



## **New seminars to help families cope with natural disasters**

A new Triple P intervention will help parents give emotional support to their children in the wake of natural disasters.

Flood Recovery Triple P and Cyclone Recovery Triple P are Level 2 Seminars, created in response to the cyclone and floods that hit Australia earlier this year.

The floods claimed 35 lives, displaced thousands of families and left 75% of the state of Queensland under water, while several towns – including more than 600 homes – were devastated by Cyclone Yasi.

Both seminars have been designed to help parents fully understand their children's reactions to these devastating events.

Dr Vanessa Cobham, Clinical Psychologist with the University of Queensland, has developed the two-hour sessions in collaboration with Triple P founder Professor Matthew Sanders and University of Queensland Associate Professor Brett McDermott.

Dr Cobham and Dr McDermott have previously worked together on resources for children and adolescents following Queensland's Tropical Cyclone Larry, and the 2009 Victorian bushfires.

"We'll show parents ways to encourage their children to resolve distress about these events, and how to answer the questions that can be expected as their children try to comprehend the scope of what happened," Dr Cobham said.

"The seminars are open to all parents, not just those who have specific concerns about their child, although the insights that affected families can provide will be very much appreciated."

Researchers are also using these sessions to develop a picture of how different families are coping in the aftermath.

Parents who attend a seminar will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about the support they think families need, and whether such needs are being addressed.

"Parents that participate in the research will help us keep an eye on how this special Triple P program assists the emotional health of families and their communities," Dr Cobham said.

"We would very much welcome their involvement, because their views could be significant for existing support programs."

Sessions are being rolled out across flood and cyclone affected areas of QLD.



For more information about Flood Recovery Triple P and Cyclone Recovery Triple P seminars, please visit <http://psy.uq.edu.au/qld>.

Queensland parents who are interested in participating in the research portion of the program should contact Lauren Hodge at [l.hodge@uq.edu.au](mailto:l.hodge@uq.edu.au) or (07) 3365 6207.