

# NZ RTLB CONFERENCE '09

***The Incredible Years parent & teacher programmes***  
***– our journey so far and our hopes for the future***

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**Motueka**

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## Our agenda today:

- Karakia & mihi (**Emma & Shane**)
- An introduction to the IY programmes (i.e. where they are from, what they are about, what they involve) (**Shane**)
- Why do we need programmes like this? The nature of the problems which IY addresses (information on parent & family/whanau risk factors, school risk factors, child biological & developmental risk factors) – (**Shane**)
- A chance to view the MoE's DVD – IY in action! (**Emma**)
- An RTLB's personal perspective (**Emma**)

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- Are they useful? Research evidence on IY programme effectiveness, including the New Zealand experience – our own findings relating to IY programme effectiveness here in Aotearoa (**Shane**)
- The MoE and Incredible Years – our involvement in providing and supporting this programme (**Shane**)
- Possible future directions for Incredible Years programming (**Shane**)
- Questions & closing (**Emma & Shane**)

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## *Incredible Years – the programmes*

- o *These are a series of programmes developed by Professor Carolyn Webster-Stratton and colleagues at the University of Washington (Seattle) Parenting Clinic to increase parenting competencies, teacher skills and to develop children's social and academic competencies*
- o *They have been refined over a period of time such that they currently represent over 30 years of quantitative and qualitative research knowledge about child conduct problems and intervention effects in various international settings*
- o *Programmes have been developed to cover the areas of parent training, teacher classroom management training and child social skills training (with the first two being our focus today)*

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## Programme goals

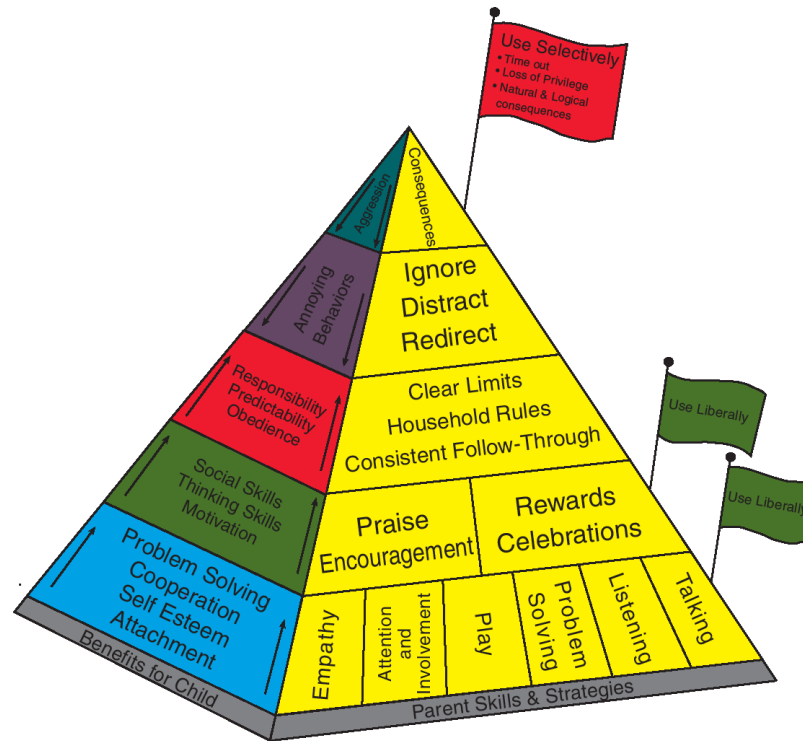
The **short-term** goals of the programmes are to :

- Reduce defiance, aggressive behaviour and related conduct problems in children
- Promote children's social (inc. play), emotional and academic skills
- Promote parent competencies and strengthen families
- Promote teacher competencies and strengthen home-school connections

The **longer-term** goals of the programmes are to :

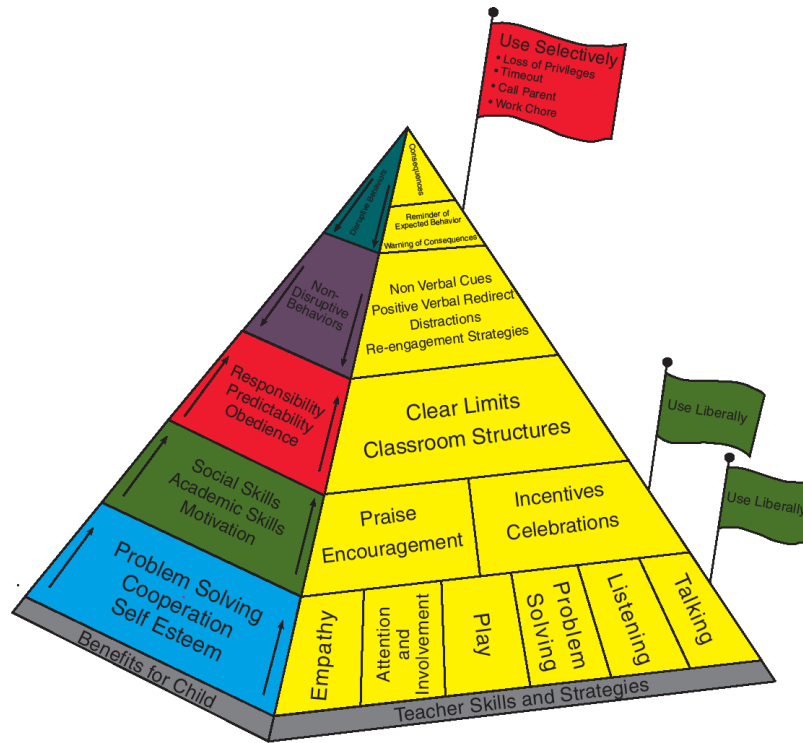
- Reduce violence, drug abuse and delinquency in later years
- Promote positive and healthy adult-child relationships

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Parenting Pyramid

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Teaching Pyramid

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## Why do we need such programmes?

- ❑ “Childhood conduct problems include a spectrum of antisocial, aggressive, dishonest, delinquent, defiant and disruptive behaviours” (AGCP, 2009)
- ❑ These problems are “the single most important predictor of later chronic antisocial behaviour and other adverse outcomes including crime, mental health problems, substance use, teen pregnancy, partner violence, educational under-achievement and poor physical health” (MSD, 2008)

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- ❑ New Zealand data is broadly similar to international findings, with a prevalence rate of 5-10% of children on this 'anti-social pathway', with the majority of these being boys (75%) and a high representation of Maori and low socio-economic groups
- ❑ Such well-established findings suggest several key reasons for attempting to intervene (early) with this group, including to decrease the short-term stresses which these problems create; to impact upon the wide range of longer-term adverse outcomes (including inter-generational transmission) which they precipitate (see Church, 2003) and because of the huge economic and social costs associated with them

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## The key risk factors for developing childhood conduct problems

- ❖ **Parent & family/whanau risk factors** include : permissive, neglectful, inconsistent and rigid parenting styles; harsh & abusive discipline strategies; low monitoring; parental psychopathology; interparental conflict & divorce; maternal isolation/lack of support; poverty & associated stressors (unemployment, crowded living conditions, illness, low education levels etc)
- ❖ **School risk factors** include inconsistent and ineffective management styles and a lack of reinforcement for prosocial behaviours leading to a cascade of negative outcomes (for the student) including peer rejection and academic failure cont...

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- ❖ **Child biological & developmental risk factors** include : a range of neurocognitive symptoms and temperamental characteristics such as inattentiveness, impulsivity, ADHD, aggression, depression, social-cognitive skill delays, social/emotional skill delays, poor emotional regulation and social understanding difficulties (inc. misperception of hostile intent). These children typically enter school with cognitive deficits and a range of language and developmental delays which reduces their school readiness and subsequent academic achievement

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## The Ministry of Education's IY DVD

- This 15m DVD (for caseworkers and potential referrers) was produced by the MoE in 2009 and tells the journey of three New Zealand families attending the IY basic parent programme
- It highlights the challenges the families faced and also shows many of the typical features of the IY sessions
- This collaborative process includes such things as group discussion and problem-solving, role-play skills practice and the use of video vignettes which highlight a range of parent-child social interactions (strategies shown to be key in helping parents learn, implement and generalise new skills)
- **PLAY!**

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## Delivering IY : an RTLB perspective

- ✓ Incredible years and case load management
- ✓ Clientele
- ✓ Interagency collaboration
- ✓ Financial considerations
- ✓ Management committee involvement and support
- ✓ Incredible Years throughout the year (no pun intended!)

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## **Does IY make a difference? – some notes on programme effectiveness**

- Webster-Stratton and colleagues have conducted/published extensive research demonstrating the effectiveness of each of the major strands (parent, teacher, child) of their intervention programming (see Webster-Stratton, 2009), with several international replications now available
- The NZ AGCP Best Practice report notes that there have now been a large number of RCTs that have shown consistent reductions in childhood conduct problems for programmes using this approach

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- Church's (2003) NZ review summarised that “parenting skills training .. can have a major impact, helping somewhere between 50-60% of parents .. to make the changes which are necessary to return the young antisocial child to a normal developmental pathway”
- Preliminary NZ data on IY from Fergusson et al (2009) and the Werry Centre (reporting on an Auckland marae-based programme) show outcome effectiveness rates in line with other international findings, with effectiveness and programme satisfaction outcomes similar for both Maori and non-Maori
- RCTs have also generally noted increased effects for combined (home & school) programme options

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## The MoE's role in promoting & supporting IY

- o Initial MoE decision to support delivery of parent training intervention based on the international/local research outlined above
- o Extensive initial facilitator training for staff in late 2005
- o New Zealand-wide programme delivery to around 100 participants via Group Special Education across 6 districts
- o By 2008 this had been extended to delivery to over 600 participants across 29 districts
- o MoE DVD produced to support information-giving around the IY programme in 2008

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## **Some possible future directions for Incredible Years programming?**

- Additional research on programme effectiveness (conducted by professor David Fergusson) is underway in New Zealand with 150 families across three geographical sites
- Programme facilitation alongside other (community) providers – CAMHS, NGOs etc
- A co-ordinated roll-out of the IY Teacher programme alongside ongoing commitment to the Parent programme
- RTLB involvement in facilitation of the programmes
- Ongoing requirements for evaluation of programme effectiveness by providers
- Need for quality training, mentoring/supervision/support etc in order to maintain programme fidelity and standards

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**Questions & closing**

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- ❑ [www.incredibleyears.com](http://www.incredibleyears.com)