- Triple P system (all five levels)
- Benefit to Cost Ratio (return on one dollar investment)
  
  $6.06
Enhancing outcomes

Current challenges → Tailor delivery to the needs of parents → Improve intervention outcomes → Better outcomes for children

Improve implementation
Considering the broader ecological context

Enablers & barriers

- **Parental concern about child behavior**
  - Perceived vulnerability
  - Severity of child problem
  - Level of parental distress

**Motivation**
- Perceived need
- Anticipated benefits/costs
- Available incentives
- Competing demands

**Cognitions or Affect**
- Expectation of benefit
- Parental self-efficacy
- Access to role models
- Parental attributions

**Social influence**
- In home support
- Extended family support
- Community and neighborhood support

**Program itself**
- Type of message
- Provider ethnicity/skills
- Cost/Accessibility
- Program format
- Cultural Acceptability

Outcomes

- **Refugee status**
- **Discrimination**
- **Acculturation**
- **Family friendly policies**
- **Poverty**
- **Employment status**
- **Social infrastructure**
- **Gender/age of parent**
- **Available parenting services**
- **Connectedness to community**
- **Laws**
- **Education /literacy**

Enablers & barriers

- **Type of Neighborhood**
- **Prior help seeking**
- **Level of violence**
- **Family of origin experiences**
- **Immigration status**
- **Culturally normative parenting practices**
- **Available parenting services**

Considering the broader ecological context
Tailoring delivery
Development of Grandparent Triple P

Theory development

Knowledge gained from consumers

Existing evidence

Tailored variant ready for empirical testing

every grandparent’s group workbook

RCT
Effects of Grandparent Triple P

I = Grandparent Triple P
C = Grandparenting as usual

ECBI Problem* (GP: $d=0.73$)
Depress* ($d=0.89$)
Anxiety* ($d=0.95$)
Stress* ($d=0.86$)
QRI Biol Support* ($d=0.56$)
No significant results in parenting style or grandparent partner relationship quality
Improving interventions: Testing enhancements
Responding to children’s emotions

- Children with conduct problems have impoverished emotion language, generate fewer emotion words and less specific emotion terms (O’Kearney & Dadds, 2005).
- Perform more poorly on emotion tasks
  - knowledge of emotions
  - understanding the causes of emotions;
  - recognizing that different emotions can evoke different emotions in different people;
  - appreciating that people can experience mixed emotions
• Parent-child interactions are a context for learning about emotions
  – review of recent upsetting events,
  – discussion of feelings
  – coaching about how the child might deal with problems in future?
• Developed an emotion-focused variant of Group Triple P and tested whether it enhanced the effects of Triple P
Does emotion coaching improve outcomes in Triple P?
Salmon et al (under review)

Other findings

- EETP produced greater changes in
  - use of emotional labels (d= .78, medium)
  - discussion of causes (d= .74, medium)
  - emotion coaching (d= 1.08, large)
- GTP had greater changes in child conduct problems (d=1.09, large)
- Both interventions produced improvements in dysfunctional parenting practices (PS), parenting self efficacy (PTC), parental distress (DASS and parents were similarly satisfied with both (CSQ)
- Focus on emotions did NOT improve child or parent outcomes
Global challenge: Reducing children’s exposure to violence
• On a global scale problematic parenting is widespread

• Physical and mental health consequences of children’s exposure to family violence are serious and long term (Moffitt et al, 2013)

• Self-reported incidence of physical abuse 40 times greater than official records (Chang, Runyan, et al, 2005)

Violence against children is widespread
Children aged 2-14 experiencing violent discipline in 29 countries

Any violent discipline: 86%
Psychological aggression: 81%
Minor physical punishment: 62%
Severe physical punishment: 19%

The Panamanian context

- Parents living in poverty (70% living on less than $300 per month)
- Living in very small houses (all the family sleeping in the same room common) in very poor communities.
- High urban crime rates (gang participation common)
- Most parents did not finish high school
- Parents very concerned about their child getting involved in gang activity and/or the child failing or quitting school

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Bringing evidence-based parenting programs to LMIC

- Establish cultural relevance and acceptability to parents and practitioners (Mejia et al, 2013)
- Establish effectiveness (with the highest possible standard of evidence)
Effects of Triple P Disobedience Discussion Group
Mejia, Calam & Sanders (under review)

Parenting Scale: d= 0.4
Parental distress: d= 0.3
Improving implementation
Training improves Practitioner Self-efficacy (Content)
Training improves practitioner Self efficacy (Process)
Organisational enablers and barriers influence return on investment

Practitioner undertakes training → Starts using programme

Barriers:
- Low
- High

Enablers:
- High use
- Greater

Return on investment:
- High
- Low
- No or low use
- Less
Drivers of implementation success

- Strong local partnerships: internal champions
- Line management support and funding
- Well trained staff
- Adequate supervision and feedback
- Technical and consultation support
- Routine evaluation of outcomes routine
Future directions

Why parenting is so important

Confronting the challenges ahead

Self regulation and life success
Program variants targeting vulnerable children and parents

(Work in progress)

- Vulnerable children
  - Parents of preterm babies
  - Children with language delay
  - Children with serious mental disorders
  - Children with chronic health problems
- Program adaptations
- Vulnerable parents
  - Parents with severe mental health problems
  - Foster carers
  - Parents who are prisoners/offenders
  - Parents with DD
Emerging Priorities

- Population approaches to parenting of children with a developmental disability (continuing)
- Parenting in an age of technology (trials in progress)
- Parenting in the context of humanitarian refugees settlement (pilot work)
Change strategies

Blending of universal and targeted interventions

Large scale implementation with fidelity

Meaningful population level change
A final word

Significant investment in parenting programs for all parents makes good sense. Through better parenting we can ensure a future generation of healthy, happy, capable children and young people.
The Helping Families Change Conference is a leading scientific event offering advanced level presentations, symposia and workshops across a broad range of parenting and family intervention domains. Those attending will be presented with state-of-the-art knowledge and engage in hands-on practice with leaders in the field of family intervention.

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