



The Parents Under Pressure Program

www.pupprogram.net.au

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PuP Program

Promoting a stable environment for children





The PuP program

The Puppy Program

What you do or don't do now, will determine your dog's adult behavior

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The Puppy Program

The puppy program is designed for puppies 8-14 weeks of age. It is an intensive 4-week one-on-one at-home training program that will teach you everything you need to know to raise a happy, well-adjusted dog. You know the perfect dog you always wanted!

The program includes the four phases of a thorough socialization program:

- **Human/Environment Socialization**-learning about different people and their environment (in and out)
- **Prevention**-exercises to prevent all sorts of dog related issues. With your puppy think prevention instead of cure.
- **Obedience**-training a puppy is easy
- **Interaction**- learn the importance of/and how to properly play with your puppy.



Risk and Protective Factors

Protective

- Strong and positive family bonds
- Parental monitoring of children's activities
- Clear rules of conduct
- Consistently enforced
- Involvement of parents in children's lives
- Success in school
- Strong bonds with institutions (e.g., school)
- Adoption of conventional norms about drug use



Risk

- Chaotic home environments
- Parents abuse substances or suffer a mental illness
- Poor parent-child attachment
- Inappropriately shy or aggressive in classroom
- Failure in school
- Poor social coping skills
- Deviant peers



Theoretical influences

The specific theoretical influences are:

- Attachment Theory/Emotional Availability.
- Behavioural parent training: Patterson's coercive family processes model.
- Parental Emotional Regulation and the Meta-Emotion perspective.
- The Ecological model.
- Goal Setting Theory.



Attachment and Emotional Availability





Attachment

- The positive emotional connection between parent and child is fundamental for the child to feel safe and nurtured.
- But it is important to note that there are continuities and discontinuities in attachment style—attachment style is not static but changes as a function of the emotional availability and responsiveness of the carers. This can fluctuate over time. A period of lowered emotional availability can impact negatively on the parent-child attachment, but is not necessarily irreparable.



Emotional Availability (EA)

- Attachment behaviours are behaviours that a child displays when confronted with the stress of separation and subsequent reunion.
- Attachment is often measured in the Strange Situation procedure.
- Emotional availability refers to the parenting behaviours and responses of a child that promote a positive emotional connection.
- The emotional availability of a parent is found at all times of the day, and is therefore, a broader concept than attachment.
- Emotional Availability is measured through naturalistic observations of day-to-day interactions between a parent and child—using the Emotional Availability Scales.



EA: Parental Sensitivity

Parent sensitivity refers to the parents ability to be warm and emotionally connected.

- Parent genuinely enjoying company of child, interaction is relaxed, congruent, low key.
- Aware of child's signals and responds appropriately.
- Accepting, respectful of child.
- Amount of physical contact is appropriate to situation.
- If there is a conflict, parent is able to resolve it quickly and return to activity.
- An 'apparent' or unreal quality, parent not really there, inauthentic; or blatantly depressed and detached, harsh and overbearing, abrasive voice.
- Inconsistent or unaware of child's signals and/or responses not appropriate
- Occasionally or often disrespectful or critical.
- Minimal physical contact or overbearing.
- Parent unable to resolve conflict, there is a great deal of conflict.

Parental Sensitivity & Babies

parents
UNDER PRESSURE



In the first 18 months of life a baby needs positive interaction from a carer to help brain development

A parent's voice, touch, smell and face are some of the first things that babies learn to recognise

Holding, looking and smiling at a baby helps his/her brain to grow

When a baby looks at his mother and sees a positive expression the baby experiences positive feelings

There is good evidence that stress (e.g., left to cry unattended for long periods) has an impact on brain development



EA: Parental structuring

Parent structuring refers to parents ability to provide a scaffold that can help a child master a situation, such as creative play, a learning task such as homework, self-regulation of the child's emotions and behaviour.

- Provides a level of guidance that helps the child achieve an outcome.
- Guidance is relaxed, unforced and well received by the child.
- Guidance helps child move to a 'higher level'.
- In discipline: i) able to remain firm—does not 'cave in' and maintains the emotional connection, ii) promotes a sense of security by making the child feeling contained.
- Level of guidance is too little to help child achieve an outcome, or,
- parent's commands and attempts at teaching are overwhelming and inhibit the child.
- Level of guidance unwanted by the child (even if minimal).
- In discipline: i) unable to set limits or enforce appropriate strategy to contain the child's emotions or behaviour. Looses the emotional connection with child, leaving child feeling unsafe, alone.



EA: Child Responsiveness

Child responsivity refers to the child's response to the parent's bids for interaction with the child.

- Child displays clear and genuine signs of pleasure in the play situation.
- Child is happy/content.
- Child responds when parent initiates.
- Child is able to play or act in an autonomous way—able to focus on activity while remaining responsive to parent.
- Child comfortable with physical proximity to parent, which is appropriate.
- Child appears shut down, not enjoying the interaction.
- Child may be acting in an way that appears to be a way of pleasing the parent rather than genuine.
- Child is irritable, angry, disorganised (unable to settle into an activity).
- Child is passive—unable to be autonomous.
- Child play on own and is oblivious to parents presence.
- Child uncomfortable or avoidant on physical contact with parent.

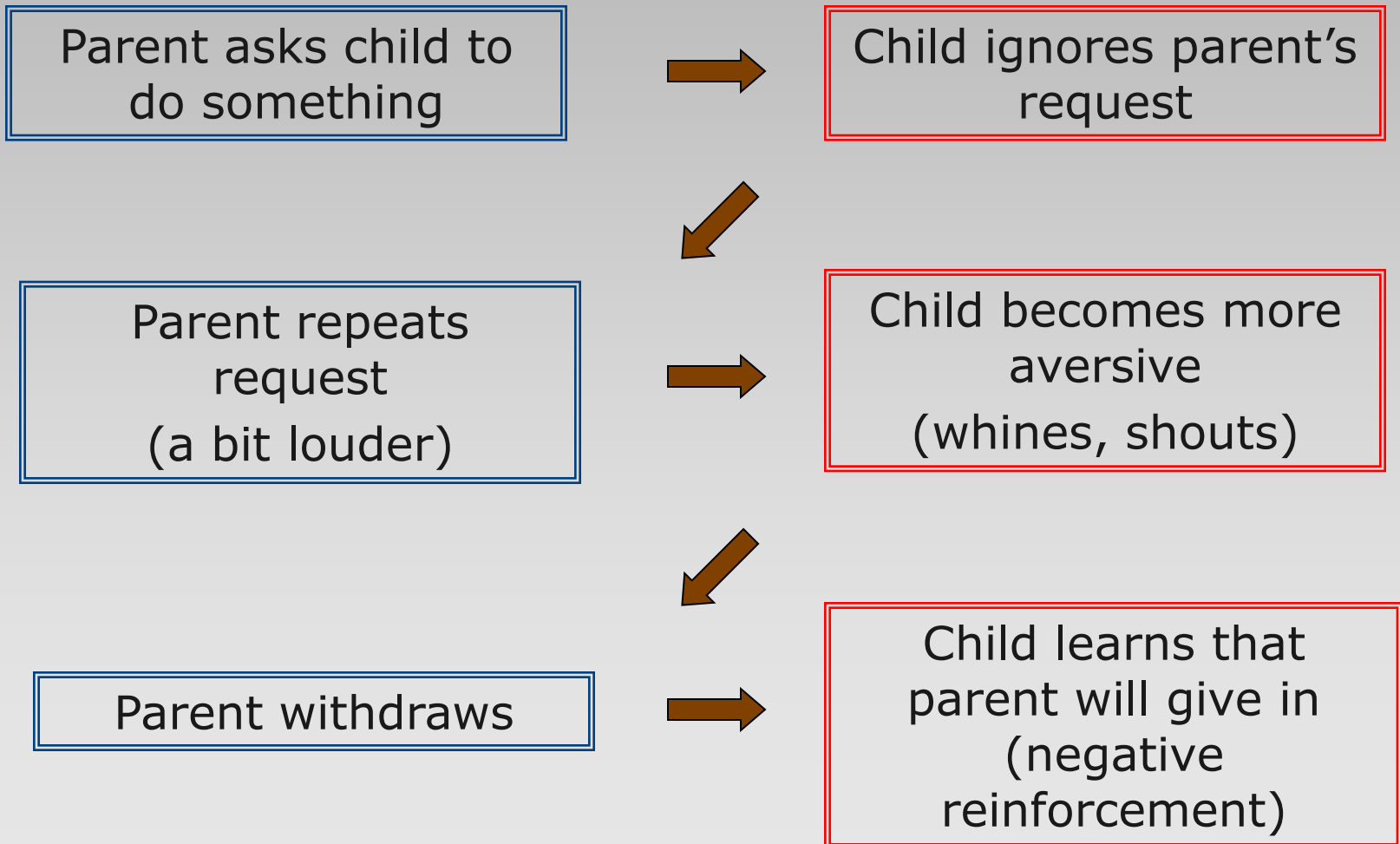


Behavioural Parent Training



Patterson's Coercive Process model

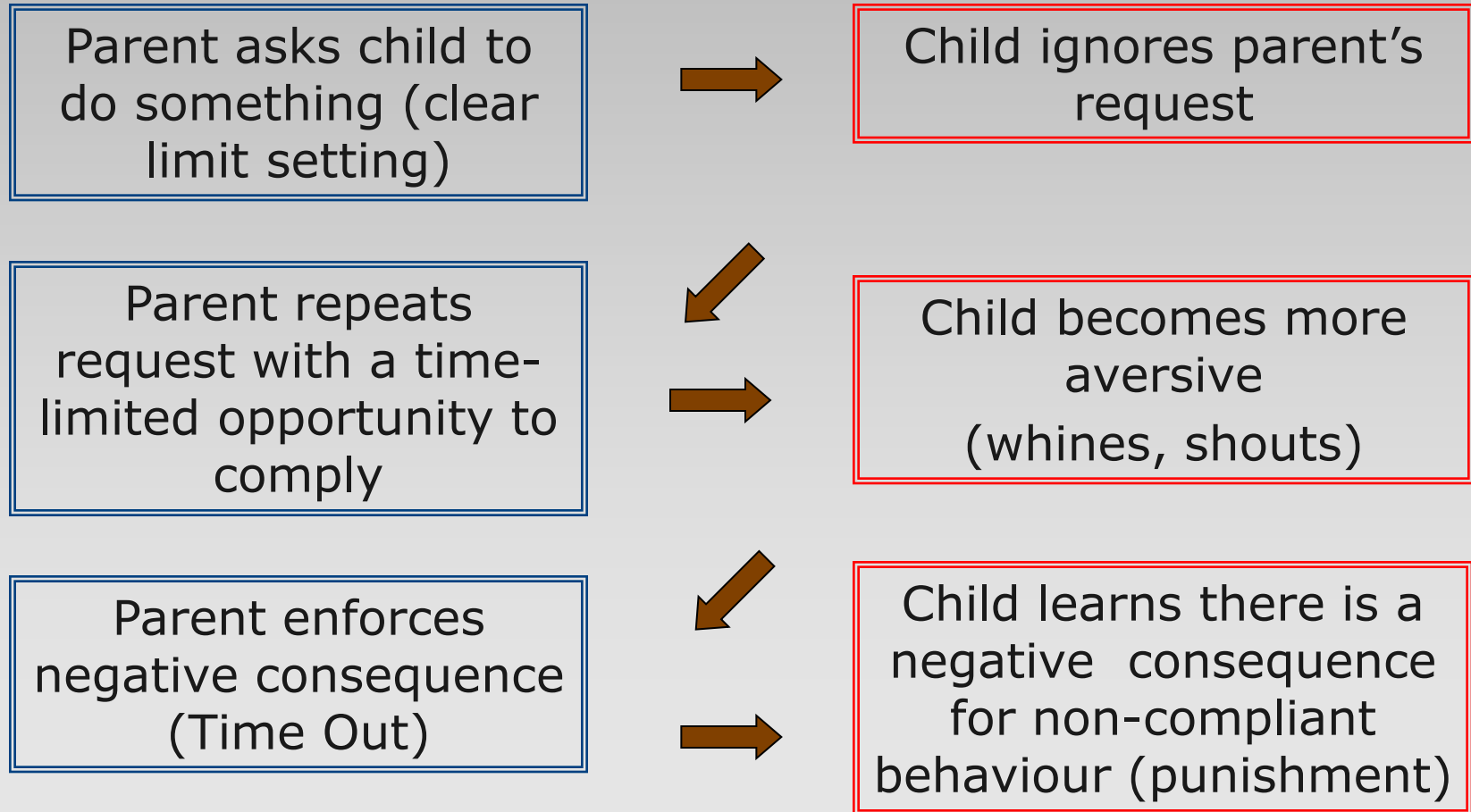
The Coercive Processes Model explains how *negative* child behaviour arises – for example why children will not do as they are told (non-compliance).





Patterson's Coercive Process model: the solution

The parenting techniques used to decrease (discourage) negative behaviours include limit setting and negative consequences for the behaviour (e.g., Time Out).





Learning Theory

Whereas Time Out and other negative consequences are used to *decrease* negative behaviours, positive reinforcement is used to *increase* positive child behaviour, such as compliance, sharing, being polite, doing homework etc

If you reward good behaviour, there is an increased chance that the child will show good behaviour again.

But, children are good at reading their parents...

Learning Theory



Scenario 1

A happy mother asks the child to do something

Child does what he is told

Mother puts a star on child's star chart

A tired mother asks the child to do something

Child refuses to do as he is told

Mother gives up asking

Stimulus Discrimination

Children respond differently to the happy and tired mothers because the children learn that:

happy mothers give rewards and tired mothers give up.



Learning Theory

Consistency is the key!

This is why inconsistent parenting is not good – children learn to run rings round their parents.

From a learning theory point of view it is important that there is consistency in the form of:-

Clear limit setting

Clear consequences for inappropriate behaviour

That this is done regardless of the mood of the parent

Easier said that done?



Emotional Regulation



Emotion Regulation

- Parental emotional regulation moderates parenting skills.
- When a parent is emotionally regulated, they will be more emotionally available and their existing repertoire of parenting skills will be more effective



Emotion Regulation

- When emotionally dysregulated, they will be emotional unavailable
 - insensitive,
 - unresponsive,
 - intrusive,
 - hostile and their parenting skills are likely to be ineffective.
- There is a focus on short-term behaviour management rather than the long-term effects of their actions on the child's development—that is they are parent-goal orientated rather than child-goal orientated.



Ecological Model

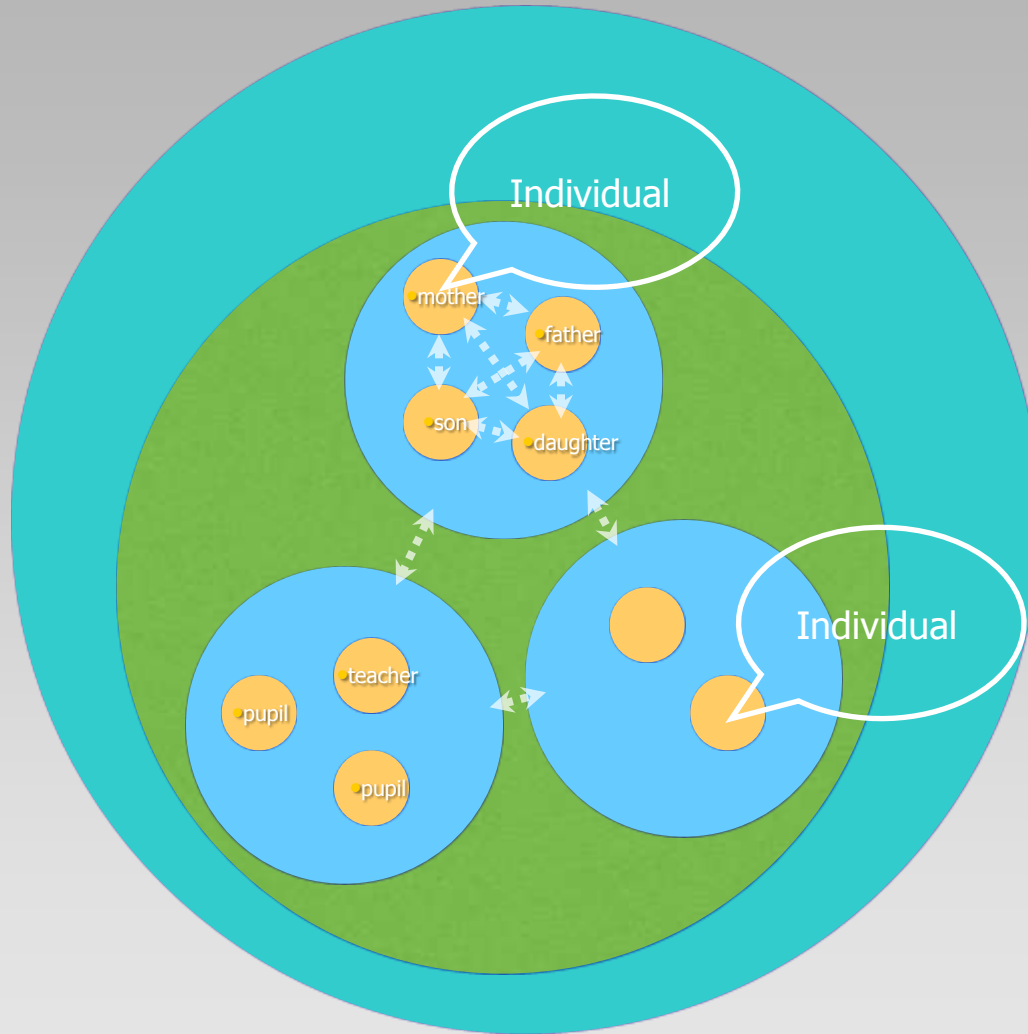


The ecological framework

- Families operated within a wider social ecology:
 - the individuals in the family,
 - the quality of the family relationships (parent-child, relationship between mother and father/partner),
 - the social context of the family: financial stress, housing problems, support etc.



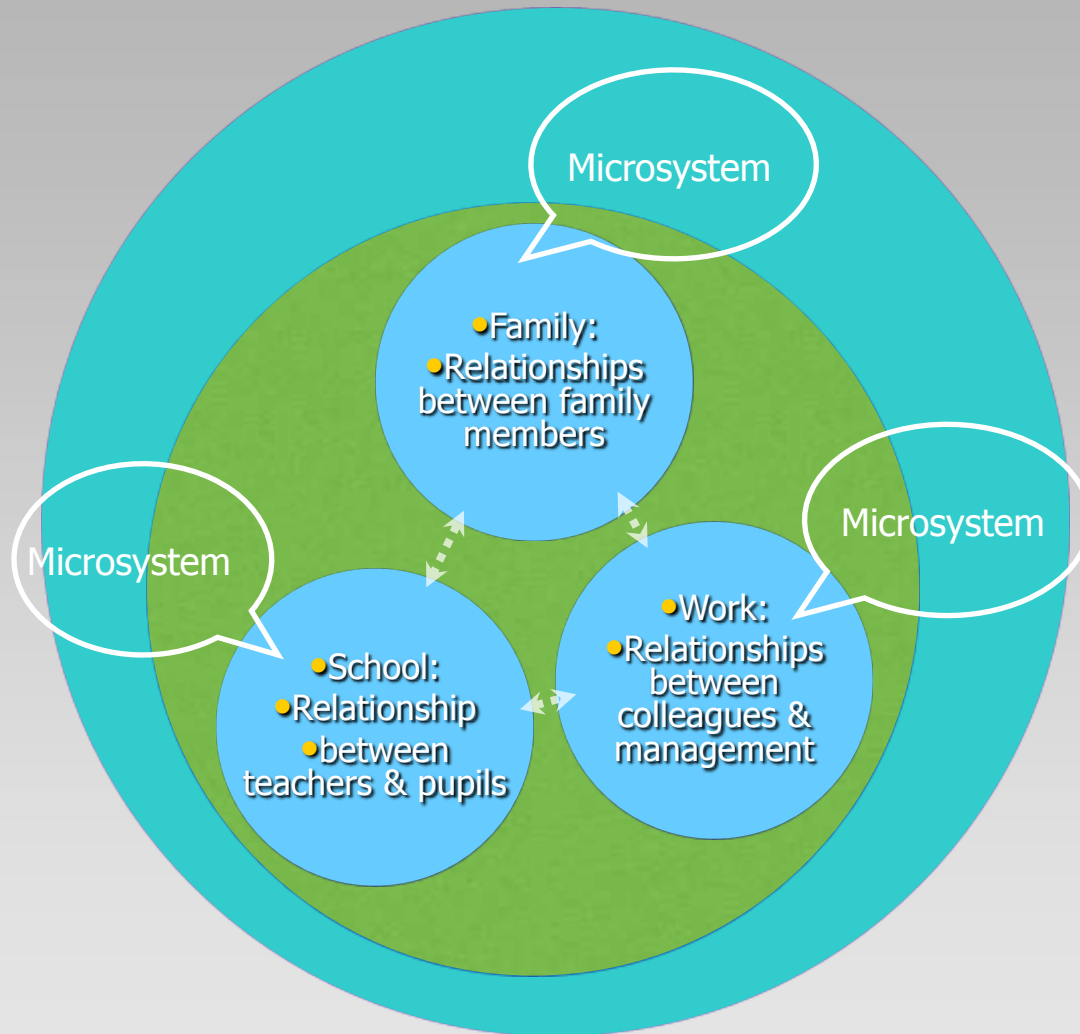
The ecological framework



- Individual differences in:
 - Temperament
 - Emotional regulation skills
 - Cognitive capacity
 - Psychopathology
 - Knowledge of parenting



The ecological framework



- Family microsystem:
 - parent-child relationship
 - marital relationship
 - other family relationships



The ecological framework





The ecological framework

Macrosystem

- Governmental policies affecting families.
 - Economic climate.



So what would you do?

A mother or father is taking his or her son to school (child is age 7 years).

You are almost at the school, which is 10-minutes from home.

Child cries out

'I haven't got my hat'!!!

The school has a 'no hat, no play' policy.



PUP Program

- Structured but non sequential
- A buffet to select from not a recipe to follow
- It's a framework—there is no single 'right' way to parent
- The importance of engagement
- The importance of installing hope that things can change – therapy starts from picking up the phone and assessment never ends



Modules 1& 2: Assessment, Sharing Information, Values Goals

- Aim of assessment is to set clear and meaningful targets for change. This done collaboratively and develops a partnership.
- Targets for change may be in any ecological domain.
- Process should be non-adversarial, respectful, therapeutic.
- The assessment process aims to highlight that there are multiple influences on parenting ability.
- Important to highlight areas of competence and emphasize how these areas of strength will help achieve change in other areas

Modules 1& 2: Assessment, Feedback and “Checking Out”



Assessment based on:-

- Interview
- Self-report measures
- Direct observation of parent-child interaction
- Feedback and “checking out” to determine goals are mutually agreed

Module 3: View of self as a parent



Aim to replace underlying schema “I am a bad parent” with the positive schema “I am a good enough parent”

- Where do our parenting values and knowledge come from?
- Acknowledge what the parent does well
- Challenge notion of an ideal child (encourage realistic expectations)



Unit 4: How to manage under pressure

- Monitoring emotions
- Thinking positively and challenging negative thinking
- Mindfulness skills
- Distress tolerance skills (imagery, muscular relaxation, self-soothing activities)
- Healthy body, healthy mind
- Making time for pleasant activities
- Accepting the unchangeable



Module 5: Health check your kids

- Provides an opportunity to discuss hygiene, nutrition and lifestyle factors
- Also easy to make changes in the areas that are meaningful e.g., taking a child to the dentist

Module 6: Connecting with your child and encouraging good behavior



Aim is to help the parent and child connect – for the child to feel special and loved, for the parent to value their role and understand their importance in their child's life.

- Spending time with child
- Mindful play - observing, describing, participating in the moment
- Learning to read your child or baby's cues
- Learning to value your child's special strengths
- Connecting with your child

Module 7: Mindful child management



Aim is to decrease undesirable child behaviour

- Identifying unacceptable behaviour
- Getting into the right frame of mind
- Use wise mind rather than emotion mind
- Limit setting
- Non-punitive discipline



Module 8: Managing substance use problems

- Non-judgemental
- Identifying and planning for high-risk situations
- Alternative to drug use
- Dealing with cravings and urges
- Harm minimisation/ Planning drug use
- Lapse
- Ways of dealing with risky, harmful, hazardous drinking
- Low risk drinking
- Controlled drinking



Module 9: Extending Support Networks

- Support is important but not always there
- Identifying support people

Module 10: Life Skills

- Financial planning (Budgeting)
- Diet/Nutrition
- Employment and education
- Housing
- Centrelink (forms & entitlements)
- Directory of welfare agencies



Module 11: Relationships

- Communicating
 - Clarifying roles
 - Satisfaction and acceptability of the relationship (deciding when enough is enough and considering options)
 - Single parents
-
- **Module 12: Closure**



PUP Assessment model

1. Assess family's current functioning
2. Identify and define goals for change
3. Provide a time-limited evidenced based intervention
4. Assessment of parent's response to intervention
5. Prepare clear and specific recommendations based on the results of the assessment



Would this make a difference to the family??

The evidence



Randomized Controlled Trial

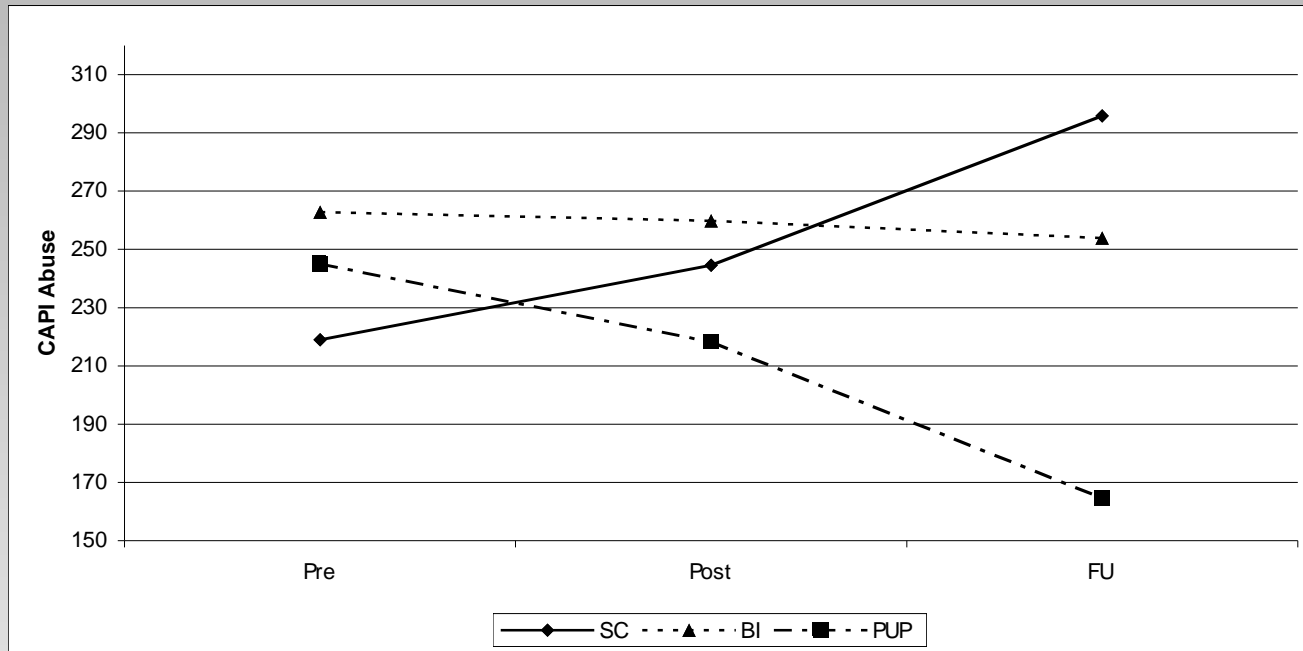
- Compared PUP with brief parenting intervention and standard care
- Significant reductions in child abuse potential, parenting stress in PUP, no change in either comparison condition at 6 months

Dawe & Harnett (2006) Reducing Child Abuse Potential in Methadone Maintained Parents: Results from a randomized controlled Trial. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*



Results of RCT

Child Abuse Potential Inventory - Total Score



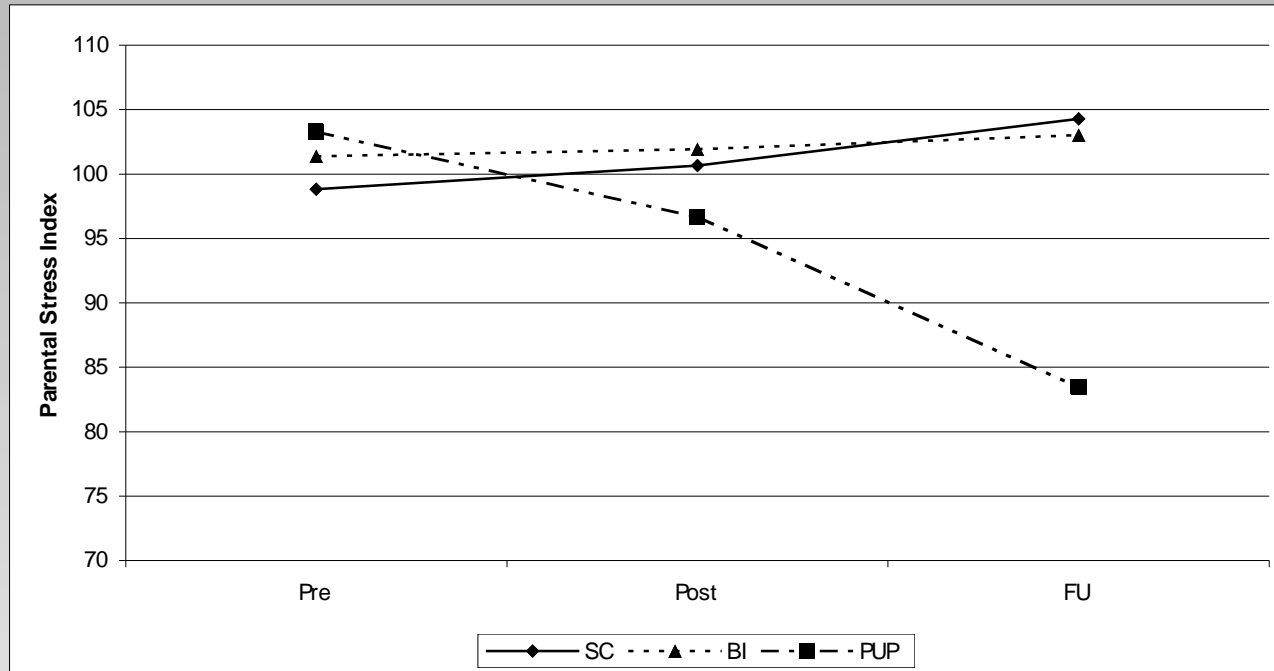
Sample Questions:-

- Spanking that only bruises a child is ok.
- It is ok to leave a child in a dirty nappy.
- Sometimes I fear that I will loose control of myself.



Results of RCT

Parenting Stress Index -Total Score



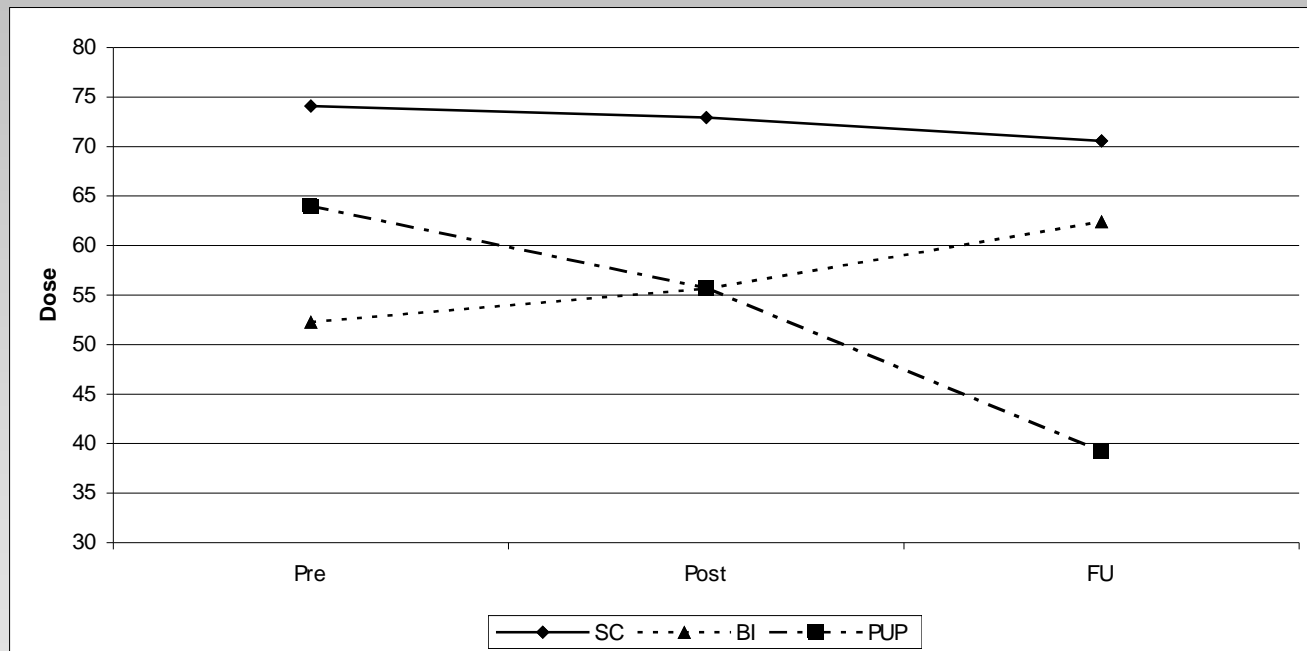
Sample Questions:-

- I feel trapped by my responsibilities as a parent.
- I often have the feeling that I cannot handle things very well.
- My child turned out to be more of a problem than I expected.



Results of RCT

Methadone Dose





Where to next?



Risk and Protective Factors

Looking back at children who were identified as anti-social in early adulthood

If Conduct Disorder NOT present at age 8



ASPD

10%

If Conduct Disorder present at age 8



90%