Level 4 Group Triple P

Reviews: Foundations for Life, July 2016, November 2019

Level 4 Group Triple P is a targeted-indicated intervention for parents with a child between 0 and 12 years old who have concerns about their child’s behaviour.

Groups of up to 12 parents attend sessions over eight weeks delivered by a single trained and supervised clinical psychologist. These sessions include five two-hour group meetings, as well as three individual telephone consultations lasting 15 to 30 minutes.

Parents learn 17 different strategies for improving their children’s competencies and discouraging unwanted child behaviour. Role play, homework exercises and discussions involving video-taped examples of effective parenting strategies are used to help parents learn methods for dealing with unwanted child behaviour and supporting their child’s emotional needs.
EIF Programme Assessment

Level 4 Group Triple P has evidence of a short-term positive impact on child outcomes from at least one rigorous evaluation.

What does the evidence rating mean?

Level 3 indicates evidence of efficacy. This means the programme can be described as evidence-based: it has evidence from at least one rigorously conducted RCT or QED demonstrating a statistically significant positive impact on at least one child outcome.

This programme does not receive a rating of 4 as it has not yet replicated its results in another rigorously conducted study, where at least one study indicates long-term impacts, and at least one uses measures independent of study participants.

What does the plus mean?

The plus rating indicates that this programme has evidence from at least one level 3 study, along with evidence from other studies rated 2 or better.

Whilst this Guidebook page describes Level 4 Group Triple P when implemented on a targeted basis (with children where there are concerns about their behaviour), it is also possible to deliver this programme on a universal basis. Evaluations investigating the impact of the programme when delivered universally have identified both positive and more equivocal findings. For instance, an RCT assessing the universal programme implemented in preschools in Germany (Heinrichs et al., 2017) provides preliminary evidence of positive impact on child behaviour. Another implementation conducted in primary schools in Switzerland (Bodenmann et al., 2008) also provides preliminary evidence of positive impact on child behaviour, yet, another analysis of this trial (Eisner et al., 2012) suggests that for those completing the full programme (i.e. attending all 5 sessions) there was no effect.

Cost rating

A rating of 1 indicates that a programme has a low cost to set up and deliver, compared with other interventions reviewed by EIF. This is equivalent to an estimated unit cost of less than £100.
Child outcomes

According to the best available evidence for this programme's impact, it can achieve the following positive outcomes for children:

**Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour**

Improved behaviour - based on study 1, study 2

*This programme also has evidence of supporting positive outcomes for couples, parents or families that may be relevant to a commissioning decision. Please see the ‘About the evidence’ section for more detail.*
Key programme characteristics

Who is it for?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to the following age-groups:

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Preschool
- Primary school

How is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to implementation through these delivery models:

- Group

Where is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation in these settings:

- Children’s centre or early-years setting
- Out-patient health setting

The programme may also be delivered in these settings:

- Primary school
- Community centre
How is it targeted?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation as:

- Targeted indicated

Where has it been implemented?

- Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Wales

UK provision

This programme has been implemented in the UK.

UK evaluation

This programme’s best evidence does not include evaluation conducted in the UK.
About the programme

What happens during delivery?

How is it delivered?

- Level 4 Group Triple P is delivered by a Triple P practitioner in five sessions of approximately two hours’ duration to groups of up to 12 families. An additional three sessions (between 15 and 30 minutes each) are delivered to individual families via telephone.

What happens during the intervention?

- Parents learn 17 different strategies for improving their children’s competencies and discouraging unwanted child behaviour.
- Learning is supported through role play exercises, homework exercises and group discussions involving video-taped examples of effective parenting strategies.

What are the implementation requirements?

Who can deliver it?

- The practitioner who delivers this programme is a Triple P practitioner, who can come from a range of professions (eg family support worker) with recommended minimum QCF-4/5 level qualifications.

What are the training requirements?

The practitioner has three days of programme training. This includes one day of pre-accreditation, and a half-day accreditation workshop (accreditation workshops are held over two days; practitioners attend in groups of five). Booster training of practitioners is not required.
How are the practitioners supervised?

- It is recommended that practitioners are supervised by one host-agency supervisor with QCF-7/8 level qualifications, with no required programme training.

What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?

- Accreditation process
- Training manual
- Supervision
- Fidelity monitoring

Is there a licensing requirement?

There is no licence required to run this programme.

How does it work? (Theory of Change)

How does it work?

- Triple P is based on the idea that parents often unintentionally perpetuate unwanted child behaviour through ineffective parenting strategies.
- Triple P helps parents replace ineffective parenting strategies with effective methods for encouraging positive child behaviour.
- In the short term, parents learn more effective strategies for managing their child’s behaviour and the child’s behaviour improves.
- In the longer term, children should have greater self-regulatory skills and self-confidence and do better in school.
- It is also expected that children will be less likely to have behavioural problems and/or engage in antisocial behaviour.

Intended outcomes

Supporting children’s mental health and wellbeing Preventing child maltreatment Enhancing school achievement & employment Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour
Contact details

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Triple P corporate website
Commissioning Toolkit Programme Overview
Investing In Children Programme Overview (all levels)
Investing In Children Programme Overview (Level 4, Group)
Investing In Children Programme Overview (Level 4, Individual)
Triple P training info
Triple P cost-effectiveness info
About the evidence

Level 4 Group Triple P’s most robust evidence comes from two RCTs conducted in China.

Study 1

Citation: Leung et al. (2003) | Design: RCT

Country: China

Sample: 91 middle-class families living in Hong Kong

Child outcomes:
Improved behaviour

Other outcomes:
Improved parenting
Increased self-efficacy
Improved relationship satisfaction


Available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14979223

Study 2

Citation: Chung et al. (2015) | Design: RCT

Country: China

Sample: 91 middle-class families living in Hong Kong
Child outcomes:
Improved behaviour

Other outcomes:
None measured


Available at
Other studies

The following studies were identified for this programme but did not count towards the programme's overall evidence rating. A programme receives the same rating as its most robust study or studies.


The EIF Guidebook provides information about early intervention programmes that have at least preliminary evidence of achieving positive outcomes for children. It provides information based on EIF’s assessment of the strength of evidence for a programme’s effectiveness, and on detail about programmes shared with us by those who design, run and deliver them.

The Guidebook serves an important starting point for commissioners to find out more about effective early interventions, and for programme providers to find out more about what good evidence of impact looks like and how it can be captured. As just one of our key resources for commissioners and practitioners, the Guidebook is an essential part of EIF’s work to support the development of and investment in effective early intervention programmes.

Our assessment of the evidence for a programme’s effectiveness can inform and support certain parts of a commissioning decision, but it is not a substitute for professional judgment. Evidence about what has worked in the past offers no guarantee that an approach will work in all circumstances. Crucially, the Guidebook is not a market comparison website: ratings and other information should not be interpreted as a specific recommendation, kite mark or endorsement for any programme.

How to read the Guidebook

EIF evidence standards

About the EIF Guidebook
The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) is an independent charity and a member of the What Works network. We support the use of effective early intervention for children, young people and their families: identifying signals of risk, and responding with effective interventions to improve outcomes, reduce hardship and save the public money in the long term.

We work by generating evidence and knowledge of what works in our field, putting this information in the hands of commissioners, practitioners and policymakers, and supporting the adoption of the evidence in local areas and relevant sectors.
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