

**A Unique PhD Opportunity**  
**Research Training in Evidence-based Parenting Interventions**

The Triple P Research Group (TPRG) at the University of Auckland's Faculty of Education is seeking to recruit up to **four (4)** suitably qualified candidates with relevant backgrounds in psychology or educational psychology to undertake advanced level PhD training in the field of evidence-based parenting and family intervention. The training program will focus on developing expertise in conducting randomized clinical trials testing the efficacy of parenting interventions based on the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program, a unique multilevel system of parenting intervention. The program of research training will provide applicants with advanced level training in the following areas:

1. Designing and implementing evidence-based parenting interventions
2. Designing and conducting studies that rigorously test the efficacy of interventions including use of randomised controlled trials and where appropriate intra-subject replication designs.
3. Experience in working with a research team specializing in evidence-based interventions.
4. Writing competitive grant submissions to support parenting research.
5. Experience in conducting research on the dissemination of evidence-based parenting programs.

**The Triple P Research Group in New Zealand**

The TPRG is a newly established research group at the University of Auckland headed by Professor Matt Sanders (the founder of the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program). It consists of a team of experienced researchers and includes four academic staff and postgraduate students and research assistants working on various projects. PhD candidates will work under the supervision of one of the academic staff with co-supervision provided by Professor Sanders.

The research group at the University of Auckland joins a collaborative international network of researchers and scholars involved in Triple P research from Europe, UK, North America and Asia. The Group has established a collaborative research relationship with the Parenting and Family Support Centre at the University of Queensland, which is Australia's best known parenting research centre (see [www.pfsc.uq.edu.au](http://www.pfsc.uq.edu.au)).

**Staff involved**

*Matthew Sanders, PhD.* Professor of Parenting Studies and Family Psychology (Head of Group).

Research interests: evidence-based parenting interventions, Triple P-Positive Parenting Programme, media and self directed interventions for parents, role of parenting in the prevention of behavioural and emotional problems.

*Louise Keown, PhD.* Senior Lecturer in Developmental Psychology. Research interests: the family and peer relationships of children with ADHD, preschool hyperactivity and conduct problems. Parenting, especially, fathering. Parenting interventions.

*Susan Farruggia, PhD.* Senior Lecturer in Developmental Psychology. Research interests: formal and informal interventions that promote wellbeing, adjustment and academic achievement among vulnerable youth, particularly those involved in child protection and the youth justice system.

*Cassandra Dittman, PhD.* Research Fellow in Parenting Studies and Family Psychology. Research interests: the role of the internet in the delivery of parenting programmes, evidence-based parenting interventions; relationships between parenting, children's behaviour and learning and developmental outcomes.

### **Eligibility**

Applicants who have a strong bachelors degree with honours/masters (first class or second class, division I) in psychology, education or other area of social science will be considered for the PhD programme. Applicants should have a sound understanding of behavioural or cognitive behavioural principles, child or adolescent development and have specific interests in the field of parenting and family relationships. Interests in intervention research are essential and some relevant experience with children and families would be an advantage.

### **Possible project areas**

Applicants will be selected who have interests in some of the following areas. The following areas are presently being considered as potential projects, but applicants should feel free to identify other potential projects:

1. *Cultural diversity and parenting*: this project area examines the cultural relevance, acceptability and effectiveness of parenting interventions for culturally and linguistically diverse families (e.g., Maori, Pacific Island, immigrant families).
2. *Fathers and parenting*: this project area examines the effectiveness of parenting interventions that are tailored to meet the needs of different father groups, e.g. solo fathers.
3. *The role of the media and technology in parent training*: this project area examines the role of the media and the web as a delivery vehicle for parenting support and as a means to access certain groups of traditionally hard to reach parents.
4. *ADHD and parenting*: This project area examines the design and effectiveness of parenting interventions for parents with ADHD and parents of children with ADHD.
5. *Parenting interventions for special or high-risk groups of families* e.g., children with chronic health conditions, children with poor nutrition, teen parents.

### **Funding support**

Applicants will be expected to apply for a University of Auckland PhD scholarship to support their candidature and the research team will be involved in securing funding support from a variety of sources to fund specific projects.

### **Application process & further information**

For further information on the application process please contact Dr Cassy Dittman by email ([c.dittman@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:c.dittman@auckland.ac.nz)). See also [www.education.auckland.ac.nz/tprg](http://www.education.auckland.ac.nz/tprg) for more information about the activities of our research group.

Potentially suitable students will be invited to meet informally with members of the research team to discuss the student's background and research interests. Suitable students will be encouraged to apply for registration through the University of Auckland Expression of Interest process ([www.postgrad.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.postgrad.auckland.ac.nz)). Each student's application to the group will be subject to confirmation via the Expression of Interest process of their eligibility for PhD enrollment.

**Closing date: Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010.**