

Research taps into teen conflict years

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Dr Dittman says while seemingly mundane, minor daily issues tend to create stress in the home.

An online program designed to short circuit the conflict cycle between teens and parents is being evaluated by University of Queensland researchers.

The [Teen Triple P Online program](#), developed as part of the world-renowned Triple P – Positive Parenting Program, is available for families around Australia willing to participate in the research trial.

Lead researcher Dr Cassandra Dittman said [parents](#) usually noticed a change in their children at around the age of 12 to 13 but in the middle

adolescent (14 to 15) years, the intensity of [conflict](#) escalated.

"Research around the world suggests the frequency of conflict between parents and teens on those everyday mundane things such as helping out around the house, doing homework, not spending too much time on the computer, tends to rise in early adolescence," Dr Dittman said.

"But the emotional intensity of conflict starts to rise around middle adolescence, possibly because teenagers are becoming more influenced by their friends and are learning to cope with surges and changes in their own emotions."

Dr Dittman said while seemingly mundane, minor daily issues tended to create a great deal of stress in the home.

Difficult relationships were also a factor that contributed to adverse outcomes for teens, such as an increased rate of risky behaviour.

"Many parents of teenagers are struggling to cope with the fact that they need to change their style of parenting as their child gets older," Dr Dittman said.

"The first piece of advice we tend to give parents is to try to remember what it was like when they were a teen."

Dr Dittman said the good news was that conflict was not all bad for teenagers.

"Parents offer a safe environment for teenagers to learn how to deal with arguments and disagreements, which is a very important life skill," she said.

"If parents can deal with conflict calmly and show how to deal with

disagreements in a positive way, it will help teenagers have good relationships inside and outside of the home and in the future."

The trial into Teen Triple P Online is available for parents of children aged 10-16. Parents can sign up for the study by [clicking here](#).

Provided by University of Queensland

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