

**Last reviewed:** September 2017

**Intervention website:** [www.parentsplus.ie](http://www.parentsplus.ie)

# GUIDEBOOK INTERVENTION INFORMATION SHEET

## Parents Plus Children’s Programme

Please note that in the ‘Intervention Summary’ table below ‘child age’, ‘level of need’, and ‘race and ethnicities information is **as evaluated in studies**. Information in other fields describes the intervention as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.

<b>Intervention summary</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Parents Plus Children’s Programme (PPCP) is for parents with concerns about the behaviour of a child between 6 and 11 years old. It is delivered by two practitioners to parents over nine sessions. Some sessions are offered to parents individually and some are delivered to groups of up to 15 parents. During each session, parents learn strategies for encouraging positive child behaviour and implementing age-appropriate discipline.
<b>Evidence rating</b>	2+
<b>Cost rating</b>	2
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved behaviour</li> <li>- Reduced hyperactivity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Child age</b> (population characteristic)	6 to 11 years old
<b>Level of need</b> (population characteristic)	Targeted Indicated

## Foundations Guidebook – Intervention information sheet

Visit the Foundations Guidebook | [www.foundations.org.uk/guidebook](http://www.foundations.org.uk/guidebook)

Intervention summary	
<b>Race and ethnicities</b> (population characteristic)	Not reported
<b>Type</b> (model characteristic)	Group
<b>Setting</b> (model characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Out-patient health setting</li><li>• Primary school.</li></ul>
<b>Workforce</b> (model characteristic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Psychologists</li><li>• Mental health professionals.</li></ul>
<b>UK available?</b>	Yes
<b>UK tested?</b>	No

## Model description

Parents Plus Children’s Programme (PPCP) is one of eight Parents Plus! interventions adapted specifically for families with concerns about the behaviour of a child between 6 and 11 years old. It is intended for use in both specialist clinical settings, such as child mental health services, and in frontline community and primary care settings, where the emphasis is largely preventative.

PPCP is delivered by two practitioners with a master's qualification or higher in psychology or related mental health profession. Parents attend nine sessions, lasting approximately two hours each. Groups sessions can include up to 15 parents.

The overall aim of PPCP is to improve family relationships and reduce challenging child behaviour through practical, evidence-based strategies. The group sessions are structured by video clips involving both actor and non-actor parents interacting both positively and negatively with their children. Topics covered in these DVDs include building a positive parent–child relationship, encouraging child cooperation, and responding to misbehavior. The DVD input is reinforced through group discussion, practice exercises, skills role-play, homework activities, and handouts.

In addition to the group sessions, parents may receive individual one-hour preparatory sessions. Family sessions are offered separately, consisting of four individual sessions with the parent and child, focusing on play and problem-solving activities.

## Foundations Guidebook – Intervention information sheet

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It is worth noting that only the group component was evaluated in PPCP's most robust evaluation.

### Target population

<b>Age of child</b>	6 to 11 years old
<b>Target population</b>	Parents who have concerns about their child's behaviour, learning, or emotional development.

Please note that the information in this section on target population is as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.



**Theory of change**

Why		Who	How	What		
Science-based assumption	Science-based assumption	Science-based assumption	Intervention	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<p>Challenging child behaviours during primary school increase the risk of behavioural problems persisting into adolescence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective parenting behaviours help the child to regulate their own behaviour and reduce the risk of child behavioural problems persisting</li> <li>• Ineffective parenting strategies can increase the risk of child behavioural problems persisting over time.</li> </ul>	<p>Parents often benefit from additional support for managing particularly challenging child behaviour.</p>	<p>Parents learn strategies for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating effectively with their child</li> <li>• Reinforcing positive child behaviour</li> <li>• Discouraging challenging child behaviour through age-appropriate discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents implement effective parenting strategies in the home</li> <li>• Parents’ confidence increases</li> <li>• Parent–child interaction improves.</li> </ul>	<p>Children’s behaviour improves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are at less risk of antisocial behaviour in adolescence</li> <li>• Children are more likely to engage positively with others.</li> </ul>



## Implementation requirements

<b>Who is eligible?</b>	Parents who have concerns about their child’s behavioural, learning, or emotional development, aged between 6 and 11 years old.
<b>How is it delivered?</b>	Parents Plus Children’s Programme is delivered in nine sessions of 2.5 hours’ duration each by two practitioners to groups of up to 12 parents.
<b>What happens during the intervention?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main group work component involves reviewing DVD parenting clips, as well as engaging in group discussion, worksheets, role-play, homework, and handouts.</li> <li>• In the family sessions, parents are supported to play with and problem-solve with their children.</li> </ul>
<b>Who can deliver it?</b>	The two Parents Plus Facilitators who deliver PPCP are typically mental health professionals with a master’s qualification or higher.
<b>What are the training requirements?</b>	The practitioners have 22.5 hours of intervention training. Booster training of practitioners is recommended.
<b>How are practitioners supervised?</b>	It is recommended that practitioners are supervised by one host-agency supervisor and one intervention developer supervisor).
<b>What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?</b>	<p>Intervention fidelity is maintained through the following processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training manual</li> <li>• Other printed material</li> <li>• Other online material</li> <li>• Video or DVD training</li> <li>• Face-to-face training</li> <li>• Fidelity monitoring</li> <li>• Published quality protocol with monitoring checklist.</li> </ul>
<b>Is there a licensing requirement?</b>	No
<b>*Contact details</b>	<p>Contact person: John Sharry</p> <p>Organisation: Parents Plus Charity</p> <p>Email address: <a href="mailto:admin@parentsplus.ie">admin@parentsplus.ie</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.parentsplus.ie">www.parentsplus.ie</a></p> <p>*Please note that this information may not be up to date. In this case, please visit the listed intervention website for up to date contact details.</p>



## Evidence summary

PPCP’s most rigorous evidence comes from an RCT and comparison group study, both conducted in Ireland.

The RCT, conducted in a clinical setting, has evidence consistent with Foundations’ Level 2+ evidence strength criteria. This study observed statistically significant improvements in PPCP’s children’s behaviour in comparison to children whose parents did not receive the intervention.

The second evaluation, conducted in a community setting, has evidence consistent with Foundation’s Level 2 evidence strength criteria. This study observed improvements in parents’ reports of PPCP’s children’s behaviour, as well as reductions in their child’s hyperactive behaviour.

Parents Plus Children’s Programme has preliminary evidence of improving a child outcome, but we cannot be confident that the intervention caused the improvement.

## Search and review

	Number of studies
<b>Identified in search</b>	3
<b>Studies reviewed</b>	2
<b>Meeting the L2 threshold</b>	2
<b>Meeting the L3 threshold</b>	0
<b>Contributing to the L4 threshold</b>	0
<b>Ineligible</b>	1



## Individual study summary: Study 1

<b>Study 1</b>	
<b>Study design</b>	Comparison group study
<b>Country</b>	Ireland
<b>Sample characteristics</b>	This study involved parents of 99 children aged 6 to 11 with significant behavioural problems. Participants included children with and without developmental difficulties.
<b>Race, ethnicities, and nationalities</b>	Not reported
<b>Population risk factors</b>	69% children experienced behavioural difficulties, while 31% experienced developmental difficulties. Most children (97.6%) had behavioural problems. Some had other concerns such as emotional problems (42.9%), overactivity/inattention (38.1%) and developmental delay (23.8%).
<b>Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline</li> <li>• Post-intervention</li> <li>• Five-month follow-up (there was no comparison group at the follow-up).</li> </ul>
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced behavioural difficulties (parent report)</li> <li>• Reduced conduct problems (parent report).</li> </ul>
<b>Other outcomes</b>	Reduced parental stress (parent self-report)
<b>Study Rating</b>	2+
<b>Citation</b>	Coughlin, M., Sharry, J., Fitzpatrick, C., Guerin, S. & Drumm, M. (2009) A controlled clinical evaluation of the Parents Plus Children’s Programme: A video-based programme for parents of children aged 6 to 11 with behavioural and developmental problems. <i>Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry</i> . 14 (4), 541–558.



## Brief summary

### Population characteristics

This study involved parents of 99 children aged 6–11 years old with significant emotional and behavioral problems. Participants included children with and without developmental difficulties and the majority (80%) were boys. Most parents involved in the study were mothers.

### Study design

This study was a comparison study and involved a sequential block design to assign 42 parents to a Parents Plus Children's Programme group, and 32 parents to a Treatment as Usual (TAU) control group depending on the date of referral. Assignment to groups was not random – the first block of 12-15 children presenting to a clinic was assigned to the treatment, and further referrals were placed in a waiting list – the TAU group. TAU families were then offered a place on the next available parenting programme.

### Measurement

Measurement took place at baseline, post-intervention, and at a five-month follow-up (there was no comparison group at the follow-up).

- **Parent report** measures included the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and Parental Stress Scale.

The two groups did not differ significantly in terms of child's age, child's gender, or baseline scores on study variables.

### Study retention

74 participants (74%) participated at post intervention – 42 from the treatment group and 32 from the TAU group.

The baseline level of conduct problems was significantly different between attriters and the remained in the treatment group at post-intervention. There was no significant differences between attriters and the remained at five-month follow-up. In the comparison group, the attrited children were significantly younger at post-intervention.

### Results

Participants who received Parents Plus Children's Programme saw significant reductions in child behavioural difficulties and conduct problems compared to those in the control group. It also led to significant reductions in parental stress.



**Study 1: Outcomes table**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Effect size</b>	<b>Statistical significance</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Measurement time point</b>
<b>Child outcomes</b>					
Behavioural difficulties	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) – total difficulties (parent report)	d=0.57	yes	74	Post-intervention
Child conduct problems	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) – conduct subscale (parent report)	d=0.81	Yes	74	Post-intervention
Child behaviour (emotional symptoms, hyperactivity, peer problems, prosocial behaviour)	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) – emotional symptoms, hyperactivity, peer problems, prosocial behaviour subscales (parent report)	N/A	No	74	Post-intervention
<b>Parent outcomes</b>					
Parent stress	Parental Stress Scale (parent report)	d=0.11	Yes	74	Post-intervention



## Individual study summary: Study 2

Study 2	
<b>Study design</b>	RCT
<b>Country</b>	Ireland
<b>Sample characteristics</b>	The study involved 75 parents of children aged 6 to 11 years attending three primary schools in Ireland. The sample included parents self-selecting to participate, with some families targeted due to being identified as 'most in need'. Most parents were mothers (87%) and children involved were not receiving clinical services at the time.
<b>Race, ethnicities, and nationalities</b>	Not reported
<b>Population risk factors</b>	Some parents were under stress due to psychosocial and economic challenges.
<b>Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline</li> <li>• Post-intervention</li> <li>• Six-month follow-up.</li> </ul>
<b>Child outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced behavioural difficulties (parent report)</li> <li>• Reduced hyperactivity (parent report).</li> </ul>
<b>Other outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced parental stress (parent report)</li> <li>• Reduced parental distress (parent report)</li> <li>• Reduced parent–child interaction difficulties (parent report)</li> <li>• Reduced parental perception of child as difficult (parent report)</li> <li>• Improved overall parental satisfaction (parent report).</li> </ul>
<b>Study Rating</b>	2
<b>Citation</b>	Hand, A., McDonnell, E., Honari, B. & Sharry, J. (2013) A community-led approach to delivery of the Parents Plus Children's Programme for the parents of children aged 6–11. <i>International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology</i> . 13 (2), 87–90.



## Brief summary

### Population characteristics

The study involved 75 parents of children aged 6 to 11 years attending three primary schools in Ireland. The sample included parents self-selecting to participate, with some families targeted due to being identified as ‘most in need’. Most parents were mothers (87%), and children involved were not receiving clinical services at the time.

### Study design

This study was an RCT. Forty-four participants were randomly assigned to the Parents Plus Children’s programme intervention group, and 31 participants were randomly assigned to a control group.

### Measurement

Measurement took place at baseline, post-intervention, and six-month follow-up.

- **Parent report** measures included the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Parenting Stress Index/Short Form (PSI/SF), and the Kansas Parental Satisfaction Scale (KPS).

### Study retention

63 families (84%) participated at post-intervention, representing 36 (81%) treatment group families and 27 (87%) control group families. 44 treatment group families (45%) participated at six-month follow-up.

### Results

This study demonstrated statistically significant positive impact of the intervention on various child and parent outcomes. For children there were reductions in total behavioural difficulties and hyperactivity post-intervention as measured by the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. For parents, there were decreases in parental stress, distress, and parent–child interaction difficulties as assessed by the Parenting Stress Index, improvements in parental perception of their child as less difficult, and enhanced overall parental satisfaction according to the Kansas Parent Satisfaction Scale.



## Study 2: Outcomes table

Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
<b>Child outcomes</b>					
Behavioural difficulties	Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) – total difficulties subscale (parent report)	d=0.32	Yes	75	Post-intervention
Hyperactivity	Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) – hyperactivity subscale (parent report)	d=0.31	Yes	75	Post-intervention
Child behaviour (emotional symptoms, peer problems, prosocial behaviour; parent report)	Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) – conduct problems, emotional symptoms, peer problems, prosocial behaviour subscales (parent report)	N/A	No	75	Post-intervention
<b>Parent outcomes</b>					
Parental stress (parent self-report)	Parenting stress Index (PSI) (parent report)	d=1.13	Yes	75	Post-intervention



Outcome	Measure	Effect size	Statistical significance	Number of participants	Measurement time point
Parental distress	Parenting stress Index (PSI) (parent report)	d=0.61	Yes	75	Post-intervention
Parental perception of child as difficult	Parenting stress Index (PSI) (parent report)	d=0.63	Yes	75	Post-intervention
Parent child interactions difficulties	Parenting stress Index (PSI) (parent report)	d=1.58	Yes	75	Post-intervention
Parental satisfaction (parent self-report)	Kansas Parent Satisfaction scale (KPS) (parent report)	d=0.95	Yes	75	Post-intervention

## Other studies

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

Hand, A., Raghallaigh, C. N., Cuppage, J., Coyle, S. & Sharry, J. (2013) A controlled clinical evaluation of the Parents Plus Children’s Programme for parents of children aged 6–12 with mild intellectual disability in a school setting. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 18 (4), 536–555.

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**Note on provider involvement:** This provider has agreed to Foundations’ terms of reference (or the Early Intervention Foundation’s terms of reference), and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the intervention provider.