

THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR THE PARENTS PLUS & WORKING THINGS OUT PROGRAMMES



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PARENTS PLUS

Why was parent training invented?

- Parent training was developed to deal with conduct problems, typical of children with disruptive behaviour disorders including
 - Oppositional defiant disorder
 - Conduct disorder
 - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Parent training was also developed to help parents deal with challenging behaviour in children with developmental disorders



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- Intellectual disability
- Autism spectrum disorder
- Speech and language delay

Why was parent training invented?

- To prevent the development of behaviour problems in normally developing children



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Features of Disruptive Behaviour Disorders

- Problems internalizing and following rules
- Problems regulating impulses - acting without thinking
- Problems regulating emotions, especially anger - short fuse
- Problems solving interpersonal problems - difficulty generating useful solutions
- Problems maintaining co-operative relationships with parents, teachers and peers - fight with adults and mix with deviant peers or become isolated



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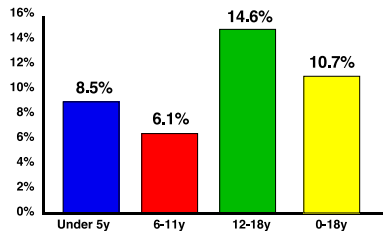
Why are Disruptive Behaviour Disorders of Interest?

- Very common
- Very troublesome
- Very costly



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Prevalence of Conduct Problems in Ireland



Martin, M. (2007). The Clonmel Project. PhD Thesis. UCD.

Percentage of cases scoring above the clinical cut-off score for the externalizing behaviour problem scale on ASEBA instruments in a population study of 3119 0-18 year olds in Clonmel, with a response rate of 70%



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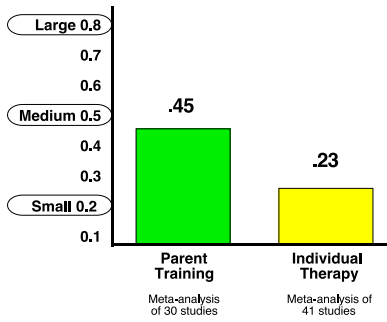
Effectiveness of Parent Training

- Meta-analyses of randomized controlled trials show that, for pre-adolescent children, group behavioural parent training
 - Is moderately effective in reducing behaviour problems
 - Is moderately effective in improving parental adjustment
 - Is about twice as effective as individual therapy in reducing children's behaviour problems



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Effect Sizes for Behaviour Problems from Meta-Analyses of Parent Training & Individual Therapy for Children aged 6-12 years



McCart, M. R., Priestler, P., & Davies, W. H. & Azen, R. (2006) Differential effectiveness of behavioural parent-training and cognitive-behavioural therapy for antisocial youth: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 34 (4), 527-545.

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Programmes



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How Many Evaluation Studies of Parents Plus Programmes have been Conducted?

- 19 studies of all Parents Plus Programmes and the Working Things Out Programme between 2001 and 2015
- 3 studies of the original Parents Plus Programme - PP
- 6 studies of Parents Plus Early Years Programme - PP-EYP
- 3 studies of Parents Plus Children's Programme - PP-CP
- 6 Studies of Parents Plus Adolescents' Programme - PP-P, and Working Things Out programme - WTO
- 1 Study of Parents Plus Parenting When Separated Programme - PP-PWS



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Evidence Base for Parents Plus Programmes

- This is a large evidence base
- 19 studies
- Over 1000 families
- All types of families - single parent, two parent and second marriage families
- Children of all ages - ranging from 2-17 years
- A wide range of problems - CD, ADHD, ASD, & ID, depression and anxiety
- PP was offered in many settings - CAMHS, early intervention disability services, preschools, schools, special schools, and community centres
- PP was facilitated by a range of professionals - child care workers, teachers, speech and language therapists, nurses, social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists



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3 Studies of The Original Parents Plus Programme - PP

- Joanne Behan et al. (2001) - In CAMHS PP works for families of children with DBD (RCT, N=40)
- Mark Quinn et al. (2007) - In a rural EIT setting PP works for families of children with ID and DBD (NRCT, N=41)
- Mark Quinn et al. (2006) - In rural EIT and CAMHS settings PP works for families of children with DBD with and without DD (NRCT, N=38)



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Pilot evaluation of the Parents Plus Early Years Programme in CAMHS
John Sharry et al. 2005

Paper

Sharry, J., Guerin, S., Griffin, C. & Drumm, M. (2005). An evaluation of the Parents Plus Early Years Programme: A video-based early intervention for parent of pre-school children with behavioural and developmental disabilities. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 10, 319-336.

Design

31 parents from 24 families with children ages 2-5 years with behavioural problems and developmental disabilities referred to 2 clinics at the Mater Hospital CAMHS completed this single group outcome study.



PP-EYP included 7 group sessions interspersed with 5 individual sessions over 12 weeks.

Results

The group showed significant improvement on the SDQ total difficulties, conduct problems and hyperactivity scales, parenting stress on the PSS, goal attainment on the goals scale, and ratings of parent-child interaction.

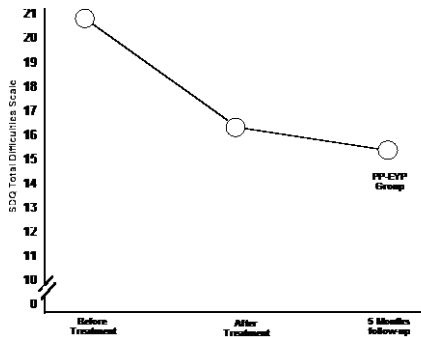


Improvement in total difficulties on the SDQ and parenting stress on the PSS was maintained at 5 months follow-up

Qualitative data showed that parents perceived their children's behaviour and communication to have improved; that they were using more positive parenting strategies; and that the quality of the parent-child relationship had improved.

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Pilot evaluation of the Parents Plus Early Years Programme in CAMHS
John Sharry et al. 2005



Sharry, J., Guerin, S., Griffin, C. & Drumm, M. (2005). An evaluation of the Parents Plus Early Years Programme: A video-based early intervention for parent of pre-school children with behavioural and developmental disabilities. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 10, 319-336.

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Early Years Programme in CAMHS
Claire Griffin et al., 2010

Paper

Griffin, C., Guerin, S., Sharry, J. & Drumm, M. (2010). A multicentre controlled study of an early intervention parenting programme for young children with behavioural and developmental difficulties. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 10, 279-294.

Design

This non-RCT was completed by parents of 81 children ages 3-6 years with behavioural & developmental difficulties referred to 4 Mater University Hospital CAMHS clinics.



There were 46 in the PP-EYP group and 35 in the TAU control group.

PP-EYP included 7 group sessions interspersed with 5 individual sessions over 12 weeks.

Results

Compared with the control group, the PP-EYP group reported significant improvement on the SDQ total difficulties and hyperactivity scales and goal attainment on the goals scale.



Improvements were maintained at 5 months follow-up.

The PP-EYP group showed significant improvement on independent ratings of parent-child interaction.

PP-EYP was equally effective for children with behavioural and developmental difficulties

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**Pilot Evaluation of the Parents Together community course:
A preventative version of the PPEYP
Sarah Kilroy et al., 2010**

Paper

Kilroy, S., Sharry, J., Flood, C. & Guerin, S. & (2011). Parent training in the community: Linking process to outcome. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 16, 459-473.

Design

In this single group outcome study 31 parents of children ages 1-9 years of whom 13 (45%) had behavioural difficulties on the SDQ completed a 6 session prevention version of the PP-EYP.



The programmes took place in 4 schools and one family centre and were facilitated by Home School Liaison teachers and Child Care Workers who received two days facilitator training, and recruited participants

Results

For the whole sample significant improvement occurred on the SDQ total difficulties, conduct problems, and hyperactivity scales and in goal attainment on the goal scale.



Greater improvement occurred for cases with behavioural difficulties, than for the sample as a whole.

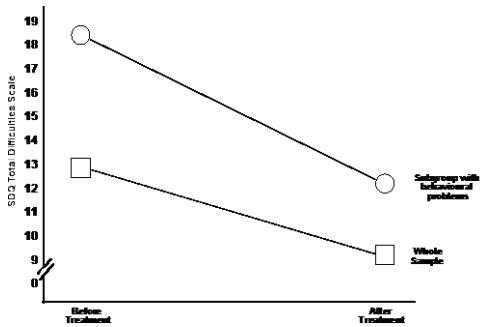
For the whole sample 3 factors were correlated with overall outcome on the parenting problems scale.

1. Weekly end of sessions ratings of perceived progress towards personal goals,
2. Hopefulness about goal attainment
3. Perceiving the group to be well organized



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**Pilot evaluation of the Parents Together community course
A preventative version of the PPEYP
Sara Kilroy et al., 2010**



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**Large scale evaluation of the Parents Together community course
A preventative version of the PP-EYP
Sarah-Jane Gerber et al., 2015**

Paper

Gerber, S., Sharry, J., Streek, A., & Mc Kenna, G. (2015). Parent training: Effectiveness of the Parents Plus Early Years Programme in community preschool settings. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*.

Design

In this single group outcome study 212 parents or guardians of children aged 6 months -7 years of whom 40% had behavioural difficulties on the SDQ completed a 7 session prevention version of the PP-EYP.



Early years practitioners from 35 preschools in the Fingal area recruited participants and delivered the programme to 45 groups after receiving 3-days of training & received ongoing supervision in programme delivery

Results

For the whole sample significant improvement occurred on all SDQ scales including the total difficulties scale, parenting stress on the PSS, parenting satisfaction on the KPS, and goal attainment on the goals scale.



Greater improvement occurred for cases with clinically significant behavioural difficulties on the SDQ, than for those with normal SDQ scores at baseline.



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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme in CAMHS
Michael Coughlan et al. 2009

Paper

Coughlin, M., Sharry, J., Fitzpatrick, C., Guerin, S. & Drumm, M. (2009). A controlled evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme: A video-based programme for parents of children aged 6-11 years with behavioural and developmental problems. *Clinical Child Psychology & Psychiatry, 14*, 541-558.

Design

In this sequential block design study there were 74 parents of children ages 6-11 years with behavioural & developmental difficulties referred to 4 Mater University Hospital CAMHS.

There were 42 in the PP-CP group and 32 in the control group.

PP-CP included 9 group sessions and 2 individual sessions.

Results

Compared with the control group, the PP-CP group showed significant improvement on the SDQ total difficulties and conduct problems scales.

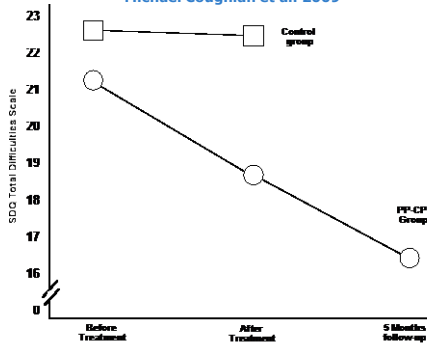
Compared with the control group, the PP-CP group reported decreases in parental stress on the PSS; increased confidence in their parenting, and movement towards their parenting goals and resolution of parenting problems on the goals scale.

These post-treatment improvements were maintained at 5 months follow-up.

Compared with families of children with developmental disorders, families of children with behaviour problems benefited more from the PP-CP programme on the SDQ total problems and peer problems scales.

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme in CAMHS
Michael Coughlan et al. 2009



Coughlin, M., Sharry, J., Fitzpatrick, C., Guerin, S. & Drumm, M. (2009). A Controlled Evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme: A Video-based Programme for Parents of Children Aged 6-11 years with Behavioural and Developmental Problems. *Clinical Child Psychology & Psychiatry, 14*, 541-558.

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Parents' experience of participation and psychological factors mediating outcome of the Parents Plus Children's Programme
Michael Coughlan et al. 2009

Paper

Coughlin, M., Sharry, J., Guerin, S., & Beattie, D. (2009). The Parents Plus Children's Programme - a qualitative study assessing parents' experience of participation and psychological factors mediating outcome. *Unpublished paper*

Design

21 parents or carers of children ages 6-11 years with behavioural & developmental difficulties referred to 4 Mater University Hospital CAMHS clinics were interviewed 5 months after completing the PP-CP



Results

Parents said the PP-CP led to their children being calmer, showing better regulation of emotions, and communicating with them more clearly.

Parents said group support was the main benefit of participating in the PP-CP.

Parents said the most useful skills covered on the PP-CP were advice on how to 'tune in' to their children, play with them, using planned sanctions to discipline their children and stepping back from conflict situations



Compared with non-improvers, parents whose children improved after PP-CP reported greater optimism, self-control, consistency in disciplining their children, and capacity to reframe child behaviour problems as situational (rather than labelling their child as bad)

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme with families of children with intellectual disabilities
Ailish Hand, Clara Ni Raghallaigh et al. 2013

Paper

Hand, A., Ni Raghallaigh, C., Cuppage, J., Coyle, S., & Sharry, J. (2013). A controlled clinical evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme for parents of children aged 6-12 with mild intellectual disability in a school setting. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 18*(4), 536-555.



Design

In this RCT 29 parents of children aged 6-11 years with intellectual disability attending Scoil Chiarán completed the study.

There were 16 in the PP-CP group and 13 in the waiting list control group.

PP-CP included 8 two and a half hour sessions.

Some parents had mild ID or literacy problems and the PP-CP was adapted to meet their needs



Some PP-EYP videos of children with disabilities were included

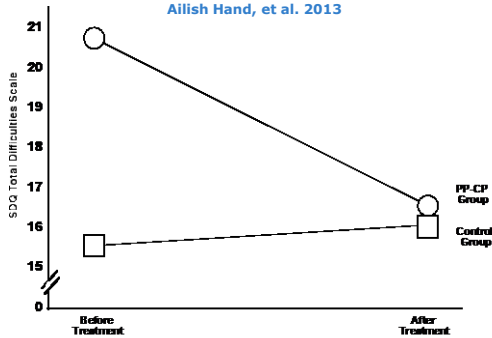
Results

Compared with the control group, the PP-CP group showed significant improvement on the SDQ total difficulties, hyperactivity and conduct problems scales, parent stress on the PSI, parenting satisfaction on the KPS, and goal attainment on the goals scale.

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme with families of children with intellectual disabilities
Ailish Hand, et al. 2013



Hand, A., Raghallaigh, C. N., Cuppage, J., Coyle, S., & Sharry, J. (2013). A controlled clinical evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme for parents of children aged 6-12 with mild intellectual disability in a school setting. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 18*(4), 536-555.

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Children's Programme as a preventative intervention with families of children in the community
Ailish Hand, Emma McDonnell et al. 2013

Paper

Hand, A., McDonnell, E., Honari, B., & Sharry, J. (2013). A community led approach to delivery of the Parents Plus Children's Programme for the parents of children aged 6-11. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology, 13*(2), 81-90.



Design

In this RCT there were 63 parents of children ages 6-11 years from 3 primary schools.

There were 36 completers in the PP-CP group and 27 in the waiting list control group.

Programmes, which included 8 sessions, were facilitated by Home School Liaison Teachers and primary care professionals who received 2 days training.



Results

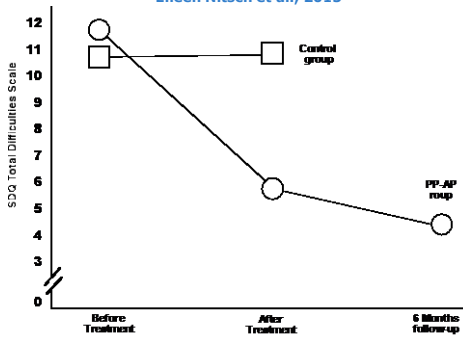
Compared with the control group, the PP-CP group showed significant improvement on the SDQ total difficulties and hyperactivity scales; parenting stress on the PSI, parenting satisfaction on the KPS, and goal attainment on the goals scale.

Improvements were maintained at 6 months follow-up.

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Positive Parenting
Evaluation of the Parents Plus Adolescents Programme in Schools
 Eileen Nitsch et al., 2015



Nitsch, E., Hennessy, G., Heffernan, L., Hoaglin, S., Sharry, J. (under review) Positive parenting: A randomized controlled trial evaluation of the Parents Plus Adolescents Programme in schools.

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Evaluation of the Parents Plus Adolescent Programme and the Working things Out Programme in CAMHS
 Ciara Wynne et al., 2015

Paper

Wynne, C., Brosnan, E., Doyle, C., Kenny, R., Sharry, J. (2015) A first-level evaluation of a family intervention for adolescent social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in child and adolescent mental health services, *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*.

Design

In this single group outcome study participants were recruited from 8 HSE CAMHS teams.

79 adolescents aged 11-17 and 83 parents completed WTO and PP-AP respectively

The 2 programmes were run in parallel over 8 weeks with joint family sessions after sessions 3 and 6.

Results

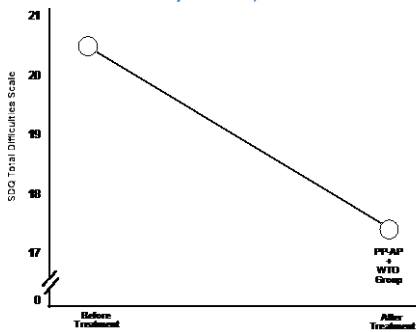
Significant improvement occurred on the parent and adolescent completed SDQ emotional problems scale, the McMaster Family Assessment Device General Functioning Scale and the goals scale.

Significant improvement also occurred on the parent completed SDQ total difficulties, conduct problems, hyperactivity and peer problems scales; parenting satisfaction on the KPS and parental stress on the PSS.



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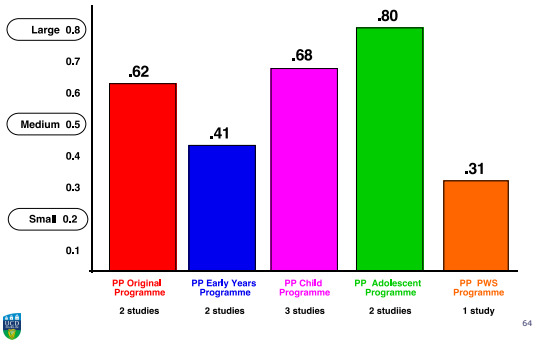
Evaluation of the Parents Plus Adolescent Programme & the Working things Out Programme in CAMHS
 Ciara Wynne et al., 2015



Wynne, C., Brosnan, E., Doyle, C., Kenny, R., & Sharry, J. (2015) A first-level evaluation of a family intervention for adolescent social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in child and adolescent mental health services. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*.

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Between groups post-treatment effect sizes on the SDQ-P total difficulties scale from 10 controlled studies of Parents Plus Programmes



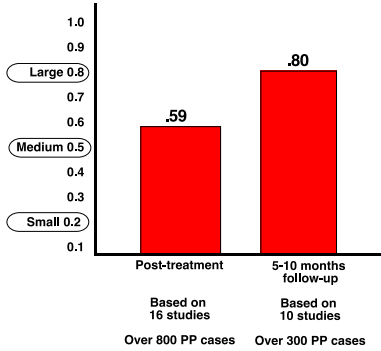

Overall were improvements shown at the end of PP programmes maintained at follow-up?

- Yes!
- Gains shown after treatment were maintained at 3-10 months follow up.
- Averaging across all PP programmes the effect size at 3-10 months follow-up on the total difficulties scale of the SDQ-P (.80) was greater than than at the end of treatment (.59).





Before after treatment, and before treatment to 3-10 month follow-up effect sizes on the SDQ-P total difficulties scale from 16 controlled studies of Parents Plus Programmes

What can we conclude about about the evidence-base for Parents Plus Programmes?

- Parents Plus programmes work.
- They work for families with children of all ages, and for separated families.
- The gains made on Parents Plus programmes are lasting.
- Parents Plus programmes work as well as other evidence-based parent training programmes.



What are the implications of PP research results for practice, policy and future research ?

- PP programmes should be rolled out nationally in preschools, schools and CAMHS.
- Large multi-site RCTs with long-term follow-up should be conducted to find out the long-term benefits of PP
- Economic evaluations should be conducted to find out the extent of the cost-savings to society associated with PP programmes.



Thank You

**Alan Carr
Professor of Clinical Psychology**