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MANCHESTER CONFERENCE TO OFFER NEW HOPE FOR MANAGING CHILDHOOD ASTHMA

Next Thursday (22nd July) a conference at the University of Manchester will learn about the latest approaches to improving the quality of life of families with young children with asthma.

The conference, which takes place at the University of Manchester from 20th to 23rd July, is being held by the British Association for Cognitive & Behavioural Therapies, whose 8,000-plus membership is involved in applying behavioural and cognitive approaches in a wide variety of settings that includes health and social care, academic research and education.

Childhood asthma is a common condition affecting approximately one in 11 children in the UK. Poor asthma management can result in increased symptoms, missed days off school, hospital admissions, and behavioural and emotional problems. Poor asthma management can therefore lead to serious implications for the child's health and the family's daily life.

Responding to these challenges is the Parenting and Family Research Group (PFRG), a collaboration between the University of Manchester and the University of Queensland in Australia. Using the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme, the PFRG project has set up three studies to see whether providing parents with skills and support that help their parenting skills can be effective in improving asthma management and their child's quality of life. This work responds to needs identified by clinicians and researchers who have found that children with asthma often have higher levels of behavioural and emotional difficulties.

The latest approaches being used in these three studies, which include seminars and online, internet-based programmes will be presented to delegates at a conference symposium chaired by Dr. Rachel Calam from the PFRG at the University of Manchester. All three studies are currently open to parents of children with asthma aged 2-10 years. Further information is available online at www.psych-sci.manchester.ac.uk/pfrg.

Dr. Calam says: "At present there are limited opportunities for parents of children with asthma to access evidence based interventions. The aim of this work is to find which sorts of help parents find most useful in their busy lives."

"Professor Matt Saunders, who developed the Triple P programme at the University of Queensland, says: "Few studies have tested the effects of parenting interventions for children with chronic illness so these trials with asthmatic children represent an exciting new development for the parenting field."

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For more information or to arrange interviews please contact Communications Consultant Stephen Gregson by email stephen@babcp.com or telephone 07767 076814. Please quote reference: PR/MAN10/SCI/01.

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Notes to Editors

1. BABCP was founded in 1972 as an interest group with 195 members who were involved in the practice and theory of behaviour therapy. It now has over 8,000 members involved in applying behavioural and cognitive approaches in a wide variety of human settings, including mental health services, primary and social care, academic research and education. As the lead organisation for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) in the UK, its main aim is to promote the theory and practice of this evidence-based form of psychotherapy. From the alleviation of anxiety and depression in adults and children to aiding recovery from severe mental illnesses, from eating and compulsive disorders to cancer care and chronic pain, from soldiers returning from conflict zones to survivors of terrorist bombings, CBT has been shown to be effective in enabling people to reclaim and sustain their quality of life.
2. The PFRG aims to promote the health and wellbeing of families and children. It does this primarily by conducting research to establish the best ways of enhancing the skills and confidence of parents in order to improve parenting and prevent behavioural and emotional problems in children. PFRG studies aim to establish the scientific basis of specific aspects of the Triple P Parenting Programme. This includes rigorous evaluation of new programme developments, sometimes involving collaboration with research groups working in similar areas around the world. A focus of the PFRG is to contribute to policy development that may affect the family. This is achieved by dissemination of research findings and by consultation with local and national government and policy advisers. PFRG members are active in professional associations, serving on editorial boards for journals, grant review committees and policy forming bodies.
3. The Triple P Positive Parenting Programme is a unique, multi-level model of family intervention for the prevention and treatment of behavioural problems in children and adolescents. Triple P has been developed by Professor Matthew Sanders and his colleagues from the School of Psychology at the University of Queensland in Australia. The Triple P model draws on social learning, cognitive behaviour and developmental theory, as well as research into risk factors associated with the development of social and behavioural problems in children.