

Triple P – What the experts say



- **“My colleagues and I regard Triple P as the world standard of best practice in the family intervention area.”**

Professor Kurt Hahlweg

Institut für Psychologie, Technische Universität
Braunschweig, Germany

- **“The program is a revolution by which ordinary families will have access to the best that the past 30 years of research on families can offer. The materials are outstanding, the program design is excellent and the science is superb. The program is the best in the world.”**

Professor Patrick McGrath

School of Psychology, Psychiatry and Biomedical Engineering
Dalhousie University, Canada

- **“Triple P is a great program. To my mind, it is the best in the world at addressing the needs of the whole community. The different components are carefully tailored to the needs of a range of parents. The content is based on best scientific practice, and is accessible and fun. Above all, it has been proven in numerous controlled trials to be highly effective.”**

Professor Stephen Scott CBE

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
National Specialist Team for Parenting and Antisocial Behaviour
Maudsley Hospital, London

- **“Triple P offers straight forward, sensible techniques that have proven to be very effective.”**

Professor Fiona Stanley AC

Telethon Institute for Child Health Research
2003 Australian of the Year

- **“The Triple P parenting program is one of the great advances in preventative psychiatry internationally and it has been pioneered and scaled up by one of our great innovators in mental health, Professor Matt Sanders... It targets one of the key risk/protective zones influencing mental health and wellbeing in children and young people and the trajectory of their lives.”**

Professor Patrick McGorry,

Executive Director, OYH Research Centre, University of Melbourne, Australia
2010 Australian of the Year

- **“Triple P was an excellent choice of parenting program for our national demonstration project due to its strong evidence base, ability to be quickly implemented, first class resources and training, plus support and backup.”**

Dr Linda de Caestecker

Director of Public Health, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
Scotland

Triple P - Some key research findings



Here is a selection of some of the key findings:

- **In the US, Triple P has been shown to cut rates of child abuse, reduce foster care placements and decrease hospitalizations from child abuse injuries.**
Prinz, R.J., Sanders, M.R., Shapiro, C.J., Whitaker, D.J., & Lutzker, J.R. (2009). Population-based prevention of child maltreatment: The U.S. Triple P system population trial. *Prevention Science*, 10(1), 1-12.
- **Triple P reduces problem behavior in children and improves parents' wellbeing and parenting skills.**
Nowak, C. & Heinrichs, N. (2008). A comprehensive meta-analysis of Triple P-Positive Parenting Program using hierarchical linear modelling: Effectiveness and moderating variables. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 11, 114-144.
- **In communities where Triple P is widely available, children have fewer behavioral and emotional problems.**
Sanders, M.R., Ralph, A., Sofronoff, K., Gardiner, P., Thompson, R., Dwyer, S., & Bidwell, K. (2008). Every Family: A population approach to reducing behavioral and emotional problems in children making the transition to school. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 29, 197-222.
- **Parents using Triple P say they are less stressed, less depressed and don't use harsh discipline.**
Sanders, M.R., Ralph, A., Sofronoff, K., Gardiner, P., Thompson, R., Dwyer, S., & Bidwell, K. (2008). Every Family: A population approach to reducing behavioral and emotional problems in children making the transition to school. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 29, 197-222.
- **Parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders using Stepping Stones Triple P report they are more satisfied as parents, their children's behavior has improved and their relationship with their partner is better.**
Whittingham, K., Sofronoff, K., Sheffield, J. & Sanders, M.R. (2008). Stepping Stones Triple P: An RCT of a parenting program with parents of a child diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*. 37(4), 469-480
- **Parents with an intellectual disability using a modified version of Group Triple P report an improvement in their parenting practices and their child's behavior, and less distress. Parents also report high satisfaction with the information and support they received.**
Glazemakers, I. & Deboutte, D. (2012). Modifying the 'Positive Parenting Program' for parents with intellectual disabilities. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2788.2012.01566.x
- **UK parents who watched a reality television series (*Driving Mum and Dad Mad*) which showed other parents using Triple P, feel more confident in their parenting, less angry and less depressed than before watching the series. They also say their children's behavior improved as a result.**
Calam, R., Sanders, M.R., Miller, C., Sadhnani, V., & Carmont, S. (2008). Can technology and the media help reduce dysfunctional parenting and increase engagement with preventative parenting interventions? *Child Maltreatment*, 13(4), 347-361.



About Triple P – Positive Parenting Program

The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program® is one of the world’s most effective parenting programs. It is one of the few based on evidence from ongoing scientific research. Developed by clinical psychologist Professor Matt Sanders and his colleagues at Australia’s University of Queensland, Triple P has been tested with thousands of families through more than four decades of ongoing research. More than 980 trials, studies and published papers, including more than 335 evaluation papers, 172 of which are randomized controlled trials, have shown it works across cultures, socioeconomic groups and in many different family structures.

Triple P is designed to give parents the skills they need to raise confident, healthy children and teenagers and to build stronger family relationships. Triple P doesn’t tell people how to parent. Rather, it gives parents simple and practical strategies they can adapt to suit their own values, beliefs and needs. The benefits can be dramatic and long-lasting.

“Children who grow up with positive parenting are more likely to develop the skills they need to do well at school, build friendships, and feel good about themselves,” says Professor Sanders.

“They are also much less likely to develop behavioral or emotional problems when they get older. Similarly, parents who use positive parenting skills feel more confident and competent about managing day-to-day family life. They are also less stressed, less depressed and have less conflict with their partners over parenting issues.”

Triple P is distinctive in that it is not a “one-size-fits-all” course. Rather, it is a system that offers increasing levels of support to meet parents’ different needs. Parents can choose anything from one-off public seminars or self-help options to more intensive group courses or individual counseling sessions. Triple P is now also available online, adding further flexibility and convenience for parents.

“Some parents may just need a light-touch of Triple P, a few ideas to help them set up a better bedtime routine or manage occasional disobedience,” says Professor Sanders. “But others may be in crisis and need greater support. So Triple P is based on the idea that we give parents just the right amount of help they need – enough, but not too much.” This Triple P approach guards against over-servicing and over-spending, which is good for parents and good for budget-conscious service managers.

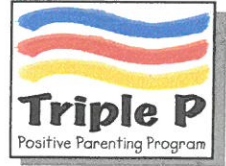
Triple P has also been designed as a population-based health approach to parenting – typically implemented by government bodies or NGOs (non-government organizations) across regions or countries with the aim of reaching as many people as possible. It is often delivered through health, families or education departments.

Practitioners come from a range of professions and include doctors, nurses, psychologists, counselors, teachers, teacher’s aides, police officers, clergy, social workers, health visitors, public health and school nurses, midwives and health support workers. The concept, once again, is to provide easy access, support, and choice for parents.

“Parenting is the most difficult job any of us will ever do in our lives, but it’s also the one we’re least prepared for,” says Professor Sanders. “By making parenting information more widely available we’re increasing the likelihood that parents will accept or seek out help. Offering Triple P is like immunizing the community. You prepare parents, make families healthier, and prevent problems before they happen.”



Top ten tips for parents



1. When your child wants to show you something, stop what you are doing and pay attention. It's important to spend frequent, small amounts of time with your child doing things that you both enjoy.

2. Give your child lots of physical affection. Children often like hugs, cuddles, and holding hands.

3. Talk to your child about things he/she is interested in and talk about your day too.

4. Give your child lots of descriptive praise when they do something that you would like to see more of, e.g., "Thank you for doing what I asked straight away."

5. Children are more likely to misbehave when they are bored so provide lots of indoor and outdoor activities for your child, e.g., building blocks, colouring, cardboard boxes, dress ups, play houses, etc.

6. Teach your child new skills by first showing the skill yourself, then giving your child opportunities to learn the new skill. For example, speak politely to each other in the home.

Then, prompt your child to speak politely (e.g., say "please" or "thank you") and praise your child for their efforts.

7. Set clear limits on your child's behavior. Sit down and have a family discussion on the rules in the home. Let your child know what the consequences will be if they break the rules.

8. If your child misbehaves, stay calm and give them a clear instruction to stop misbehaving and tell them what you would like them to do instead (e.g., "Stop fighting; play nicely with each other.") Praise your child if they stop. If they do not stop, follow through with an appropriate consequence.

9. Have realistic expectations. All children misbehave at times and it is inevitable that you will have some discipline hassles. Trying to be the perfect parent can set you up for frustration and disappointment.

10. Look after yourself. It is difficult to be a calm, relaxed parent if you are stressed, anxious, or depressed. Try to find time every week to let yourself unwind or do something that you enjoy.

More information: www.triplep-parenting.net



Getting Results

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Thank you!

Getting Results

By Professor Matt Sanders

It's natural to want your child to do well at school and some parents use a reward such as money to encourage their children to get better grades. I've often heard of parents offering their child money for every "A" on their end-of-term report card.

One of the problems with giving children financial incentives for good end-of-term grades is that the reward comes too long after the effort is made.

Rather than waiting till the end of term, it's much more effective to set up a system of rewards which are brief and frequent and which encourage positive daily habits. These daily habits then build towards an eventual outcome, such as a good homework and study routine.

However, you can encourage children to build good study and homework habits without having to resort to offering money.

Why not try a reward such as spending time with your child doing an activity they really like? Or you could offer a special treat you know they'll enjoy. The object is to encourage good routines by giving extra attention and praise or small frequent rewards when they are doing the right thing.

When kids are struggling that little bit of extra attention can encourage them into new patterns of behaviour – and they may end up getting that A after all!

Professor Matt Sanders is founder of the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program®. To find out more about Triple P in Alberta go to www.triplep-parenting.net.



Kids as consumers

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Kids as consumers

By Professor Matt Sanders

It could be anything from breakfast cereal at the supermarket to an expensive new video game. Chances are though, your child has a very clear idea of what he or she wants you to buy.

It's hardly surprising when you consider children watching two hours of television a day will be bombarded with around 10,000 advertising messages every year.

So, with children being groomed to consume from a very young age, some parents may feel powerless when the pestering starts. But there are ways to help children express their wants – which is natural and not necessarily negative – yet prepare them for the disappointment of not always getting everything they want.

First, you should help your child understand why you will or won't buy something. Rather than telling your son he can't have something, "because I say so", you could explain why the product isn't suitable. Is it offensive or too expensive? Perhaps the child can have the item when they reach a certain age. Explain once and don't let your child interrogate you.

You can also help your children become better informed consumers by teaching them the value of money. Give them a set amount of pocket money to spend as they like. Even six year olds soon learn they can't buy anything once the piggy bank is empty.

And finally, remember you're a role model. Think about what you say and do in front of your kids. If you constantly discuss other people's worth or success in terms of how much they earn, how much they have or what they've bought, your child is going to accept those values as important.

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Lying

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Lying

By Professor Matt Sanders

Preschoolers sometimes mix up reality and fantasy, but we expect that by primary school, children will know the difference between the two.

To discourage lying, parents need to explain to their child why lying is wrong and the consequences of lying.

For example, you could briefly and calmly tell your child: "Tania, I feel disappointed when you lie. It makes it hard to believe anything you say. If you keep telling lies you will find that nobody will trust you."

Give your child opportunities to be honest and praise them for telling the truth. Your positive response will encourage them to repeat their honesty in future. Even when a child admits to telling a lie, praise them first for their honesty, before proceeding with the disciplinary consequences.

If your child is finding it hard not to tell lies, you might need to set up a written contract signed by you and your child. This contract should state what you expect your child to do and the rewards and consequences that will follow. If they have lied, the consequences for that behaviour are clearly listed in the contract.

As your child learns to not lie, you will no longer need a written contract as you and your child will have established a more permanent contract of trust.

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Making Friends

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Making Friends

By Professor Matt Sanders

For many children, starting school is an exciting time – new classes, new faces and hopefully, new friends to be made.

Having good friends is important to a child's self-esteem but, unfortunately, children do not always know how to look after friends. You can lend a hand by helping your child develop good social skills. Talk to your child about being a good friend and encourage your child to practise skills such as:

- Looking at and listening when someone is speaking to them, such as a friend telling them a story
- Taking turns in games and activities
- Asking what others might like to do rather than assuming that other children will always want to follow
- Thinking about others people's feelings. "I wonder how Tom is feeling now. How do you think you would feel if that happened to you?"
- Helping others
- Being friendly and welcoming to a new child in class.

To help your child make friends, and so your child can practise being a good "host", you may like to invite another child to your home for a play. Be prepared to contact the parents to organize this if your child is too shy to ask.

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Homework Habits

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Homework Habits

By Professor Matt Sanders

Homework is an accepted part of every child's schooling. However, it doesn't have to become a family battle. The key is for parents and children to be prepared.

Your child should have a set, regular time for homework that fits in around your schedule and your child's other commitments such as sport or music lessons.

Homework should come at a time after your child has had a chance to relax after arriving home and before they are allowed to play or watch television.

Relaxing immediately after school is as important for children as it is for adults who want to wind down after coming home from work. Give your child an afternoon snack and use that time to find out what their homework tasks are, whether they need any special materials for projects, and when it needs to be ready.

While children don't have to have absolute quiet when working, they should have a homework area that has clear table space, is well lit, and is free from obvious distractions (like the television).

If your child wants your opinion on how good their homework is don't feel that you have to make sure the work is perfect before they hand it in. They may feel discouraged if you point out all the spelling and punctuation mistakes. Instead, say something positive about the work and, if you must make corrections, just choose one or two mistakes.

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Getting Out the Door on Time

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Getting Out the Door on Time

By Professor Matt Sanders

For many families the morning rush hour is the most stressful part of the day. So how can you and the kids get out the door on time?

The key is organization.

Get yourself ready first, before your child. To avoid last minute rushing prepare some things the night before and go to bed at a reasonable hour so you'll wake early enough.

I also recommend against having the television on in the morning. Better to make sure the children are dressed before breakfast. Perhaps when they are fully ready you can turn the television on then.

Let your child know ahead of time that you'll be going out and explain exactly what the day's activities will be and their time requirements.

Younger children can learn the importance of organization by doing things for themselves. Teaching children to get dressed by themselves is a chance to practice independent skills and it also saves you time.

You may like to try the "beat the clock" game. Your child's goal is to be ready before the alarm clock sounds off. If your child wins, he earns a small treat or reward, such as a favourite snack in his lunch box.

Tell your child exactly what tasks he must do to be ready to leave and thus win the reward. Make sure you set the timer for a reasonable amount of time and avoid giving repeated instructions or nagging your child to hurry up.

Often it will only take a two-week period of beating the clock before the rewards and the clock are phased out. Remember to always praise your child's achievements in learning better organization.



Telling Kids What to Do

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Telling Kids What to Do

By Professor Matt Sanders

When children refuse to cooperate, it may be related to the way instructions are given. Here are some common traps.

Too many. The more instructions you give, the more opportunities to disobey.

Too few. Children may sometimes seem disobedient because no one has taken the time to give them clear information on what is expected.

Too vague. Shouting your son's name, then pausing and frowning because he is jumping on the couch might not be of much help if he has also just teased his sister. State clearly what behaviours you find unacceptable.

Asking, not telling: Don't phrase an instruction as a question. If you ask: "Would you like to go to bed now?" be prepared for them to say: "No".

Poorly timed. Asking your child to do something while they are busy watching their favorite television show will probably result in them ignoring the instruction.

Shouting from a distance. Instructions shouted from one room to another are often ignored simply because parents are not there to back up the instruction.

Emotionally laden. Children react to the emotional tone of what parents say to them. Calling children "stupid" or an "idiot" shows disapproval of the child rather than the child's behaviour. Although it can be difficult, parents should work to control expressions of anger when giving children instructions.

If you want your child to stop doing something, remember to tell them what to do instead. Give your child time to cooperate and praise them when they do so – or carry out a logical consequence if they refuse.



Dealing with Disappointments

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Dealing with Disappointments

By Professor Matt Sanders

Despite what certain sport shoe commercials might have you believe, life isn't always about winning.

It is equally important for the development of healthy self-esteem that children learn how to deal with disappointment.

As a reaction to not getting what they want, such as being chosen for a team, children may sometimes put themselves down, saying things like: "I'm dumb" or "you hate me" or "I'm just stupid". If this happens, try to avoid being too sympathetic. Instead encourage your child to try again after the set-back and to enjoy the activity or game even if they aren't the winner.

Rather than simply reassuring your child that everything will be OK, you can help your child develop their own sense of worth by letting them know that you understand their feelings of disappointment and that you are there to help them work out a reasonable way of dealing with that disappointment.

Remember too, when you're helping your child with an activity or with homework concentrate on effort not results. Praising your child for trying and making an improvement will motivate them to continue trying at a difficult task.

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Single Parenting

By Professor Matt Sanders

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Single Parenting

By Professor Matt Sanders

Single parents often say they feel it's more difficult to discipline a child without a partner's support. But it's very important to approach discipline in exactly the same way as if you were parenting with someone else.

It's vital to have a game plan and be consistent. That means setting house rules that don't fluctuate.

It may surprise some people to know that children like boundaries. Kids very easily become comfortable with the familiarity of a routine at bedtime, at mealtimes or when it's time to get out of the house in the morning. Positive and predictable routines mean discipline will become much easier. Life won't have to be full of big battles over little issues!

Another worry many single parents express is the lack of a significant male or female influence in the household. Mothers may feel this more keenly when they're raising a son alone, as many fathers do when they're raising a daughter.

It's always important to encourage your child to have role models and mentors. Role models can show children how to behave, and what is the appropriate thing to do.

So, single parents may want to look for opportunities for their children to get to know other men or women in the child's life. It could be a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, a trusted family friend or a sports coach. Having someone who will serve a mentoring role throughout the child's life can be a great example to – and support for – the child.

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Parent Traps

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Parent Traps

By Professor Matt Sanders

It's tough being a parent but it's easy to fall into one of the common parenting traps.

The criticism trap is when there are frequent power struggles with your child. The situations escalate from criticizing to threatening and yelling. This type of discipline often backfires. The parent's anger makes the child and parent resentful and hostile. If these kinds of battles take place frequently, it's time to try a new way of handling the situation.

The "leave them alone" trap involves the parent simply not acknowledging their child when they are behaving well. If good behaviour is taken for granted it may be replaced with the misbehaviour that receives more attention. A basic principle of positive parenting is to praise behaviours you would like to see more often.

The "for the sake of the children" trap occurs when parents in unhappy marriages stick doggedly to the same marriage routines, for the sake of the children, rather than addressing the problems constructively.

The perfect parent trap. There is no such thing as a perfect parent and trying to be one will only lead to disappointment, resentment, guilt, and feelings of inadequacy.

The martyr trap is one where parents become so over-involved in the task of parenting they neglect their own needs. The parents' relationship suffers and may end in feelings of dissatisfaction and resentment. Quality parenting can only happen when adults have their own lives in balance.

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