

## PREVENTING SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN FAMILIES

Substance misuse in America has reached epidemic proportions, placing a huge strain on communities, the foster care system, and state budgets. The stress and isolation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this disturbing trend, with over 81,000 drug overdose deaths occurring in the 12 months ending in May 2020, the highest number ever recorded in a 12-month period. [1] The sheer scale of this crisis requires cost-effective, creative solutions that work. A community-wide approach aimed at keeping families together and teaching children and young people the skills they need to withstand this epidemic is essential.

Decades of research shows that parenting is a critically important protective factor that reduces the likelihood of children developing substance misuse habits, regardless of whether their parents do. [2] Children exposed to parental substance misuse and who lack a positive parent/child relationship are at even greater risk for substance misuse (as well as school dropout, sexually transmitted disease, delinquency and mental health challenges). [3,4]

The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program® is a system of parenting support programs designed to help parents, kin, and caregivers develop skills in themselves and their children that contribute to better outcomes for children, families and the community. It offers communities an innovative way to build strength in families to endure this epidemic as well as provides an additional motivating factor to help parents misusing substances overcome their addiction.





**WORKS ACROSS DIVERSE** CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC AND **GEOGRAPHIC COMMUNITIES** 



**IMPROVES HEALTH AND** WELLBEING FOR **PARENTS AND CHILDREN** 



**IMPROVES** CHILD BEHAVIOR



TRIALS



## LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS – STOPPING THE FLOW OF ADDICTIONS

Children exposed to multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are at far greater risk of later substance misuse as well as reduced life expectancy from chronic health conditions. [5] Triple P is the only parenting program in the world to have demonstrated the ability to prevent ACEs specifically related to child maltreatment at a population level and mitigate their effects where they have already occurred.

It does this by making parenting support widely available to as many families as possible. With substance misuse affecting a wide variety of family circumstances, particularly in light of the disruption in daily life caused by the pandemic, traditional approaches which target a small proportion of the population will not diminish the scale of the problem.

Triple P builds family resilience by helping parents and children develop the ability to self-regulate, a skill which helps us set personal goals, become more self-sufficient, solve problems and manage emotions. Triple P practitioners are trained to help parents identify their own goals to solve problems within their unique family situation, and then offer strategies to achieve these goals.

This process, which is central to all Triple P programs, creates a sense of self-agency and confidence within parents that they can contribute to a positive family environment. The increased resilience children develop because of Triple P is one of the reasons the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends programs such as Triple P to mediate the toxic effects of growing up in poverty. [6]



Here in New York, Triple P is now approved as an evidence-based prevention program by OASAS. Courses are running frequently on Zoom and range from 2-3 days for initial training followed by an Accreditation process.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

<u>contact.us@triplep.net</u> <u>www.triplep.net</u>

<sup>[1]</sup> https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p1218-overdose-deaths-covid-19.html

<sup>[2]</sup> Stone, A. L., Becker, L. G., Huber, A. M., & Catalano, R. F. (2012). Review of risk and protective factors of substance use and problem use in emerging adulthood. Addictive Behaviors, 37, 747-775.

<sup>[3]</sup> Luthar, S. S., Cushing, G., Merikangas, K. R., & Rounsaville, B. J. (1998). Multiple jeopardy: Risk and protective factors among addicted mothers' offspring. Development and Psychopathology, 10, 117-136.

<sup>[4]</sup> Luthar, S. S. (2015). Resilience in development: A synthesis of research across five decades. In D. Cicchetti & D.J. Cohen (Eds.), Developmental psychopathology: Volume Three—Risk, disorder, and adaptation (2nd ed.), (pp. 739-795). New York: Wiley.

<sup>[5]</sup> Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., Koss, M. P., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. American Journal of Preventative Medicine, 14(4), 245-258. doi: 10.1016/S0749-3797(98)00017-8

<sup>[6]</sup> Council on Community Pediatrics. (2016). Poverty and child health in the United States. Elk Grove Village, Illinois: American Academy of Pediatrics. Retrieved from: http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/137/4/e20160339.full.pdf