

EVALUATION STUDY ON POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAMME (TRIPLE P)

Background

Parenting can be challenging when children are in their transition years as tweens and early teens. To better support parents, the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) piloted the evidence-based Positive Parenting Programme (Triple P) in 2014 for parents of Primary 3 and 4, and Secondary 1 and 2 cohorts in 20 schools and subsequently expanded to 50 schools in 2015.

Triple P is a multi-level, prevention-oriented parenting and family support programme developed at the University of Queensland in Australia. Based on extensive empirical research that identifies risk factors and strengthens protective factors, Triple P equips parents with parenting techniques that promote children's psychological, social and emotional competence. For our pilot, parents were offered an appropriate Triple P programme based on their level of needs. Triple P Level 2 is best suited for parents who just need a "light touch" and some ideas on what to do to address a tricky parenting situation. Triple P Level 3 is for parents who are facing more challenging parenting issues on a regular basis and require one-to-one help or coaching.

MSF conducted an evaluation study to assess the impact of Triple P programmes on parenting competence, parenting stress and child difficult behaviour. The positive findings add on to existing international evidence for the effectiveness of Triple P in improving parenting and child outcomes.

Study Methodology

Parents were invited to fill up the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). They were recommended a suitable Triple P programme based on the SDQ score. Parents who were committed to complete the programme were invited to participate in the study. There was a total of 535 study participants.

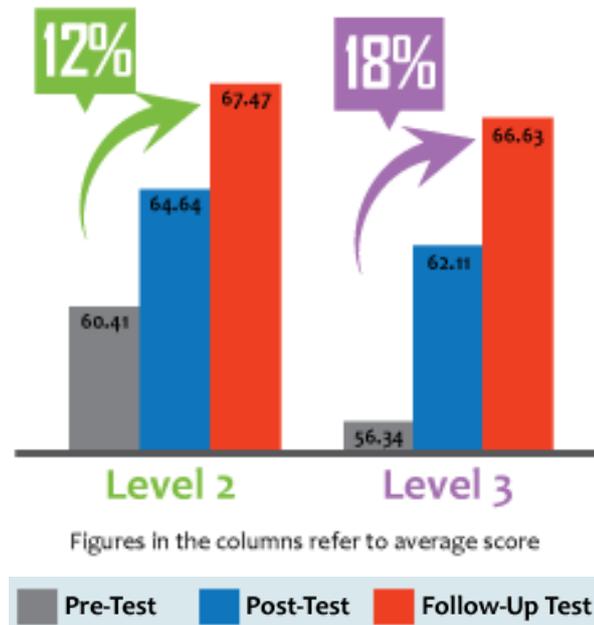
The following four psychometric assessments were completed by study participants at three different time-points: Pre-Test (Before attending programme), Post-Test (After attending programme) and Follow-Up (3 months after programme completion).

- *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)* is a 25-item measure for parents to describe their children's behaviour (Goodman, 1997; Goodman, Meltzer & Baily, 1998). It comprises five scales (emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, pro-social behaviour) and is assessed on a 3-point scale (Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True). A high SDQ Total Score would suggest a high level of child behavioural issues.
- *Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS-21)* is a self-report questionnaire of 21-items rated on a 4-point scale of severity/frequency depending on the extent to which study participants have experienced each state over the past week. Each of the three scales consists of statements that describe patterns of behaviours descriptive of the three negative emotional states of Depression, Anxiety and Stress. A high score would suggest a high level of negative emotional states.
- *Parenting Sense of Competence (PSOC)* questionnaire (Johnston & Mash, 1989) is a 16-item scale that measures parental satisfaction (the extent to which parents are satisfied with their role as a parent) and parental self-efficacy (the extent to which parents perceive they are able to manage the role of being a parent). A high score would suggest a high sense of parenting competence.
- *Parenting Stress Index (PSI-SF)* assesses parenting stress that stems from 3 main sources (Abidin, 1995). They include parent characteristics (Competence, Health, Depression, and Spouse/Parenting Partner Relationship), child characteristics (Distractibility/Hyperactivity, Adaptability, and Demandingness) and maladaptive parent-child interaction. The index assesses the overall level of parenting stress that an individual is experiencing. A high score would suggest a high level of parenting stress.

Key Findings

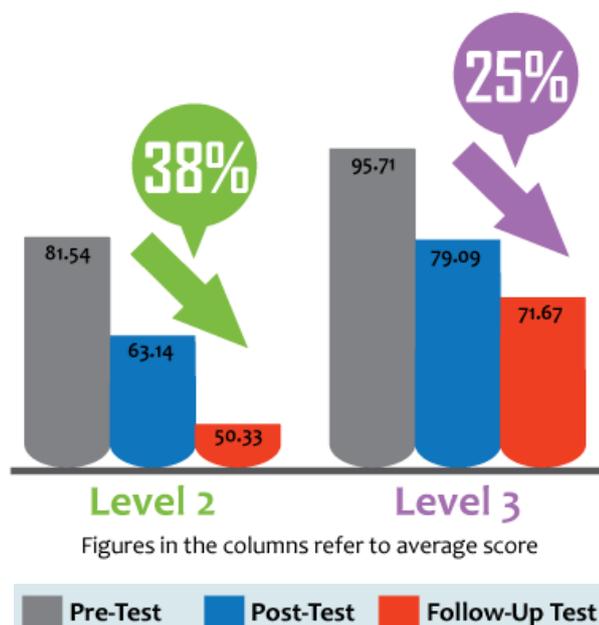
Parents who completed the programmes reported greater parenting competence, lower parenting stress, improved emotional states and reduced behavioural problems in children. The findings are consistent with international literature review on the positive effects of Triple P on parenting and child outcomes, and show that Triple P works in the Singapore context.

Level of Parenting Competence



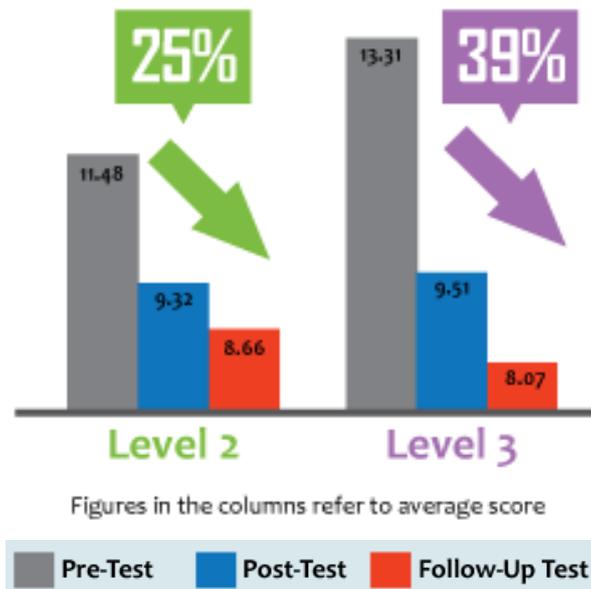
- **Parents were more competent in their parenting** – On average, parents reported an improvement of 12% and 18% in parenting competence for Levels 2 and 3 respectively. For Level 2, the parenting competence mean score increased from 60.41 pre-programme to 67.47 during the follow-up test (3 months after programme completion). For Level 3, the mean score increased from 56.34 pre-programme to 66.63 during the follow-up.

Level of Parenting Stress



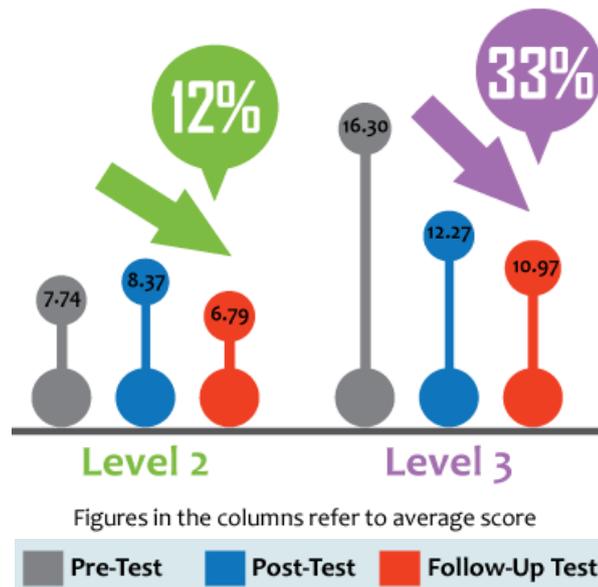
- **Parents experienced lower parenting stress** – There is a reduction of 38% and 25% in stress level for Levels 2 and 3 respectively. For Level 2, the parenting stress mean score dropped from 81.54 pre-programme to 50.33 during the follow-up. For Level 3, the mean score dropped from 95.71 pre-programme to 71.67 during the follow-up.

Level of Negative Emotional States



- **Parents experienced improved emotional states** – The level of negative emotional states decreased 25% and 39% for Levels 2 and 3 respectively. For Level 2, the negative emotional states mean score dropped from 11.48 pre-programme to 8.66 during the follow-up. For Level 3, the mean score dropped from 13.31 pre-programme to 8.07 during the follow-up.

Level of Child Difficult Behaviour



- **The child exhibited less behavioural problems** – Parents also reported a reduction of 12% and 33% in the level of child's difficult behaviour for Levels 2 and 3 respectively. For Level 2, the mean score dropped from 7.74 pre-programme to 6.79 during the follow-up. For Level 3, the mean score dropped from 16.30 pre-programme to 10.97 during the follow-up.

These findings provide evidence on the effectiveness of Triple P in improving outcomes for our local families. MSF has since **scaled up the programme to 118 schools in 2016, and plans to increase the outreach to 175 schools by 2018.**