

The Incredible Years Parent Training Programmes

By Carolyn Webster-Stratton

INCREDIBLE FAMILIES CHARITABLE TRUST

- Dr Denise Guy – Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
- David Howden – lawyer, who has practiced for over 25 years in the Family Court
- Diana Linforth-Howden – Infant Mental Health Clinician and Family Therapist
- Dr Vivienne Mountier – Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

The Incredible Years

- Dr Carolyn Webster-Stratton – Clinical Psychologist, Professor and Director of the Parenting Clinic at the University of Washington.
- Responsive and nurturing parenting sets the stage for children's social, emotional and academic development
- Children and families who face multiple risks need parenting information and support that is over and above that provided in generalist, universal or selective interventions.

The Goals for the Incredible Years Parent Training Series

For children 2 – 8 years

- To develop cost-effective, community-based, universal prevention programmes that all families of young children can use to promote social competence and to prevent children from developing conduct problems.
- To develop comprehensive treatment programmes for young children with early onset conduct problems.

Reducing Risk Factors

- The programmes address multiple risk factors which have been shown to be related to later development of delinquency, substance abuse and violence and poor mental health.
- **Child risk factors** - language and learning delays, attention deficit disorder, conduct problems, lack of social skills.
- **Family and parenting risk factors** - harsh and inconsistent discipline, poor monitoring, lack of parental support, poor relationship with teachers and schools.
- **School risk factors** - teachers classroom management skills, academic difficulties, classroom aggression, playground bullying, peer rejection and deviant peer groups.

Evaluations

- Programmes have been evaluated in six randomized trials.
- The programme promotes positive and nurturing parenting interactions, reduces critical and harsh parenting and reduces behaviour problems in children with high risks.
- The Parenting programme has been independently evaluated in New Zealand by Professor David Fergusson & Lesley Stanley
- The programme has also been shown to be effective with parents of different racial and cultural backgrounds.

Programme Delivery

Parenting skills training is delivered through five curricula:

- BASIC (basic parenting skills),
- ADVANCED (parental communication, problem solving and anger management)
- SCHOOL (parents promoting children's academic skills).
- TODDLER (parents understanding relationship issues and developmental issues)
- INFANT (parents learning to develop 'in-tune' responsive and secure relationships with their baby)

Programme Content

- Emphasis on building a therapeutic relationship
- Developmentally based
- Capable of cultural adaptation
- Tailored to goals and values of individual families
- Coping vs mastery model
- Videotaped modelling particularly supportive for people with less literacy skills

Content continued

- Role play rehearsal
- Group discussion and contribution to help establish 'key principles'
- Weekly home assignments
- Group support
- Weekly facilitator telephone calls
- Home visits if required to cover missed sessions or particularly troublesome individual family issues

Benefits of programme provision in the general community

- Many parents have little understanding of child development or age appropriate child management strategies and the programme can enhance this knowledge.
- Trained facilitators can model reliable, predictable and responsive behaviour that mirrors secure attachment behaviour
- Programme participation frequently reduces parent isolation

Evaluated and effective therapeutic intervention

- Incredible Years programmes provide an additional tool for therapists and families to consider when preparing their therapeutic plans
- Some parents gain considerable self insight by participating in group sessions that allow a sharing of experiences
- The programme can be part of 'stepped' plans that may reduce the need for individual therapy sessions

Programme Providers in NZ

- The Ministry of Health have purchased the Incredible Years for delivery by staff in Child & Adolescent Mental Health Clinics for their client group
- The Ministry of Education has also purchased the programme for delivery by Group Special Education Staff for their client group

Facilitator Training

- The Werry Centre is funded to provide facilitator training for the Basic and Advanced Programmes
- Facilitators have therapeutic backgrounds
- There are currently eleven facilitators in New Zealand who have also continued in their training and become accredited trainers

Further training

- Accredited Peer coaching has been introduced
- Mentoring is a further level of training, that allows training of further basic facilitators to be undertaken.

The involvement of the Incredible Families Charitable Trust

- To facilitate delivery of the Incredible Years Programmes with fidelity by trained facilitators
- To provide the programme to any parent who wishes to attend, whose children are in the appropriate age group
- To raise money and to gain contracts to enable this to happen