



Family &
Community Services
Community Services

the children's hospital at Westmead
The Sydney children's Hospitals Network



Making a world of difference: one family at a time

Nerissa King (Learning and Support Teacher, Department of Education and Communities)

Kim Evans (Senior Clinical Psychologist, Ageing Disability Home Care)

Background

Children's Hospital Westmead School-Link initiative

Partnered with NSW Health, Education and Disability agencies

Delivered the Group Stepping Stones Triple P programme

Collaboration

Course delivered Term 2, 2013.

Partnership between:

- Nerissa King (Learning and Support Teacher, Department of Education and Communities)
- Kim Evans (Senior Clinical Psychologist, Hunter, Ageing Disability Home Care)

Information about Telarah PS

- The suburb of Telarah is in the Maitland district of NSW.
- Total student population is 460.
- Index of community socio-educational advantage (NAPLAN results, family background information, census data) states that 44% of children at the school were in the lowest 25% for socio-educational advantage

Information about Telarah PS

- 20% of families are indigenous
- High prop of both parents unemployed
- Three specific classes for students with disabilities, including one early intervention class and two for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties

The families

- All had a child attending Telarah Public School
- All had children aged between 5-11 years with an intellectual disability or autism or both
- 13 families (15 parents) commenced
- Group held in school hours

The families

- 6 parents completed at least 80% of the course
- Another 4 parents completed at least 50% of the course.

Encouraging attendance

- Teachers and principal referred families who met criteria
- Persistence – phone calls and follow-up – before, during and after
- By start date, Nerissa had spoken to each parent 3 times and met them personally

Encouraging attendance

- Offered child minding
- Helped with other family issues
- Not Thursday because shopping day
- Picked school drop off time due to parent request

Encouraging attendance

- 1:1 support to complete questionnaires
- Good morning tea / breakfast
- Social connections

Preliminary results from assessments

Assessments used:

- Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS) (Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995)
- Parenting Tasks Checklist (Sanders and Woolley, 2005)
- Parenting Scale (Arnold et al 1993)
- Developmental Behaviour Checklist (DBC) (Einfeld and Tonge, 2002)

Preliminary results from assessments

- Pre-post data for 7-9 parents
- Some simple percentages of improvement are reported here for Telarah (full statistical analysis still being done)

Preliminary results from assessments

Parents:

- 60% parents reported improvement in self-ratings of depression;
- 43% parents reported improvements in parenting style (eg less lax and less over-reactive);

Preliminary results from assessments

- 75% reported increased behavioural self-efficacy (confidence in dealing with specific child behaviours)
- 87% reported increased setting self-efficacy (confidence to deal with difficult behaviour in different settings)

Preliminary results from assessments

Children's behaviour (DBC):

- Disruptive/antisocial : 71% parents reported improvement
- Self absorbed: 57% reported improvement
- Communication difficulties: 57% reported improvement

Preliminary results from assessments

- Anxiety: 57% reported improvement
- Social relating: 57% reported improvement
- Total problem behaviour score: 71% reported overall improvement

Other benefits parents/families reported

- Families got to know school and teachers
- Other family needs met whilst attending the course
- Parents develop relationships with other parents

Benefits school reported

- Teachers got to know the whole family
- Needs of individual families are understood
- Long term relationship with school commenced



Benefits school reported..

- Provided opportunity for preventative and proactive family work to be carried out:
 - connecting to GP / neighbourhood centre
 - immediate connect to local non-gov organisation for food vouchers / clothing

Benefits school reported..

- School and ADHC developed working partnership – another course was run the next term and is also planned for 2014
- School / ADHC sharing resources

One family - Mackenzie and Fiona

- Mackenzie is 6 years old.
- She loves to play with soccer balls, loves robots and “Toy Story”.
- She was in kindergarten in 2013.
- She has physical and intellectual disabilities.

Mackenzie and Fiona

“Unfortunately, I didn’t have any parental role models to guide me. Triple P is now like my parenting bible. It’s made our bond stronger and we are able to communicate better. Now I speak in a way that Mackenzie can understand” Fiona..

