

NEW PARENTS PLUS EVIDENCE

2024 META ANALYSIS

PP HEALTHY FAMILIES RESEARCH

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Research Team

- **Claire O'Dwyer, UCD, HSE**
- **Brid Áine Davis, UCD, HSE**
- **Martin O'Connor, HSE, Parents Plus**
- **Conal Twomey, St Patricks Mental Health Service**
- **John Sharry, Parents Plus**
- **Adele Keating, Parent Plus, CHI, Crumlin**
- **Kathy Looney, UCD, CHI, Crumlin**
- **Eileen Brosnan, Parents Plus**
- **Alan Doran, HSE**
- **Eddie Murphy, HSE**



Papers and Thesis

The presentation is based on two papers and Claire O'Dwyer's doctoral thesis listed below and a suite of programmes developed by John Sharry and colleagues at Parents Plus

- **O'Dwyer, C. (2024). An evaluation of the evidence base of Parents Plus group-parenting based programmes on child and parent wellbeing and family healthy lifestyles. Unpublished D Psych Sc (Clin Psy) thesis, UCD School of Psychology.**
- **O'Dwyer, C., Twomey, C., Davis, B., Sharry, J., Brosnan, E., Carr, A. (2024). Parents Plus systemic, solution-focused parent training programs: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis. Unpublished manuscript under review. UCD School of Psychology**
- **O'Dwyer, C., Davis, B., O'Connor, M., Keating, A., Sharry, J., Doran, A., Murphy E., Looney, K., & Carr, A. (2024). A cluster randomised controlled trial of the effectiveness of a Parents Plus group-based parenting programme to promote healthy lifestyles among children and their families. Unpublished manuscript under review. UCD School of Psychology**



ParentsPlus
Empowering Professionals to Support Families

Why was parent training invented?

- To help parents deal with conduct problems, typical of children with
 - Oppositional defiant disorder
 - Conduct disorder
- It was based on behavioural theory and research
- This research showed that children learn behaviour problems through coercive family process
 - They learn aggression and defiance brings relief
 - They learn parents are to be avoided because they hassle you
- Behavioural parent training helps families
 - Use effective behaviour control systems where rule following is rewarded
 - (instead of coercive family process, where rule breaking is rewarded)



How has parent training developed in recent years?

- It helps parents support children with a wide range of problems – not just conduct problems (ADHD, ASD, S&LD, ID)
- It is informed not just by behavioural theory & research, but also by
 - Social learning theory
 - Attachment theory
 - Family systems theory
 - Developmental psychology
 - Research on child and family strengths, resilience and protective factors
- It replaces a narrow focus on child behaviour problems with a broader focus on empowering parents to
 - Strengthen parent-child relationships
 - Promote child development and QoL
 - Address behavioural and emotional problems



Parents Plus programmes are leaders in these recent developments

- **They support families of children with a wide range of challenges**
- **They empower parents to**
 - **Strengthen parent-child relationships**
 - **Promote child development and QoL**
 - **Address behavioural and emotional problems**
 - **Address neurodiversity**
- **They are**
 - **Family centred**
 - **Goal focused**
 - **Strengths based**
- **They are informed by**
 - **Social learning theory**
 - **Attachment theory**
 - **Family systems theory**
 - **Developmental psychology**
 - **A neurodiversity affirmative perspective**

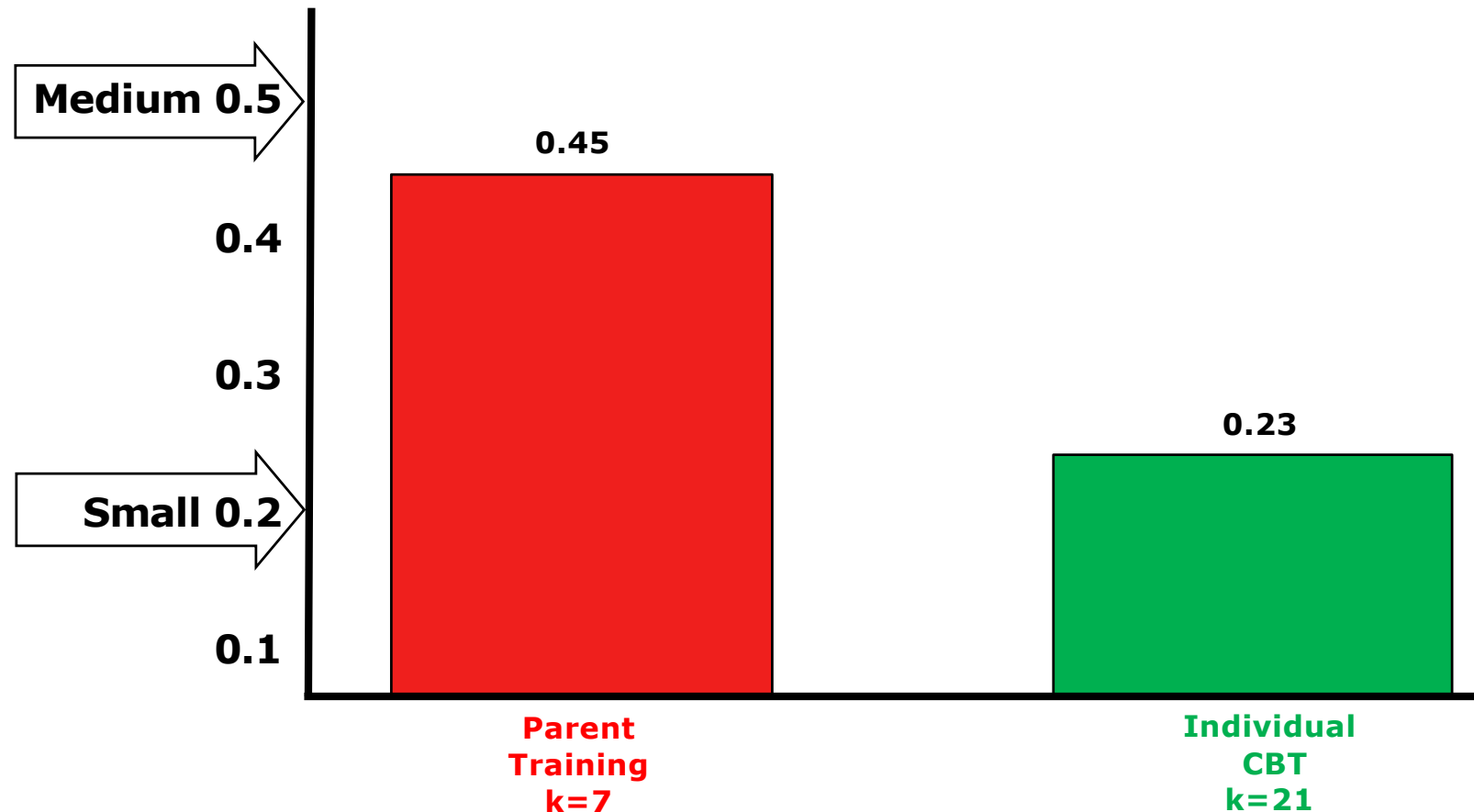


How effective is Parent Training?

- **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**



Comparison of effects of Parent Training and CBT for children 6-12 years on antisocial behaviour



McCart, M. R., Priester, P. E., Davies, W. H., & Azen, R. (2006). Differential effectiveness of behavioural parent-training and cognitive-behavioral therapy for antisocial youth: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 34(4), 527–543. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-006-9031-1>

**Parents Plus is one of 3 international
evidence-based group parent training programmes
currently used in Ireland
supported by meta-analytic evidence**

Parents Plus Programme

Prof John Sharry

Parents Plus & UCD, Ireland



Incredible Years Programme

Prof Caroline Webster Stratton

U Washington, USA



Triple P

Positive Parenting Programme

Prof Matt Sanders

U Queensland, Australia



2024 Meta-analysis of Evaluation Studies of Parents Plus Programmes




ParentsPlus
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How Many Evaluation Studies of Parents Plus Programmes are there ?

- 21 studies of Parents Plus Programmes between 2001 and 2024
- 3 studies of 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
- 4 Studies of Parents Plus Adolescents' Programme – PP-AP, and Working Things Out programme – WTO
- 1 Study of Parents Plus Parenting When Separated Programme – PP-PWS
- 1 Study of the Parents Plus Prog. for parents of children with ADHD – PP-ACP
- 1 study of the PP prog. for parents of children with special needs – PP-SNP
- 2 studies of the Parents Plus Prog. to enhance healthy lifestyles – PP-HFP

The 4 studies in green have been added to those in the meta-analysis published in 2017.

Carr, A., Hartnett, D., Brosnan, E., & Sharry, J. (2017). Parents plus systemic, solution-focused parent training programs: Description, review of the evidence base, and meta-analysis. *Family Process*, 56(3), 652-668. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12280>



What is the evidence Base for Parents Plus Programmes?

This is a large evidence base

- **21 studies**
- **1179 families**
- **All types of families** - single parent, two parent and second marriage families
- **Young people of all ages** – ranging from early childhood to young adulthood
- **A wide range of problems** - ODD, CD, ADHD, ASD, & ID, depression and anxiety, post-divorce adjustment problems, risk of or wishing to prevent obesity
- **PP was offered in many settings** - CAMHS, primary care, early intervention and disability services, preschools, schools, special schools, family resource centres, 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

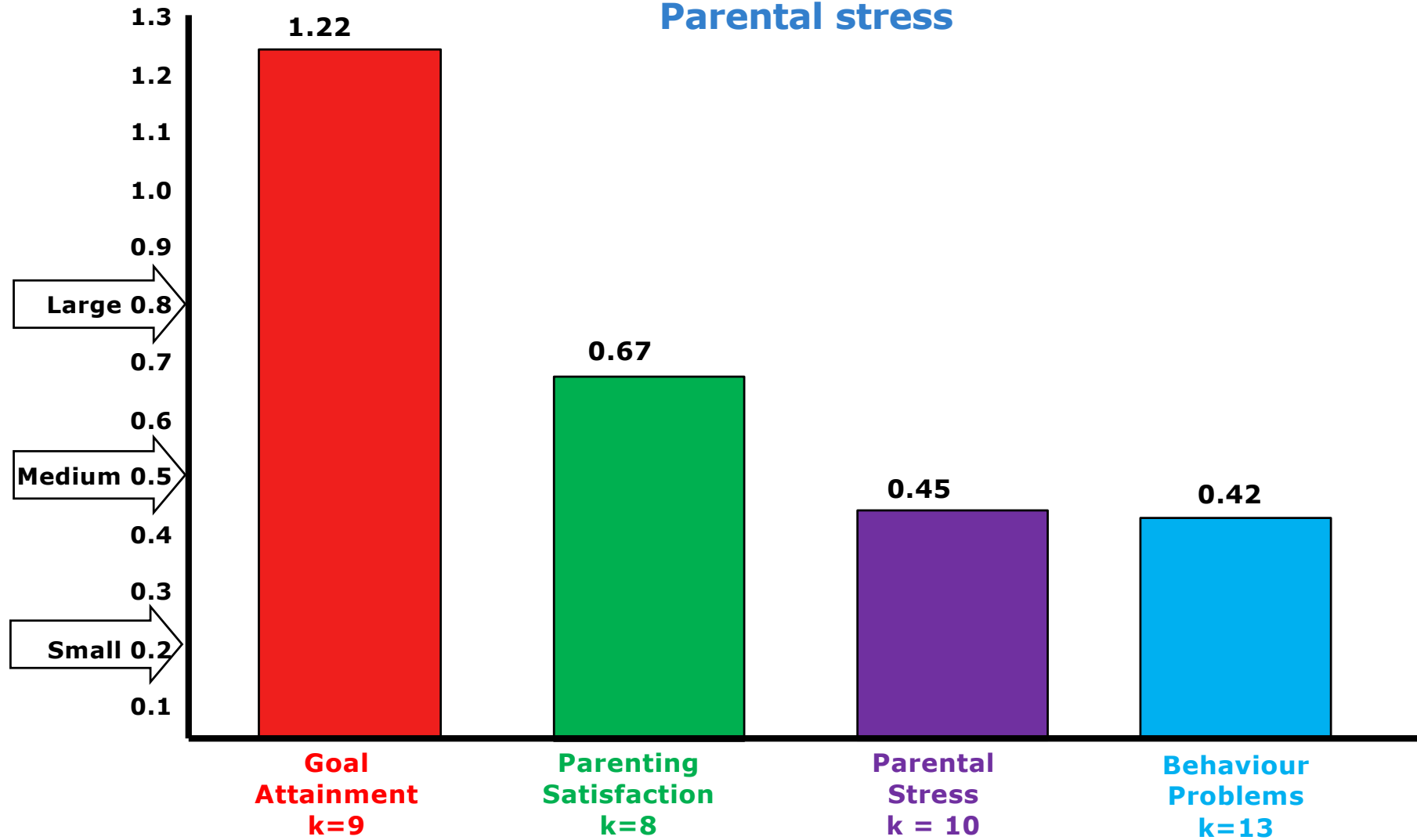


Did the Parents Plus 2024 meta-analysis results show that PP programmes had positive effects?

- **Parents Plus programmes had a**
 - **LARGE effect on Goal attainment and Parenting satisfaction**
 - **SMALL to MEDIUM effect on Parental stress and Child behaviour problems**
- **With LARGE effects the average case in the PP group did better than over 80% cases in the control group**
- **With MEDIUM effects the average case in the PP group did better than over 70% cases in the control group**
- **With SMALL effects the average case in the PP group did better than over about 60% cases in the control group**



**Post-intervention PP group V Control group effect sizes for
Goal attainment,
Parenting satisfaction,
Behaviour problems, &
Parental stress**

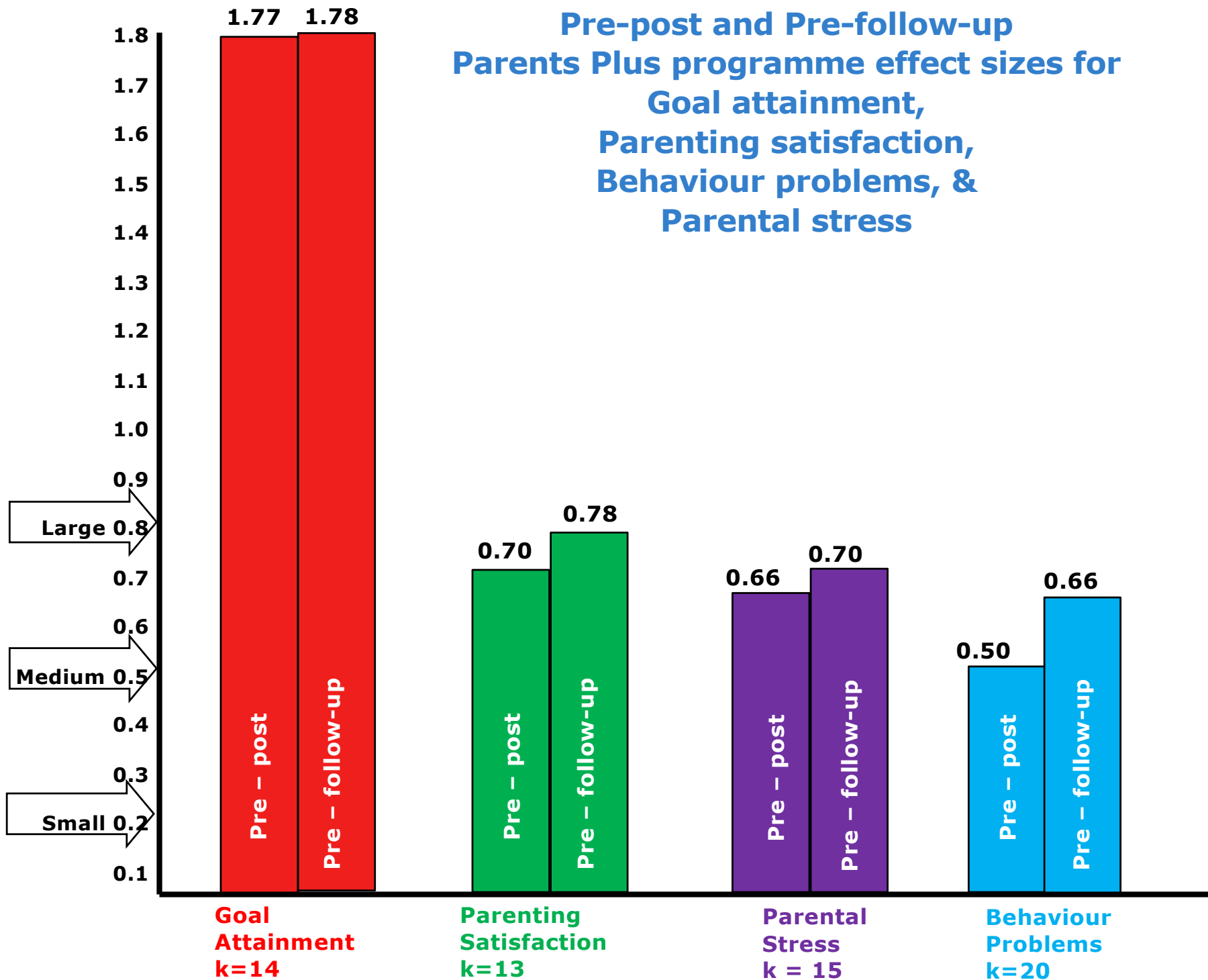


Overall were improvements shown at the end of PP programmes maintained at follow-up?

- The post-treatment effects of Parents Plus programmes were maintained at 2 to 10 months follow-up for
 - Goal attainment
 - Parenting satisfaction
 - Parental stress &
 - Child behaviour problems



**Pre-post and Pre-follow-up
Parents Plus programme effect sizes for
Goal attainment,
Parenting satisfaction,
Behaviour problems, &
Parental stress**

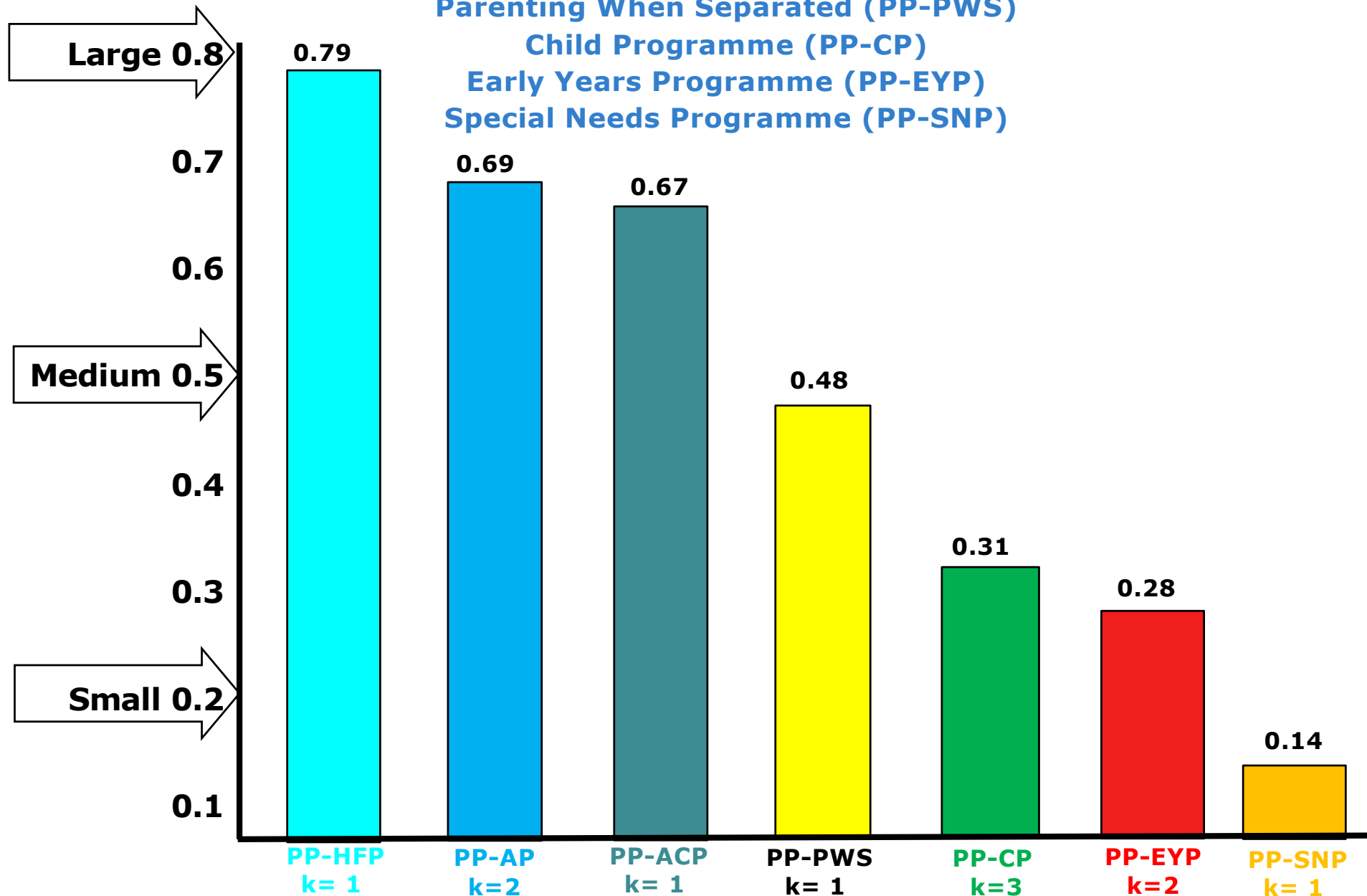


Which Parents Plus programmes had greatest effects on child behaviour problems?

- There were **LARGE** effects on child behaviour problems for
 - Parents Plus Healthy Families programme (PP-HFP)
 - Parents Plus Adolescent Programme (PP-AP)
 - Parents Plus ADHD Child Programme (PP-ACP)
- There were **SMALL** to **MEDIUM** or **SMALL** effects on child behaviour problems for
 - Parents Plus Parenting When Separated programme (PP-PWS)
 - Parents Plus Child Programme (PP-CP)
 - Parents Plus Early Years Programme (PP-EYP)
 - Parents Plus Special Needs Programme (PP-SNP)



Post-intervention PP group V Control group effect sizes for behaviour problems for
Healthy Families Programme (PP-HFP)
Adolescent programme (PP-AP)
ADHD Child programme (PP-ACP)
Parenting When Separated (PP-PWS)
Child Programme (PP-CP)
Early Years Programme (PP-EYP)
Special Needs Programme (PP-SNP)

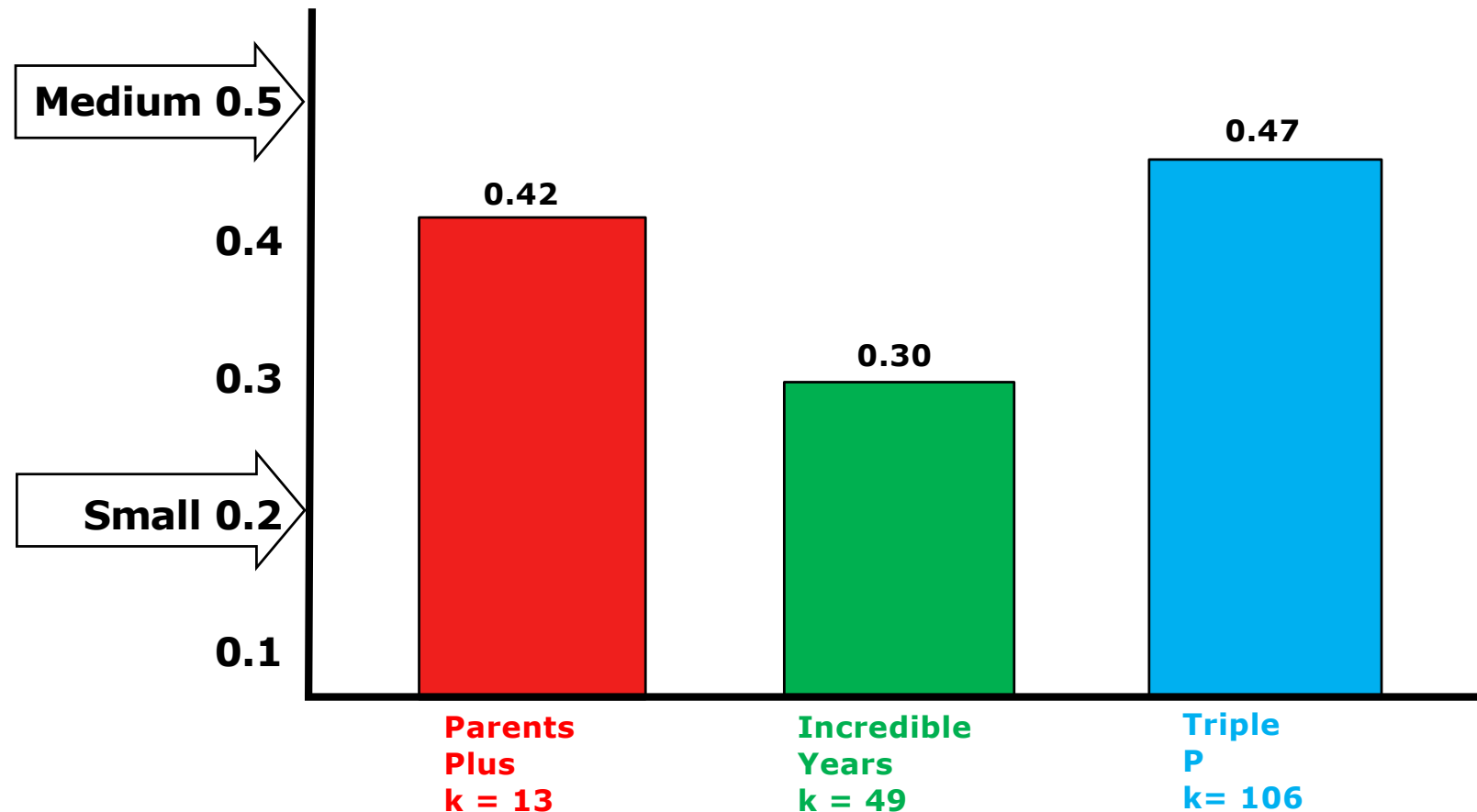


How did the results of the Parents Plus 2024 Meta-analysis compare with those of meta-analyses of other group parent training programmes used in Ireland?

- The 2024 Parents Plus meta-analysis results were compared with those of the most comprehensive meta-analyses of the Incredible years and Triple P programmes
- The effects of parent training on child behaviour problems was similar for
 - Parents Plus programme
 - Incredible years Programme
 - Triple P Programme
- The 3 programmes had small to medium effects on child behaviour problems

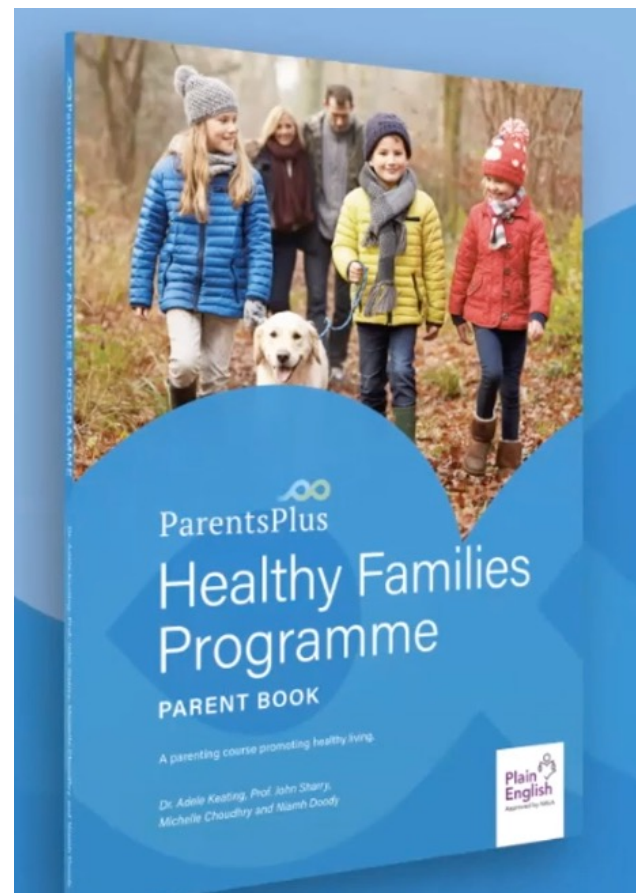


Between groups post-treatment effect sizes for Parent reported behaviour problems for the Parents Plus, Incredible Years and Triple P Programmes



- O'Dwyer, C., Twomey, C., Davis, B., Sharry, J., Brosnan, E., Carr, A. (2024). Parents Plus systemic, solution-focused parent training programs: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis. Unpublished manuscript under review. UCD School of Psychology
- Menting, A. T., Orobio de Castro, B., & Matthys, W. (2013). Effectiveness of the Incredible Years parent training to modify disruptive and prosocial child behaviour: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 33(8), 901–913. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2013.07.006>
- Sanders, M. R., Kirby, J. N., Tellegen, C. L., & Day, J. J. (2014). The Triple P-Positive Parenting Program: A systematic review and meta-analysis of a multi-level system of parenting support. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 34(4), 337–357. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2014.04.003>

2024 Evaluation of Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme



2024 evaluation of the Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme

Paper

O'Dwyer, C., Davis, B., O'Connor, M., Keating, A., Sharry, J., Doran, A., Murphy, E., Looney, K., Carr, A. (2024). A cluster randomised controlled trial of the effectiveness of a Parents Plus group-based parenting programme to promote healthy lifestyles among children and their families. Unpublished manuscript under review. UCD School of Psychology

Design

- In a cluster randomised controlled trial 18 clusters from 16 participating agencies were assigned to matched pairs and then randomised to the intervention or control group in 2021 & 2022
- There were 68 parents in the PP group and 70 in the control group.
- 91 parents completed the study; the drop-out rate was 34%.
- The PP programme involved 8 two-hour sessions (described in the next presentation by Drs Looney and Keating)



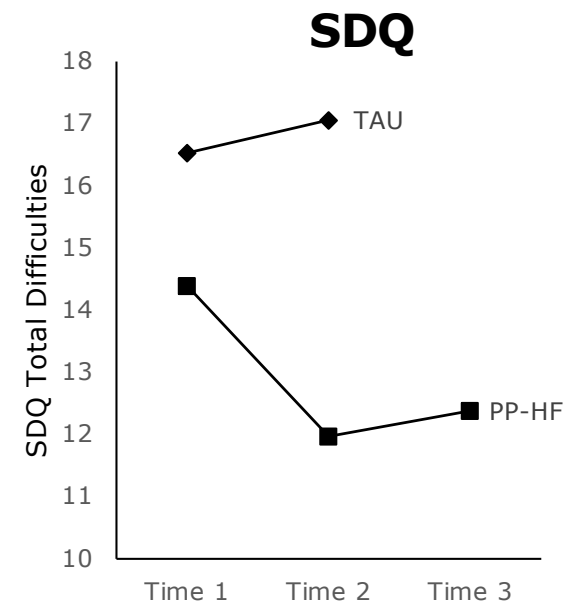
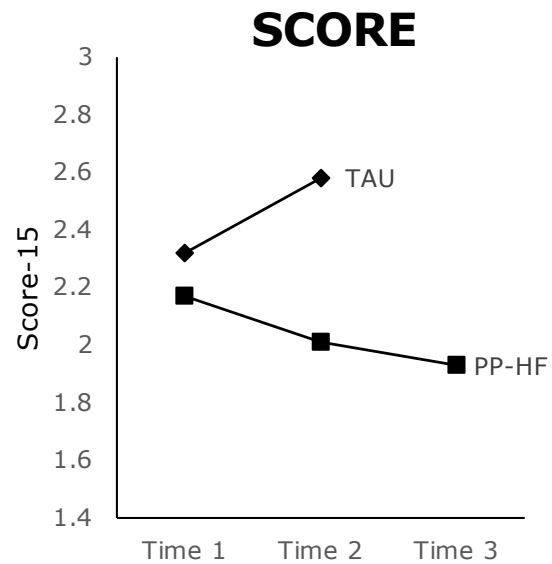
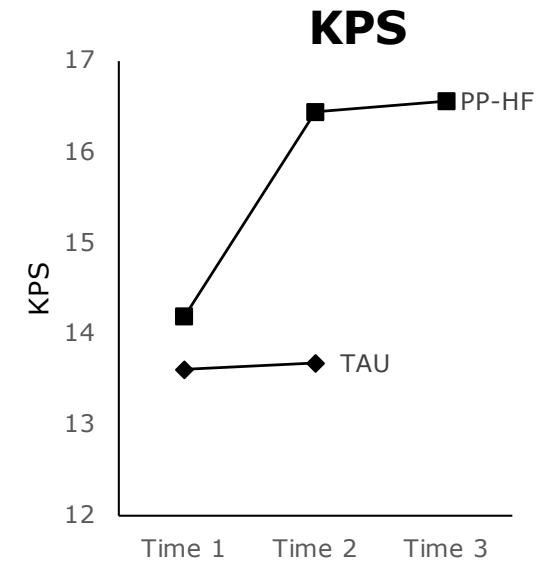
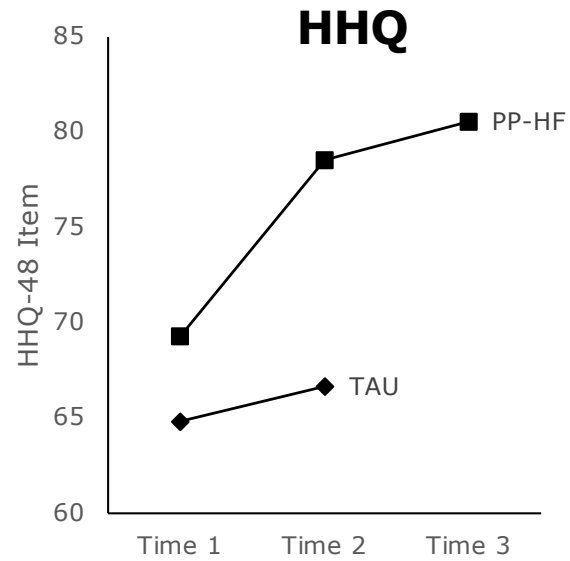
What were the results of RCT of the Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme?

Compared with the control group, the PP-HF group showed improvements in

- Healthy lifestyle (Healthy Habits Questionnaire – 48 (**HHQ**))
- Parenting satisfaction (Kansas Parent Satisfaction Scale (**KPS**))
- Family functioning (Systemic Clinical Outcome Routine Evaluation (**SCORE**))
- Child behaviour problems (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (**SDQ**))
- Improvements were maintained at 2 months follow-up



What were the results of RCT of the Parents Plus Healthy Families Programme?



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

- **Parents Plus programmes work**
- **They work for intact and separated families with children of all ages with**
 - **Behavioural problems**
 - **ADHD**
 - **Special needs**
 - **At risk of obesity**
- **The gains made on Parents Plus programmes are lasting**
- **Parents Plus programmes work as well as other evidence-based group 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 the HSE**
- **Large multi-site RCTs with long-term follow-up should be conducted to find out the long-term benefits of PP**
- **RCTs of Parent Plus programmes conducted by other research teams who are independent of the Parents Plus organization are required to strengthen the validity of the evidence base**
- **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



Professor Alan Carr is founding director of the UCD doctoral programme in clinical psychology. He has a couple and family therapy practice at the Clanwilliam Institute where he treats individuals couples and families with a range of psychological challenges across the lifespan. His research programme at UCD focuses on clinical psychology, family therapy, parent training, and positive psychology. He has produced over 25 books and 250 papers and presentations.

The team involved in the research reported in the presentation included the following members

Claire O'Dwyer, HSE, UCD

Brid Áine Davis, HSE, UCD

Conal Twomey, St Patricks Mental Health Service

Martin O'Connor, HSE, Parent's Plus

John Sharry, Parents Plus

Eileen Brosnan, Parents Plus

Adele Keating, Parent Plus, CHI Crumlin

Kathy Looney, UCD, CHI Crumlin

Alan Doran, HSE

Eddie Murphy, HSE

Cite this presentation as follows: Carr, A., O'Dwyer, C., Davis, B., O'Connor, M., Twomey, C., Sharry, J., Keating, A., Looney, K., Brosnan, E., Doran, A., & Murphy E. (2024). New Parents Plus evidence: 2024 meta-analysis and PP healthy families research. Keynote address to the Parents Plus Innovations in Practice Conference, LinkedIn Community Space, 1 Wilton Place, Dublin 2, 13 November 2024

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