

Psychology
of Parenting



Case Study Eight: **Psychology of Parenting**

The Psychology of Parenting Project (PoPP) is a targeted early-intervention initiative designed to develop workforce and organisational capacity to deliver the two most robustly-evidenced parenting programmes (the Incredible Years and Level 4 Group Triple P), for parents of 3-6 year old children with elevated levels of behaviour problems. The PoPP is also aligned to the work being undertaken within the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative, particularly that related to improving the developmental milestones, health and wellbeing of young children.

The research evidence for these two programmes demonstrates that the PoPP holds particular promise in terms of reducing health inequalities because:

- i. A disproportionate number of young children with behavioural difficulties live in disadvantaged homes and neighbourhoods.
- ii. Early onset behaviour problems are associated with several sub-optimal parenting practices and these are more prevalent in disadvantaged families.
- iii. Early-onset behavioural difficulties have a high level of continuity into adolescence and adulthood and are associated with a broad range of poor outcomes. By interrupting this common escalating cycle at an early stage, there is less risk that initial disadvantages will be compounded by other adversities

typically encountered by children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds as they progress down more risk-laden developmental pathways.

- iv. The effectiveness of these parenting programmes is much the same across a wide range of family types and ethnic groups. The programmes are also at least as effective for children with the most severe behavioural problems as for those with more moderate difficulties, which is important as PoPP is targeted toward those children with the most severe levels of difficulty.

As well as reaching the most vulnerable children (in terms of their elevated behaviour problems), the PoPP has been successful in addressing other areas of inequality concern. Although families are recruited to PoPP groups based on level of behaviour difficulty in the child, across the 14 Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) with whom the PoPP team have been working to deliver this initiative, the majority of the families who have taken part in PoPP groups have come from areas within Scotland experiencing the greatest levels of deprivation. Furthermore, a good number of the parents who have participated in the groups are fathers, which is important given how underrepresented fathers often are in parenting interventions. PoPP has also been an initiative offered to all CPPs in Scotland, regardless of rurality. Our data suggests that our reach in relation to rurality is reflective of the breadth of CPPs with whom we are working.

You can read more about our work on equality on our website at:
www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/about-us/equality-and-diversity



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