

Independent review shows program helps children with disabilities

9 April 2015



Independent research has shown a UQ parenting program can help children with behavioural issues.

Parents of children with developmental disabilities can take heart from new research which shows that a University of Queensland program can reduce serious emotional and behavioural problems.

A study by US researchers published in the journal *Research in Developmental Disabilities* has found that parenting programs, particularly [UQ's Stepping Stones Triple P program](#), were likely to reduce aggression, noncompliance and defiance in children with developmental disabilities, such as autism and learning disabilities.

UQ's Parenting and Family Support Centre director and Triple P – Positive Parenting Program founder Professor Matt Sanders said the study's findings were important as children with developmental disabilities were much more likely than typically developing children to develop aggressive or disruptive behaviour.

"It's important that [parents](#) of children with disabilities who are concerned about their behaviour seek help now to prevent more serious

problems occurring later in life," Professor Sanders said.

"Cases of aggression and self-injury, such as head banging, in children with developmental disabilities can get worse with age.

"What many parents may not realise is that they could actually be reinforcing the behaviour they are seeking to reduce, because they are inadvertently rewarding that behaviour."

Professor Sanders said the study also cited evidence which showed that mothers of children with [developmental disabilities](#) were more likely to display symptoms of depression and anxiety than parents of typically developing children.

"We know that parent stress can actually exacerbate disruptive behaviours in children with disabilities," he said.

"There's a diversity of opinions about how best to deal with behaviour problems in [children with disabilities](#) so it's important parents feel confident that the type of help they are seeking has been shown to work."

"This study is important verification of the work conducted by our researchers in the development of Stepping Stones Triple P."

Stepping Stones Triple P is available free to parents of [children](#) with disabilities in Queensland and Victoria and will soon be available in New South Wales.

More information: More information for parents is available on the Stepping Stones Triple P website: www.triplep-steppingstones.net

"Effects of parent management training programs on disruptive behavior for children with a developmental disability: A meta-analysis,"

Research in Developmental Disabilities, Volume 38,
March 2015, Pages 272-287, ISSN 0891-4222,
[dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2014.12.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2014.12.004)

Provided by University of Queensland

APA citation: Independent review shows program helps children with disabilities (2015, April 9) retrieved 24 September 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-04-independent-children-disabilities.html>

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