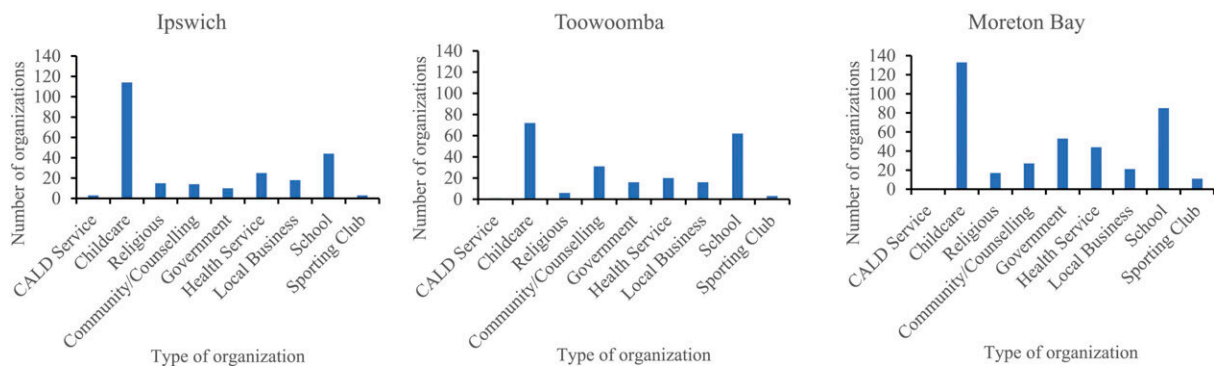


Positive parenting strategies can reduce child maltreatment

July 31 2024

Organization Engagement by Local Government Area



Organization engagement by local government area. Credit: *Child Maltreatment* (2024). DOI: 10.1177/10775595241259994

University of Queensland research shows child maltreatment cases decreased in socially disadvantaged communities that participate in positive parenting programs.

Professor Matt Sanders from UQ's Parenting and Family Support Centre and the ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course (Life Course Centre) led the study, which involved delivering parenting programs to more than 5,000 families across Queensland and New South Wales.

"Our aim was to understand how the [Triple P—Positive Parenting Program](#) system might influence child maltreatment statistics in socially disadvantaged communities in Australia, which are at greater risk due to poverty and other social challenges," Professor Sanders said.

"Programs were offered to parents via self-directed [online courses](#), seminars, brief individual consultations, group programs, and more intensive programs through schools, [health services](#) and sporting and religious organizations.

"A comparison was conducted between 32 communities where the Triple P system was implemented and 32 closely matched socially disadvantaged communities that received standard care programs.

"After two years of the system being offered, we found the communities that received Triple P had a 25% reduction in confirmed child maltreatment cases, while those receiving standard care programs saw a 3% increase."

Child maltreatment accounts for 40% of [mental health problems](#) in adults in Australia.

"Harsh and coercive parenting practices increase the risk of school failure, [substance abuse](#), unemployment, [relationship issues](#), mental health issues, and there is a high risk that these problems will transfer from one generation to the next," Professor Sanders said.

"If we can change the trajectory of children who experience maltreatment, we can prevent the significant adverse outcomes for them, their families, and communities."

Study co-author and Life Course Centre Director Professor Janeen Baxter said the research provided new and valuable insights to help

improve outcomes for children in Australia.

"We know that parenting and [family relationships](#) are crucial, and this study demonstrates the influence positive parenting has on families now and into the future," Professor Baxter said.

"Child outcomes were assessed using de-identified government data on child maltreatment, highlighting the value of administrative data for research and policy evidence."

The [research](#) was published in *Child Maltreatment*.

More information: Matthew R. Sanders et al, Parenting, Child Maltreatment, and Social Disadvantage: A Population-Based Implementation and Evaluation of the Triple P System of Evidence-Based Parenting Support, *Child Maltreatment* (2024). [DOI: 10.1177/10775595241259994](#)

Provided by University of Queensland

Citation: Positive parenting strategies can reduce child maltreatment (2024, July 31) retrieved 1 August 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-07-positive-parenting-strategies-child-maltreatment.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.