

Delphi Consensus Study of an *M*-Health Intervention to Improve Coparenting Relationship
Quality between Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviours

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To my incredible husband Phil. Always there to support and encourage me. None of this would have been possible without you holding the fort for our family whilst I was lost in this journey. I am eternally grateful for you.

Declarations

Statement of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library*, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the copyright Act 1968.

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Acknowledgement of Collaborations

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has been done in collaboration with other researchers. I have included as part of this thesis a statement clearly outlining the extent of collaboration, with whom and under what auspices. I contributed to the development of the research questions, undertook and interpreted the statistical analyses, and wrote the body of the work with editing provided by my primary supervisor, A/Prof. Linda Campbell. A/Prof. Linda Campbell contributed to the development of the research questions, the formulation of the methodology, and the editing of the manuscript. Mrs Freya Powe contributed to the original design of the study and the initial development of the methodology. Ms Jaime Wroe contributed to the formulation of the methodology and the editing of the manuscript.

Statement of Authorship

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis contains a manuscript of which I

am a joint author. I have included as part of the thesis a written statement, endorsed by my supervisor, attesting to my contribution to the joint work.

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Formatting Style Used in This Thesis

This thesis is formatted according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, seventh edition*. The manuscript was formatted for submission to the *Child: care, health and development* journal in line with the submission guidelines and instructions for authors which are contained in Appendix A.

Delphi Consensus Study of an *M*-Health Intervention to Improve Coparenting Relationship Quality between Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviours

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Declarations

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethics Approval

Approval was obtained from the ethics committee of the University of Newcastle

Consent to Participate

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Abstract

Background: Coparenting relationship quality is widely acknowledged as an important factor influencing child behaviour, parenting self-efficacy, and parental mental health. A quality coparenting relationship is thought to buffer negative short- and long-term outcomes for parents (e.g., mental health, relationship difficulties) and children (e.g., behavioural, developmental).

Method: In a recent Delphi Consensus study by Powe et al. (2019) exploring broad parenting themes, four coparenting specific themes (e.g., respectful communication, managing conflict) and 21 subtopics (e.g., defusing conflict, active listening, respect) were identified. The current study extends on the Powe et al. study by systematically developing and testing the feasibility (i.e., clarity, usefulness, relevance) of a bank of researcher-developed, *m*-health intervention messages (N=63) designed to support coparenting relationship quality for parents of children with challenging behaviours. An online Delphi methodology over three consecutive rounds was adopted with an expert professional panel (n=11) with experience in childhood developmental disorders, behaviour management and parenting.

Results: A total of 33% (n=21) of the initial bank of researcher-developed *m*-health messages (N=63) were endorsed by 80% or more of the Delphi expert panel. The final message bank represented all four main themes but not all subtopics. Final messages were deemed by the panel to be helpful, clear, and relevant for parents of children with behavioural challenges.

Conclusion: There was consensus from an expert panel that the researcher-developed messages were suitable to support the coparenting relationship (e.g., improved communication and interpersonal connection) for parents of children with behavioural challenges. The findings may inform future development of a web-based *m*-health

intervention to support coparenting quality in populations of parents with children who have behavioural challenges. Future studies should assess the feasibility of the *m*-health messages in the target population.

Delphi Consensus Study of an *M*-Health Intervention to Improve Coparenting Relationship Quality between Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviours

Literature Review

For many, becoming a parent and starting a family is a major life goal. Parenting provides many intrinsic rewards, and it is universally one of society's most important rites of passage and a fundamental component of human existence (Thomas et al., 2017). However, less commonly explored prior to embarking into parenthood are the associated challenges. For many parents, the reality of parenthood can be challenging both personally and interpersonally. Influential factors impacting the transition to, and navigation of, parenthood include the quality of the romantic relationship, the quality of the individual's and their partners family and social support systems, and the individual's and their partner's mental health prior to having children (Duvander et al., 2020; Kariman et al., 2016). These factors can positively or negatively impact the parenting experience. However, some groups are at greater risk of a variety of factors including but not limited to poor mental health and parent-child attachment, and relationship challenges.

One parent group at significantly greater risk of poor child, parent and family system outcomes are parents of children with behavioural challenges (Latham et al., 2018).

Challenging behaviour is any behaviour or behavioural pattern deemed to hinder a child's learning and development (Fettig et al., 2013). It can often be harmful to the child and to others and places the child at risk for social problems in adolescence and adulthood (Bailey & Wolery, 1992; Kaiser & Rasminsky, 2003). Parents of children with behavioural challenges are significantly more likely to experience relationship breakdowns, interfamily conflict, disruptions to work, reduced social engagement, and poor personal and interpersonal mental health (Doubet & Ostrosky, 2015; England & Sim, 2009; Hauge et al., 2015; Karst & Van Hecke, 2012; Saini et al., 2015). Whilst this may be due to having a child with behavioural

challenges, there may also be pre-existing factors in parents that may have caused attachment and mental health concerns resulting in behavioural challenges in the children (Schickedanz, Halfon, Sastry & Chung, 2018). Behavioural challenges can be a result of temporary or more chronic environmental stressors (e.g., trauma, sensory sensitivities, impaired impulse control etc,) or be associated with neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g., Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD] etc.). For some children, behavioural problems may become more enduring and persistent resulting in diagnoses of Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) or Conduct Disorder (CD) (Maughan et al., 2004).

Coparenting is a complex construct that describes a specific relationship between the primary carers of a child or children. It is exclusively considered within the context of parenting and parenting related duties (e.g., practical, and emotional support), and is distinct from characteristics of a romantic relationship (Feinberg & Sakuma, 2011; Schrodtt & Braithwaite, 2011). More specifically, financial, sexual, and romantic factors are not directly considered in a coparenting framework (McHale et al., 2002). The coparenting framework takes into consideration many types of parenting systems including but not limited to separated parents, parent-grandparent, and blended family systems. Interestingly, in coparenting relationships whereby the romantic relationship is intact, research indicates that positive coparenting is more predictive of marital quality, than marital quality is predictive of positive coparenting (Feinberg et al., 2007; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2004). Furthermore, higher perceived coparenting quality, irrespective of relationship status, is positively associated with- however not causally related to- improved parental adjustment and mental health, and greater parenting self-efficacy (Doubet & Corso, 2010; Feinberg, 2002; Feinberg et al., 2007; Saini et al., 2015; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2004). For children, positive coparenting relationships improve a child's sense of security and self-worth, decreases stress and anxiety, and positively influences parent-child communication (Fagan & Lee, 2014;

Hayes & Watson, 2013). Longitudinal studies have shown coparenting to be a predictor in child adjustment over time (Floyd et al., 1998; Jones et al., 2003). Evidence suggests more favourable coparenting is positively related to parental coping and problem-solving and more favourable interpersonal and social outcomes for children (Feinberg, 2003; Teubert & Pinquart, 2010). Furthermore, Latham et al. (2018) posits that a quality coparenting relationship can buffer the impact of negative child behaviours on parental self-efficacy.

Studies have shown that coparenting quality can be enhanced through parental psychoeducation. Thus, coparenting presents as a mechanism for positive change in the parenting population. For example, a study by Feinberg et al. (2009) looked at a parental psychoeducation program delivered through hospital infant education programs, which provided information on topics such as postpartum depression, interparental conflict, parenting skills and child self-regulation. Researchers reported improved coparenting quality as determined by lower levels of competition and better communication between parents. In another study by Feinberg and Sakuma (2011), parental psychoeducation focused on emotional control, conflict management, problem solving, communication and support strategies in the joint parenting of infants. Fathers engaged in the program reported improved capacity to support their partner and improved closeness with their partner. In addition, mothers reported better mental health with lower levels of depression and anxiety compared to the control mothers who received no psychoeducation. Furthermore, all parents engaged in the program reported improved parent-child relationships. Parenting programs designed to support coparenting populations have also been shown to be effective in targeting challenging childhood behaviours, especially when both coparents participate (Porzig-Drummond et al., 2014). In addition, coparenting-based psychoeducation programs have been shown to be effective in building more confident and involved parenting practices (Kaminski et al., 2008).

However, one significant barrier to coparenting-based psychoeducation programs is

the engagement of both parenting partners. Paternal engagement remains a significant challenge across parenting psychoeducation programs more broadly (Lechowicz et al., 2019; Tully et al., 2017). According to evidence, some of the main barriers in recruiting fathers include a lack of awareness, maternally focused content and services, additional costs, and inflexible work commitments (Bayley et al., 2009; Love et al., 2016; Panter-Brick et al., 2014). Therefore, interventions need to be tailored to suit and be accessible by both parties of the parenting system to be successful (Axford et al., 2012; Bayley et al., 2009; Love et al., 2016).

Due to low parent participation rates in traditional face-to-face parent training interventions and advances in technology, researchers and practitioners are beginning to use mobile devices, tablets and smartphones, or *m*-health, as a delivery platform to provide on-demand and flexible access to programs (Baumel et al., 2016; Breitenstein et al., 2014; Self-Brown & Whitaker, 2008; Shorey et al., 2017). *M*-health interventions also can be tailored to suit a variety of population needs and provide opportunities for cost effective program delivery (Yang & Van Stee, 2019). Millennial parents are adept in their use of technology and embrace digital media tools to access information (Oomen-Early & Early, 2015). Therefore, parents present as a potential target population for *m*-health interventions.

Within the parenting literature, *m*-health parenting programs have led to improved parenting self-efficacy and child behaviours. A meta-analysis conducted by Lindhiem et al. (2015) found psychotherapy and behavioral interventions delivered by *m*-health platforms produced significantly greater treatment outcomes compared to no intervention. In addition, *m*-health studies delivering parenting programs have reported benefits including improved parenting self-efficacy and a reduction in negative child behaviours. Therefore, the use of *m*-health is one approach increasingly being used as a channel to deliver flexible access to intervention programs in parent populations (Baumel et al., 2016; Breitenstein et al., 2014).

In summary, the coparenting relationship presents as a favourable target for intervention. Parenting literature indicates coparenting quality is a modifiable factor that can be targeted through parental psychoeducation with improvements to coparenting quality providing positive outcomes for the parent, child, and family system (Feinberg, 2002). In addition, these benefits have been demonstrated in interventions that specifically target behaviour problems in children. One significant barrier identified in the delivery of parenting programs is parental engagement. *M*-health is an emerging new psychoeducation platform with increasing evidence of its ability to meet outcome goals within the parenting population.

The current Delphi Consensus study extends on the findings by Powe (2019) to systematically develop and test the feasibility (i.e., helpfulness, clarity, and relevance) of a bank of researcher developed *m*-health messages designed to support coparenting quality in parents of children with behavioural challenges. We developed a bank of *m*-health messages to be systematically evaluated for feasibility by an expert panel, consisting of academics and professionals with experience in childhood developmental disorders, challenging behaviours, and parenting, using a Delphi methodology.

Method

The Delphi Method

The current study employed a Delphi Method to enable the systematic development of the subject by an expert panel. The Delphi method is used as a means of forecasting based upon results of numerous rounds of questionnaires sent to a panel of experts (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963; Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004). In alignment with this methodology, researcher developed *m*-health messages designed to support coparenting quality in parents of children with behavioral challenges were assessed for feasibility by expert panel members across three

rounds. During each round, the expert panel independently rated the clarity (i.e., “Did you find this message clear?”), helpfulness (i.e., “Do you think this message would be helpful for parents?”) and relevance (i.e., “How relevant is this message to parents?”) of the researcher-developed *m*-health messages in the context of the target population. The expert panel were also provided with the opportunity to provide open feedback on each individual item at the time of rating. Based on feedback and rating scores from the expert panel, messages were modified, combined, or omitted between each round. Rounds were spaced two weeks apart, between 1st October, 2020, and 12th November, 2020, and this process was replicated across all three rounds of the study. The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Newcastle, approval No. H-2018-0391 (see Appendix B).

Panel formation

The study recruited 14 expert panel members with expertise in the areas of neurodevelopmental disorders, behaviour management and parenting across both government and private organisations. Participants were excluded if they did not complete all Delphi rounds. It is recommended that a sample size between 10 and 18 panel members per expert area is suitable for research using Delphi Method (Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004). All panel members were over 18 years of age.

Expert panel members were identified by the research team and directly invited to participate in the study via email invitation (see Appendix C) and to review the Professional Information Statement (see Appendix D). Inclusion criteria included working in the field, either clinically or from a research perspective, with experience or knowledge relevant to supporting parents and families with children with behavioural challenges (e.g., children with developmental disorders or problem behaviours), and access to the internet.

Questionnaire development

The current study extends on the findings by Powe (2019), which identified 19 original overarching coparenting themes and associated subtopics suitable for parent training (see Appendix E). These themes were reviewed by the research team using consensus methodology. A consensus team of three independent reviewers is deemed acceptable (Custer et al., 1999). Each theme was reviewed by the minimum three independent reviewers. All items that met expert panel consensus for inclusion (i.e., scores ≤ 2 for relevance or helpfulness) or exclusion (i.e., scores ≥ 3 for relevance or helpfulness) were retained or omitted accordingly. For any item that did not meet consensus, the third independent reviewer was engaged for a final decision. Four themes were excluded during the initial review and 10 themes required.

In summary, the consensus review identified five main themes including *conflict resolution*, *respectful communication*, *listening skills*, *working together*, and *developing strategies to deescalate conflict*. The themes of *conflict resolution* and *developing strategies to deescalate conflict* themes were consolidated and represented as *conflict resolution*. Therefore, a total of four main themes emerged. A summary of the review process for identifying the study themes can be found in Figure 1.

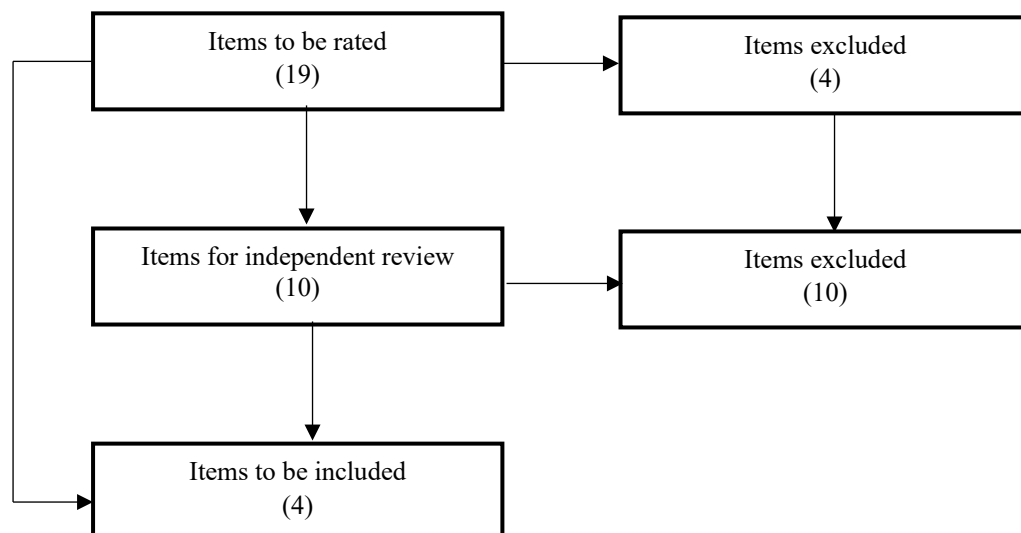


Figure 1. Review process of the coparenting themes by Freya et al. (2019)

Each overarching theme contained between four to seven subtopics with a total of 21 subtopics across all four themes. A summary of the overarching themes and subtopics is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Coparenting Themes and Subtopics

Themes	Subtopic
1. Conflict resolution skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness, and respect of differences • Defusing conflict • Managing conflict healthily • Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive • Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right
2. Communicating respectfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing rapport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basics: tone, body language and using helpful expressions/phrases • Positive communication strategies • Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down

3. Listening skills

- Being able to just listen and not wait to interject
- Active listening
- Taking the time to talk to your co-parent
- Paying attention, asking if you understood the other parent correctly
- Non-judgemental listening
- Using interest, warmth, and humour
- Turn taking

4. Working together as parents

- Respect
- Decide what is ultimately in the best interests of children while understanding that each parent may achieve this in different means
- Developing joint goals
- Improving communication between parents
- Why is it important to present a united front?

How to deal with differences of opinion between parents

For each subtopic, three *m*-health messages were drafted. According to Hair et al. (2010), a sample of three items is sufficient in capturing a construct. Evidence-based parenting literature, websites and books were consulted in the development of the *m*-health messages. The final bank consisted of 63 *m*-health messages to be reviewed by the expert panel in Round One of the Delphi study (see Appendix F). Figure 2 provides a summary of the *m*-health message development process.

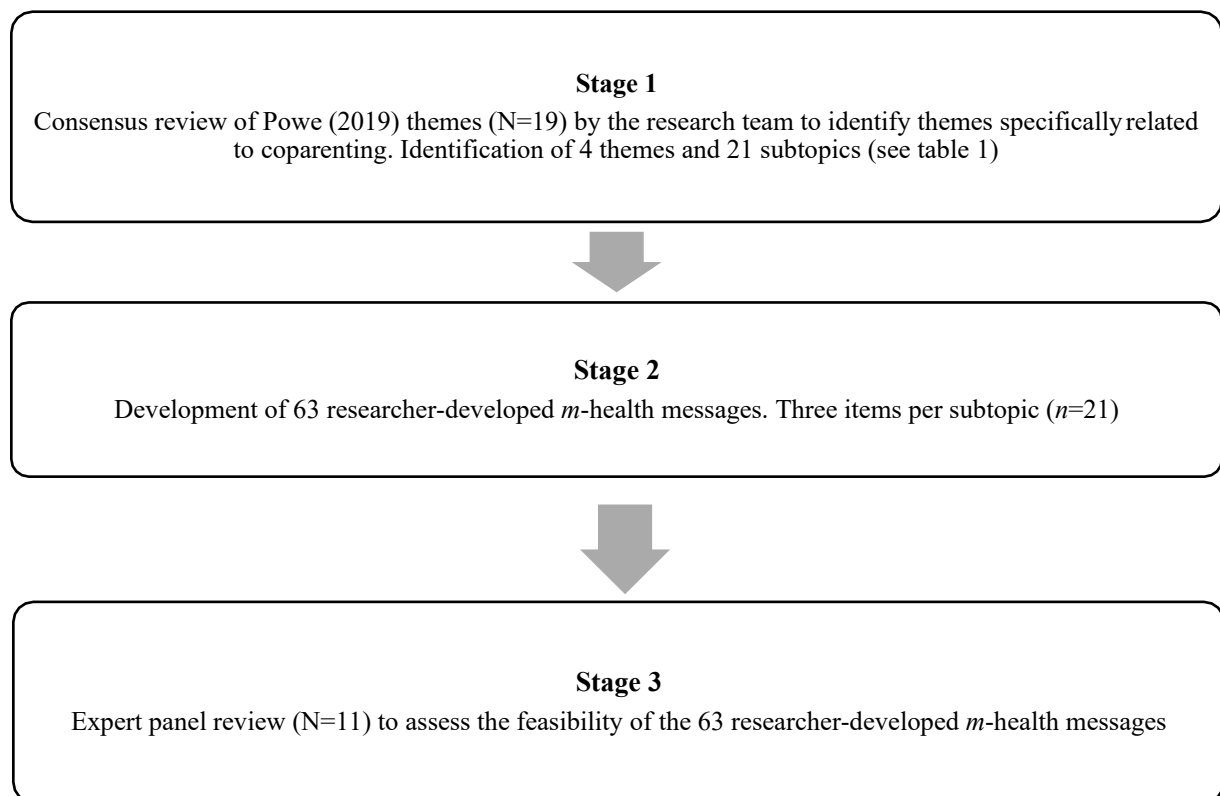


Figure 2. Development Process of the *m*-health message.

Questionnaire administration

Delphi rounds were administered using the online survey platform Qualtrics, pre-determined criteria (see Figure 3). A participant-specific survey link was emailed to panel members. Study information was presented, and informed consent provided. A single email reminder was delivered if the survey was not completed within seven days. However, if no response was received within an additional seven days the participant was removed from the study.

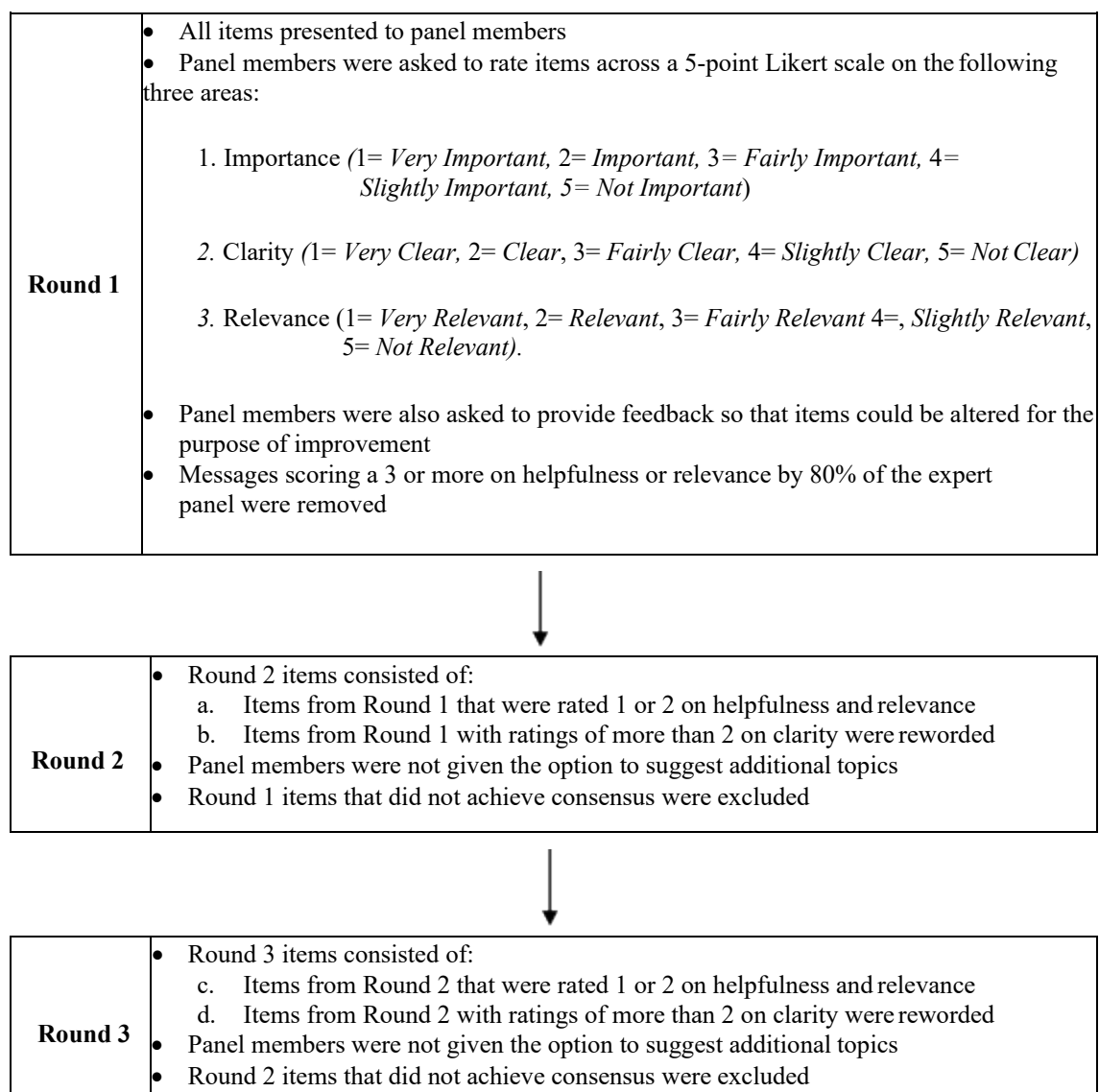


Figure 3. Delphi Administration Schedule.

For each Delphi round, expert panel members rated the researcher-developed *m*-health messages using a 5-point Likert scale to assess the following pre-determined study outcomes:

1. How helpful or support they felt the message was for the coparent population (i.e., *Very Helpful*, *Helpful*, *Fairly Helpful*, *Slightly Helpful*, *Not Helpful*).
2. The clarity of the message and whether the language and terms used were appropriate for the target population (i.e., *Very Clear*, *Clear*, *Fairly Clear*, *Slightly Clear*, *Not Clear*).
3. The relevance of the message content to the target population with the intent of improving the coparenting relationship (i.e., *Very Relevant*, *Relevant*, *Fairly Relevant*, *Slightly Relevant*, *Not Relevant*).

The feasibility assessment criteria are provided in Table 2. Panel members were also encouraged to provide open ended feedback for each item at each round.

Table 2

Feasibility - Assessment criteria for the researcher-developed m-health messages.

Feasibility Construct	Definition	Sample item
<i>Helpfulness</i>	Perceived benefit of the <i>m</i> -health message to parents of children with behavioural challenges.	“Do you think this message would be helpful for parents?”
<i>Clarity</i>	Transparency and readability the <i>m</i> -health message.	“Did you find this message clear?”

<i>Relevance</i>	Relevance of information and parenting strategies discussed in the <i>m</i> -health message for parents of children with behavioural challenges	“How relevant is this message to parents?”
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*Adapted from Fletcher et al. (2016)

Analysis

Expert review ratings and feedback were assessed following each Delphi round in accordance with the study criteria. Item eligibility was determined for the helpful and relevant constructs if the item was rated as either *Very Helpful/Relevant* or *Helpful/Relevant* (i.e., score 2 or less). If an item was rated *Fairly Helpful/Relevant*, *Slightly Helpful/Relevant* or *Not Helpful/Relevant* (i.e., score 3 or greater) by two or more reviewers (20%) it was removed from the item bank. Items reported by two or more assessors as repetitive in the feedback were also removed from the item bank. For clarity items, ratings of two or greater were rephrased to improve readability and reassessed in the subsequent round.

Results

Panel Members

Fourteen professionals were invited to participate in the study. Of these, 12 (92%) completed round one. There was minimal attrition over the final two rounds, with 11 professionals completing all Delphi rounds.

Professional Panel

The panel ($N = 11$) consisted of psychologists ($n = 7$), an occupational therapist ($n = 1$), a speech pathologist ($n = 1$), a registered nurse ($n = 1$), and a general paediatrician ($n = 1$). Panel members reported working across a range of private (66.6%) and government organisations (33.4%) including hospitals, university, private practice, disability support, children and family services, and child protection. Panel member's professional experience ranged from 4 months to 30 years, with 27.3% having ten years or more experience, 9.1% with between five to 10 years' experience and 63.6% with less than 5 years' experience. The panel consisted of 63.6% of members who had children with parenting experiences ranging from 1 year to 31 years, with 12.5% of members having between 5 and 10 years and 37.5% having 10 to 20 years, and 50% of members had more than 20 years' parenting experience. Panel members' perceived satisfaction with their own coparenting relationships were also explored. Most panel members (85.8%) reported positive (i.e., *Very Satisfied*, *Satisfied*) coparenting experiences. Only one panel member (14.2%) reported no satisfaction. An overview of sample characteristics for the panel members is provided in Table 3.

Table 3*Sample Characteristics of Expert Panel*

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Sex (N=11)		
Female	9	81.8
Male	2	18.2
Professional organisation type (N=15) *		
Private Practice	8	53.3
Government	2	13.3
Health Organisation	2	13.3
Disability Support	2	13.3
Academic	1	6.8
Professional Experience (N=11)		
Less than 1 year	1	9.1
1-10 years	7	63.6
11-20 years	2	18.2
21 +	1	9.1
Parenting Experience (N=7)		
5-10 years	1	12.5
11-15 years	2	25.0
16+ years	5	62.5
Sex of Child or Children of Panel Member (N=20)		
Male	15	75.0
Female	5	25.0

Note. Percentages to one decimal point; * N greater than participate numbers indicates multiple employment roles.

Feasibility

The original bank of 63 researcher developed *m*-health messages were reviewed according to the study criteria outlined in Figure 3. The Delphi method resulted in the exclusion of 29 items and the modification of 32 items in Round One (see Appendix G), and the exclusion of 13 items and modification of 17 items in Round Two (see Appendix H). As feasibility ratings for each individual *m*-health message in Round Three did not meet exclusion criteria (i.e., mean score ≥ 3), nil required modification or deletion according to this quantitative criterion (see Figure 4 and Appendix I).

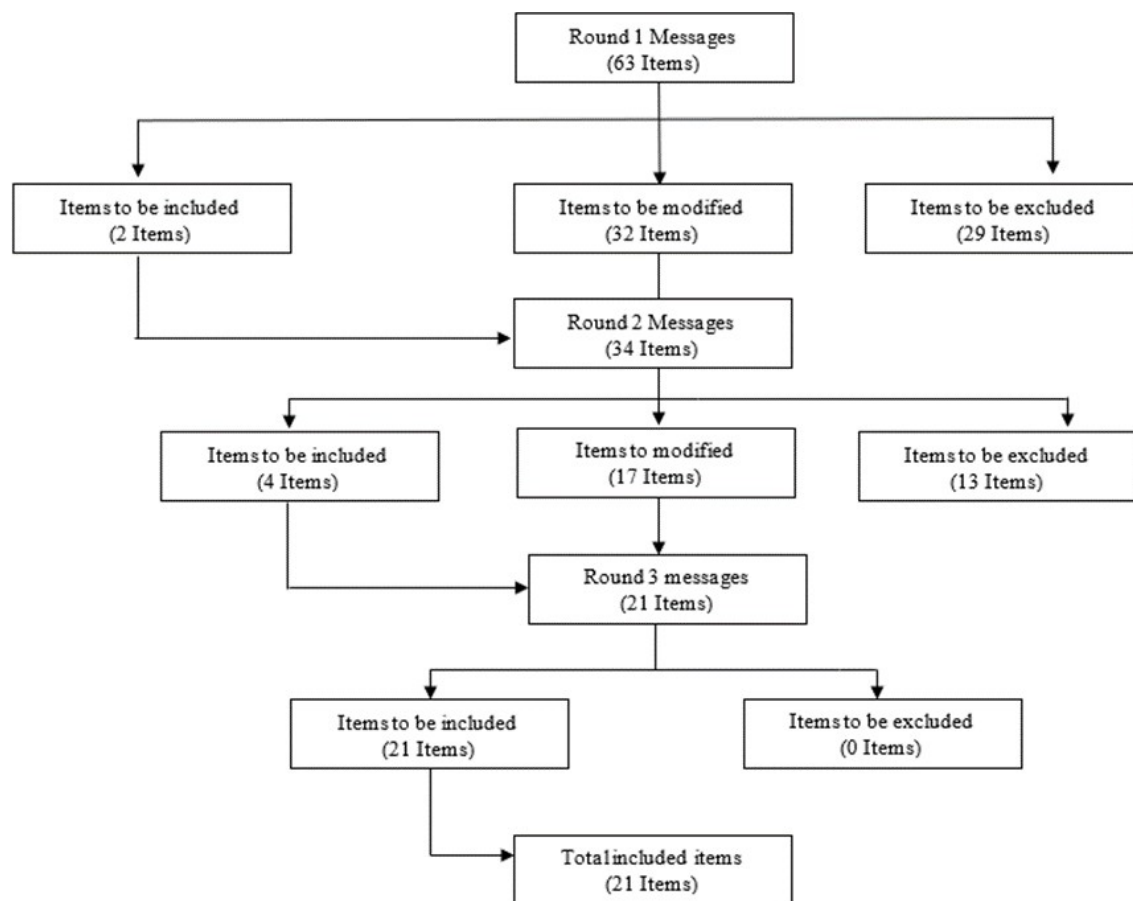


Figure 4. Number of items included, modified, and excluded at each round of the Phase One questionnaire.

The final bank of researcher-developed *m*-health messages reviewed by the expert Delphi panel consisted of 21 items. Consistent with expectations, a majority

(90.5%) of the panel members rated these *m*-health messages as highly feasible for parents of children with behavioural challenges, as characterised by a mean overall feasibility rating ≤ 2 ($M = 1.38$, $SD = .58$). Furthermore, the majority ($\geq 80\%$) of panel members strongly agreed that the final bank of *m*-health messages was helpful, clear, and relevant for parents of children with behavioural challenges (see Table 4).

Table 4

Mean feasibility ratings according to expert review panel (N = 11)

	Feasibility Construct		
	Helpfulness	Clarity	Relevance
Mean (Standard Deviation)	1.43 (.59)	1.37 (.61)	1.35 (.55)

A summary of the mean and standard deviation for all factors (i.e., helpfulness, clarity, and relevance) and the overall feasibility score for each of the final items is presented in Table 5.

Table 5*Item Ratings of Helpfulness, Clarity, Relevance, and Feasibility*

Theme*	Subtopic	Item	Helpfulness Mean (SD)	Clarity Mean (SD)	Relevance Mean (SD)	Feasibility Mean (SD)
1	Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness, and respect of differences	Time out together as a couple is absolutely essential and your children will benefit. Positive and enjoyable activities with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership. Take any opportunity you can to prioritise time with each other, even if it's only watching a favourite show together for half an hour after the children are in bed.	1.27 (.44)	1.18 (.44)	1.18 (.33)	1.21 (.41)
	Defusing Conflict	Lead by example next time you find yourself in an argument with your partner. Children learn how to resolve conflict in relationships from their parents, so try to set the example by handling conflicts the way you would want your child to.	1.27 (.50)	1.45 (.73)	1.18 (.44)	1.30 (.56)
	Managing conflict healthily	If you are struggling to manage conflict with your partner, sometimes trying different ways to express yourself can be useful. Saying something like "I understand why you do [it] the way you do, however can we try it [another] way and see how it goes?" may generate a more favourable response from your partner. A few sessions with a parenting specialist may also be useful to create a parenting plan which works for both of you.	1.36 (.73)	1.55 (1.01)	1.36 (.73)	1.42 (.82)
	Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive	When current ways of communicating with your partner aren't working, try something different. Sharing your perspective (e.g., This is why I'm upset) is better than blaming your partner (e.g., You should have done this...).	1.64 (.71)	1.64 (.87)	1.36 (.50)	1.55 (.69)
		Things can't always go our way and that's okay. We try and teach our children the same thing. Consider letting your partner do things their way when they have the children next time	1.64 (.73)	1.45 (.53)	1.45 (.53)	1.52 (.59)
		If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think. Letting your partner know you need 10 or 15 minutes to cool off before continuing the conversation may be helpful.	1.18 (.44)	1.36 (.73)	1.27 (.71)	1.27 (.62)
2	Establishing rapport	Maintaining connection with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis, like watch a movie together or put the kids to bed and have a late dinner with each other	1.45 (.53)	1.18 (.44)	1.45 (.73)	1.36 (.56)

		Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. If you're tired, upset and/or angry, try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you.	1.45 (.53)	1.45 (.53)	1.45 (.53)	1.45 (.53)
	Positive communication strategies	Take the time to listen to and understand your partner's point of view. Different opinions may provide different solutions.	2.00 (.78)	1.64 (.73)	1.64 (.73)	1.76 (.74)
	Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down	It's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting your partner down. Instead, do your best to maintain focus on the problem- this way there's a better chance you'll both reach a solution.	1.36 (.53)	1.27 (.71)	1.27 (.50)	1.30 (.58)
3	Being able to just listen and not wait to interject	Parents often assume what the other one is going to say before the other person finishes what they are trying to say. Sometimes these assumptions are wrong, and if even if they are right, this will lead to denial or defensiveness in the other. Therefore, do your best to allow your partner to finish what they are saying.	1.55 (1.01)	1.27 (.71)	1.27 (.71)	1.36 (.81)
	Active Listening	Sometimes we forget that our partner's input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind as to how to deal an issue, however you'll often find they want the same outcome as you. By giving your partner your undivided attention and reflecting what they've said, your partner will likely feel more understood.	1.73 (.71)	1.73 (.67)	1.55 (.53)	1.67 (.63)
	Taking the time to talk to your coparent	Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Sometimes, all that is needed is a few minutes of meaningful conversation without interruptions. A good time to schedule this might be after the children are in bed or at school.	1.45 (.53)	1.27 (.44)	1.18 (.44)	1.30 (.47)
		If you're finding it difficult to find time to communicate with your partner, try creating a scheduled time that suits you both. It'll make you feel more organised and give you some time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively.	1.64 (.53)	1.55 (.53)	1.64 (.53)	1.61 (.53)
	Turn taking	Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities around the house. Ask yourself when was the last time you bathed the kids or cooked dinner? This helps to set a shared standard and feelings of respect.	1.27 (.50)	1.27 (.71)	1.18 (.44)	1.24 (.55)
		Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? It may be beneficial to do as many chores as you can together or at the same time. This can decrease tensions that may come from an unequal sharing of responsibility.	1.18 (.44)	1.18 (.44)	1.18 (.44)	1.18 (.44)

4	Respect	Be kind to your partner and validate their feelings as much as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often be disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner behave the same way can be demoralising. Say something nice – and true- about your partner as often as you can. A few kind words may be all that is needed to let your partner know they're respected	1.18 (.44)	1.09 (.33)	1.09 (.33)	1.12 (.37)
		Have you complimented your partner today? Showing your partner respect is crucial to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you.	1.55 (.53)	1.27 (.44)	1.55 (.53)	1.45 (.50)
	Improving communication	No matter how well you know your partner you still cannot read their mind. It is much better to talk to your partner to get the facts and have a conversation rather than relying on our assumptions.	1.55 (.71)	1.45 (.73)	1.73 (.93)	1.58 (.79)
	Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents	Do not undermine your partner in front of your children. Overruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety can appear to a child as parental division. This will increase challenging behaviours in your child which will have a negative impact on them. Instead, try re-negotiating with your partner at an appropriate time when your children are not present.	1.27 (.71)	1.36 (.73)	1.18 (.67)	1.27 (.70)
		Parenting disagreements are much more beneficial as a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.	1.09 (.33)	1.09 (.33)	1.10 (.35)	1.09 (.34)

* 1 = Conflict resolution skills; 2 = Communicating respectfully; 3 = Listening skills; 4 = Working together as parents

Qualitative feedback

Feedback clustered under two key themes including: message structure (e.g., inclusion of supporting strategies and examples, concisely written messages, use of language etc.) and content tailoring. For example, feedback for improvement included clarity of the message (e.g., *“Needs to be simplified for lay person and shortened”*) and defining terms (e.g., *“Might be helpful to define what an open and positive state is and provide some examples”*). A summary of the expert feedback by theme is presented in Table 6. Panel members also commented on positive aspects of the messages (e.g., *“Good. practical strategy and thought provoking”*).

Table 6

Summary of themes and expert panel feedback

Summary Themes	Expert Panel Feedback Summary
Provide Examples	Examples were requested in message in areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to lead by example - How to show the coparent you respect them
Provide Strategies	Strategies were requested in messages in areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to be assertive - how to de-intensify old triggers - how to set joint goals
Shorter messages preferred	Messages were too long
Simple non-directive language	Use non-directive language: words like ‘attacking’ and ‘blaming’ were seen as too direct Language needs to be kept simple and straightforward
Pre-Education suggested	Pre-framing education for parents was suggested or indicated in areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why is respect healthy - Understanding body language
Context and Tailoring	Context was also deemed important in areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if parents were together or separated - communication skills of the parents - current state of the coparenting relationship parenting skills of the parents - mental and emotional health of the parents

Personalisation

Personalisation was not liked in the context of “Hey [parent]”.

According to the written feedback, a total of 32, 17 and 0 *m*-health messages were modified in Round 1, Round 2 and Round 3, respectively. Table 7 provides samples of the modified messages.

Table 7

Sample modification of three m-health messages according to expert panel feedback

Initial <i>m</i> -health message	Expert panel feedback	Modified <i>m</i> -health message
Being aggressive toward your partner in times of conflict is never a healthy solution. If things get too heated, separate yourself from the situation to de-escalate and give yourself time and space to think. Time out may be exactly what you need.	De-escalate is a word professional’s use. Not parents (aim to Grade 3). Examples of what ‘time-out’ might look like could be useful. For example, “separate, but try not to storm out”. The last sentence isn’t needed.	If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think.
When it comes to parenting a child with challenging behaviours, always check that you and your partner are clear on what the problem is. Unless this is clear and clarified, much time and energy can be wasted on dealing with ‘not the problem’.	Not the problem??	When it comes to parenting, always check that you and your partner are clear on what the issue is. Unless this is clear much time and energy can be wasted without dealing with the actual problem.
Maintaining rapport with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a	Important message and explains why quality time is needed – to improve communication and	Maintaining a connection with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit

habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis.	make the relationship as healthy as possible what might they do?	to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis,
	Language could be refined (for example, rapport= connection may be better for the parent population)	like watch a movie together or put the kids to bed and have a late dinner with each other.

Discussion

This study presents the development, methods, and expert endorsement of 21 researcher-developed *m*-health messages designed to support coparenting quality in parenting partners of children with behavioural challenges. A total of 33% (i.e., 21 of 63) of the original *m*-health message bank were endorsed by the expert Delphi panel (N=11). Feasibility findings suggest the final bank of messages were relevant, clear, and helpful. Of the original bank of 63 *m*-health messages developed, a total of 42 items (67%) were eliminated over the three consecutive Delphi rounds. A simple narrative analysis of the feedback provided valuable insight into the necessary considerations when developing *m*-health psychoeducation messages for the coparenting population. The most salient of which were message structure and content tailoring.

Collectively, the expert panel feedback cautioned the use of language that was, in some cases, deemed too directive. More specifically, the expert feedback suggested parents may be negatively triggered by some messages (e.g., “There are many caveats to time out with your partner. Wording around available opportunities may be more applicable, as statements like the above for families experiencing severe child challenging behaviour can trigger negative emotional responses”). Expert feedback also suggested that messages should

provide specific example phrases or strategies that parents could implement (e.g., “Maybe give an example phrase to use”; “Give an example of an assertive statement”). Feedback cautioned the use of particular words such as “attacking” and “blaming” (e.g., “This message elicits negative emotions when reading. It’s unpleasant and makes the message more resistant to acknowledgement”). Finally, the need for pre-framed messages was also expressed (e.g., “needs a pre-frame example such as: we can take words back however they still inflict a wound”). Greater explanation and understanding of the direction or importance of the message could aid in compliance. Feedback also suggested messages should use simpler language (e.g., consumer literacy, “aim your words at a grade 3 [level]”).

One potential way to address the above concerns may be to apply the principals of Psychological Reactance Theory (Brehm, 1966) to the development of *m*-health messages. Psychological Reactance Theory is a model that aims to explain the resistance that an audience can feel when they perceive their freedom of choice is threatened (Rains, 2013; Rosenberg & Siegel, 2018). For example, a message to parents suggesting they consider sharing more of the household chores with their partner may elicit a negative reaction for any number of reasons. Whilst the message is likely relevant and unambiguous, it may be disregarded because the recipient feels they are always being told what to do around the house by their partner. Brehm and Cole (1966) and Brehm and Sensenig (1966) focussed their earlier research on Psychological Reactance Theory around determining the antecedents and consequences of the reactance process. Dillard and Shen (2005) have since endeavoured to identify the specific elements of persuasive messages that determined their effectiveness. More recently, Gardner and Leshner (2016) explored ways in which directive messages could better persuade recipients and mitigate reactance. Given the influence quality coparenting has on child outcomes, this area appears to warrant further investigation.

Other factors that may be important to consider in the development of *m*-health messages for the coparenting population include but are not limited to parental mental health and parental self-efficacy. Feedback from the panel often indicated or referred to parental capacity to implement the message content. Factors such as parental mental health and self-efficacy play an important role in parenting behaviours and or an individual's perception of their ability to parent. Furthermore, evidence suggests parental mental health and self-efficacy may be moderated by factors such as the expression of belief in the other parents' ability to parent effectively; respecting and expressing the value of the other parents' input and contributions; in addition to coparents' willingness to present a united front in support of each other's decisions and authority (Belsky et al., 1996; McHale, 1995; Weissman & Cohen, 1985). Therefore, coparenting interventions that address and target interrelated factors may be more successful in reaching the desired outcomes.

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Content tailoring has been identified as another potential approach to address challenges identified in this study. Tailoring describes an approach that individualises content to the receiver with the expectation of improved outcomes (Teubert & Pinquart, 2010). Pre-screening of parents to assess characteristics of the coparenting relationship (e.g., relationship type), mental health, interpersonal and personal variables could allow for messages to meet and relate to the recipient's needs more directly. For example, item banks could be developed to support various coparenting relationship types (e.g., separated, grandparent-parent, foster) and specific coparenting challenges (e.g., messages to support communication, attachment, or parenting styles). Whilst *m*-health items rated for feasibility in the current study were aimed at parents in a marital or de-facto relationship, there are many other contexts that warrant tailored intervention items. Messages designed specifically for individuals in coparenting systems who are separated or divorced, disabled, foster or stepparents, have different cultural backgrounds or are same-sex, transgender or gender fluid are examples of the many larger contexts to consider. *M*-health interventions providing items geared for fathers as well as mothers would likely prove to be more accepted, helpful and relevant than those that appear to be geared more for mothers only (Panter-Brick et al., 2014).

Another important consideration in the tailoring of message content is the parenting stage or current age of the children the coparenting partnership is currently engaged in. The parenting stage has a significant impact on the division of tasks and parenting expectations over time. For example, in traditional nuclear families, when children are still extremely young and highly dependent on their carers (e.g., early parenthood), mothers are usually deemed the primary carer (Elder Jr, 1998; Feinberg & Kan, 2008; Le et al., 2016). Family systems and the coparenting relationship often change over time as characterised by the roles, responsibilities, and behaviours specific to the unique family system. Such characteristics include child behaviour, temperament and developmental age. Also included are levels of

parental education, mental and physical health; as well as financial circumstances, family support and the number of children in the family (Cox & Paley, 1997; Feinberg, 2003; Mangelsdorf et al., 2011). So, whilst there is significant evidence supporting the benefits of interventions to improve coparenting quality in parents of children with challenging behaviours, it is likely that tailoring items in alignment with specific coparenting contexts (e.g., relationship status) and user-specific challenges (e.g., mental health or parental self-efficacy) will be an important factor in optimising the effectiveness of *m*-health interventions in the future.

Finally, another important finding in the study was that although all coparenting themes were represented by endorsed items in the final bank of messages, not all subtopics were represented. More so, the expert panel reached majority consensus on subtopics related to healthy conflict management, maintaining respect and rapport within the coparenting relationship (e.g., compromising, agreeing to disagree), equal distribution of parenting tasks and presenting as a united front in front of the children. Expert panel consensus across these subtopics appears to capture the Feinberg (2003) framework of coparenting whereby four overlapping domains: a) coparental agreement (e.g., childrearing practices); b) support for the other parent; c) agreed division of labour; and d) joint management of family dynamics influence coparenting quality and child outcomes. Conversely, items within subtopics such as consideration for the other parents' point of view; listening to the other parent without judgment; using warmth and humour when communicating with the other parent; developing joint goals for the child with the other parent and respecting that the other parent has their own way of doing things did not reach expert panel consensus at all. Items regarding the importance of clarifying problems and paying attention to one's tone and body language when communicating were also not endorsed despite significant evidence highlighting the

importance of these elements in effective communication (Halford et al., 1990). It may be that message quality within these subtopics requires adjustment in accordance with the language and tailoring considerations already highlighted in this study. The lack of consensus may also be reflective of the homogeneity of expert panel members in that most were happy with their coparenting relationship or did not have coparenting experience other than that vicariously encountered with their clients. As such, expert panel members in this study may have had a skewed perception of the helpfulness and relevance of the messages rated. Panel member responses were also not anonymous, and this may have also influenced responses. Further Delphi studies representing a range of both personal and professional coparenting experiences within an anonymous expert panel appears warranted to identify if any such biases exist (Powell, 2003).

In summary, *m*-health interventions designed to improve coparenting quality are likely going to be most effective when reflecting an understanding of families from the current context in which they exist. With the knowledge that quality and cooperative coparenting is fundamentally important in children's development and is affected by variables that change with time, it seems only logical that future *m*-health interventions are designed with this in mind.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths of this study included the use of Delphi methodology as a well-established model used in the development of mental health guidelines. There was also minimal panel member attrition between rounds. A major limitation of the study however was that it did not include a consumer [parent] panel, therefore the relevance and usefulness of findings to the target parent population has not been tested (Sanders & Kirby, 2012). The suitability and credibility of panel members was a strength, with over half having more than five years'

experience in working with parents of children with challenging behaviours. Seventy-two percent have children of their own with over 10 years parenting experience, therefore a good experiential understanding of coparenting could be assumed. There was one member of the expert panel with only four months experience however, which was a limitation the overall strength of the panel. There was an over- representation of females within the panel however, which limits the extent to which findings can be generalised to represent both genders working with parents of children with challenging behaviours. This was not intentional, as there was an equal ratio of male and female experts invited to participate in the study, with fewer males engaging.

Future Directions

Message structure and content tailoring were identified as important considerations when developing *m*-health psychoeducation messages for the coparenting population. Future research on this topic should therefore examine the feasibility of *m*-health messages developed using child voice, narratives and other-referencing. Message banks tailored specifically for particular coparent populations incorporating parental mental health and self-efficacy, parental stage and or current age of children in the coparenting partnership should also be developed and examined for feasibility. Future Delphi studies should also represent a range of both personal and professional coparenting experiences within an anonymous expert panel.

Conclusion

Consensus from an expert panel support that researcher-developed messages may be suitable to improve the coparenting relationship for parents of children with behavioural challenges. Further research is warranted into message structure and content tailoring however as both were identified as important considerations impacting the perceived

effectiveness of *m*-health messages. Future research should focus on the continued development of persuasive and impactful *m*-health messages assessed for feasibility by an expert panel and then a target population.

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Key Messages

- *M*-Health interventions can be a useful mode of delivery for parental interventions and training due to the flexible and cost-effective nature of mobile technology.
- Future parental interventions should meet the needs of parents at critical transition times for both parents and their children (e.g., beginning school or divorce).
- A *m*-health bank of intervention messages should be aimed at motivating coparents to find common ground and facilitate joint behavioural management strategies.
- This study obtained consensus between an expert professional panel of academics and professionals with experience in childhood developmental disorders to develop the feasibility of researcher-developed *m*-health messages.
- The findings from this study can inform the development of *m*-health programs to support parents of children with behavioural challenges.

Appendix A



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A key messages box should be provided with each manuscript. This should include up to 5 messages on key points of practice, policy or research. This also applies to articles solicited for themed issues.

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Figures and Tables: Always include a citation in the text for each figure and table.

Appendix B

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



Notification of Expedited Approval

To Chief Investigator or Project Supervisor:	Doctor Linda Campbell
Cc Co-investigators / Research Students:	Doctor Chris May Mrs Freya Powe Mrs Nicole Ennis-Oakes
Re Protocol:	A coparenting intervention for aggressive children: a Delphi consensus study
Date:	06-Aug-2020
Reference No:	H-2018-0391

Thank you for your **Response to Conditional Approval (minor amendments)** submission to the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) seeking approval in relation to a variation to the above protocol.

Variation to:

1. Introduce Phase 2 of the study, which includes:
 - (a) changing data collected from identifying to anonymous;
 - (b) a research population of parents of children with a neurodevelopmental disorder and a control group (parents of children without neurodevelopmental disorder);
 - (c) expanding research population from n=24 to n=250 (Phase 1 expert panel n=50; Phase 2 parent panel n=200);
 - (d) addition of Prolific online recruitment;
 - (e) changing analysis and reporting from just descriptive statistics to also include correlations, t-tests, regression and ANOVA due to variables of interest;
 - (f) revision of approved questionnaire to include m-health messages, and feasibility and acceptability questions;
 - (g) addition of Parental Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (PRFQ), Parental Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC), Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS);
 - (h) amending study title to "Feasibility Study of an m-health Intervention Aimed at Improving Co-parenting Relationship Quality Between Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviours."
- Parent Information Statement (v3, dated 6.7.20)
- Professional Information Statement (v3, dated 6.7.20)
- Expert Panel Survey (version submitted 6.7.20)
- Prolific Parent Survey (version submitted 6.7.20)
- Social Media Script (version submitted 31.7.20)

Your submission was considered under **Expedited** review by the Ethics Administrator.

We are pleased to advise that the decision on your submission is **Approved** effective **06-Aug-2020**.

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



Progress Report Acknowledgement

To Chief Investigator or Project Supervisor:	Doctor Linda Campbell
Cc Co-investigators / Research Students:	Doctor Chris May Mrs Freya Powe Mrs Nicole Ennis-Oakes
Re Protocol:	A coparenting intervention for aggressive children: a Delphi consensus study
Date:	18-Dec-2020
Reference No:	H-2018-0391

Thank you for submitting your **Annual Progress Report** to the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) in relation to the above protocol.

Your report has been accepted and your HREC approval for the above research remains valid. Continuation of this approval will again be subject to the provision of an annual progress report by the due date approximately one year from now.

The timely submission of your report is greatly appreciated.

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Appendix C



Welcome to our Coparenting Study

The quality of the coparenting relationship can have a significant impact on child's psychological development and behaviours, as well as parental mental health. Researchers at the University of Newcastle are trying to find out more about strengthening the parenting relationship to best support children and their families. We are developing mobile-health (m-health) messages to deliver evidence-based strategies and skills for building healthy co-parenting relationships for parents with children aged 6 to 17 years. The purpose of this online study is to help us determine whether the information within the m-health messages is relevant, clear, and useful for parents. Your responses will allow the researchers to further develop the m-health messages before they become apart of an SMS intervention.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for considering being a part of this important and much needed research. Before we can start the study, we need to let you know what it's all about. Unfortunately, we cannot pay you to be a part of this study; however, we know your time is valuable. We are sincerely grateful for your help and hope that satisfaction is found in the knowledge that this is a critical and extremely important area of research you are helping with.

Please download and read the [Professional Information Statement](#) before proceeding. It is advised to save a copy to your computer or print a copy. Please note this survey must be completed in one sitting.

If you would like more information, please contact Nicole Ennis-Oakes, University of Newcastle (c3326848@uon.edu.au).

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Newcastle, Approval No. (H-2018-0391).

Appendix D

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Professional Information Statement for the Research Project:

Feasibility Study of an m-health Intervention Aimed at Improving Co-parenting Relationship Quality
Between Parents of Children with Challenging Behaviours

Dr Linda Campbell and Nicole Ennis-Oakes

Document Version 3; dated 06/07/2020

You are invited to participate in the research project identified above, which is being conducted by Dr Linda Campbell and Nicole Ennis Oakes from the School of Psychology, University of Newcastle.

The research is part of Nicole Ennis-Oakes postgraduate studies at the University of Newcastle, supervised by Dr Linda Campbell from the School of Psychology.

Why is the research being done?

Researchers at the University of Newcastle are trying to find out more about strengthening the parenting relationship to best support children and their families. We are developing mobile-health (m-health) messages to deliver evidence-based strategies and skills for building healthy co-parenting relationships for parents with children aged 6 to 17 years. The purpose of this online study is to help us determine whether the information within the m-health messages is relevant, clear, and useful for parents. Your responses will allow the researchers to further develop the m-health messages before they become apart of an SMS intervention. This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Newcastle, Approval No. (H-2018-0391).

Why have you been invited to take part?

As an established expert in the area of parenting and/or child behaviour, we are keen to gain your views on the usefulness, relevance and clarity of m-health messages about coparenting relationship quality.

What would you be asked to do?

We are inviting you to participate as a professional to provide your expert opinion on a bank of researcher-developed m-health messages. You will be asked to complete a 60-minute anonymous survey containing the m-health message content related to topics and strategies aimed at improving coparenting quality. For each message you will be asked to provide ratings of usefulness, clarity and relevance to parents. The opportunity to provide open written feedback for each item will also be provided.

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Whether or not you decide to participate, your decision will not disadvantage you. If you decide to participate you may withdraw from the research at any time up to the time of submitting the survey without explanation. You will also have the option of withdrawing any data that identifies you.

You may omit or refuse to answer any question without penalty or explanation. You have the right to have any of your questions about the study answered. If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask before the study begins.

How much time will it take?

If you were to participate as professional participant, the single round survey you will be asked to complete is expected to take 60 minutes in total. The survey must be completed in one sitting.

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

Participation in this study will not involve any physical harm. It is unlikely participation will result in emotional discomfort. However, in the unlikely event, you are under NO obligation to answer any item and may continue with the study without penalty or explanation. You may also withdraw from the research at any time during your participation without explanation.

Participation in this study involves the completion of a standardised test used to routinely screen for depressive symptoms in the postnatal period. Scores from this test would not be sufficient basis for clinical decisions or diagnosis as they may contain substantial margins of error and are not intended for diagnostic purposes in this study.

Should you have any concerns or feel you need to discuss your personal circumstances with

a professional please contact your GP an appropriate health professional or any of the following services:

Lifeline	Beyondblue	Parentline
13 11 14	1300 224 636	1300 301 300
www.lifeline.org	www.beyondblue.org.au	www.parentline.com.au

How will your privacy be protected?

Your privacy is important to researchers at the University of Newcastle. Data will be collected anonymously via Qualtrics (privacy policy: <https://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/>). All personal information will be handled with strict confidentiality. Any identifying data (e.g., email address) will be stored separately from your responses and will only be used for the specific purposes indicated in the survey (e.g., future research or notification of study findings), and only if you provide consent to be contacted for these reasons within the survey. Only members of the research team will have access to the information. Data will be stored electronically on the University server. The data will be kept for a minimum of five years consistent with university policy or until no longer required, at which time the records will be deleted from the server.

The data we collect will contain demographic and personal contact information (e.g., email address, occupation, professional experience). All data will be de-identified prior to the publication of any study findings. Personal records will be stored securely with access restricted the study research team. Information collected is for the sole purpose of the current study and will not be used in any future research unless your consent has been provided.

How will the information collected be used?

All data collected for this project will be de-identified prior to the reporting of any findings which will only refer to overall trends and make no reference to individuals that have participated in the study. The proposed study and its findings will be reported in a thesis as the final component for Nicole Ennis-Oakes's postgraduate degree. In addition, it is the intention of the research team to prepare research papers for scientific journal submission during the period 2020 to 2023. In addition, if you consent to your data from this study being utilised in future research, only de-identified data will be used. If consent is given participant's de-identified date will be held in a separate database for this purpose. Again, overall trends may be reported by the research team by way of scientific journal submission

or conference presentation but no reference to individuals will be reported. If you do not wish your data to be used in future research, please tick the appropriate box on the consent form. Participants will be able to request a summary of the research findings at the completion of the study. This will be communicated via email.

If you tick the box agreeing to be contacted about future research, you are under no obligation to participate in any future projects.

What do you need to do to participate?

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research. If you are happy to participate please use the link provided in your email to complete your expression of interest and some brief demographic information before commencing the survey.

Further information

Should you have any queries regarding the study, any of the investigators will be glad to answer your questions at any time.

INVESTIGATORS

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Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. (H- 2018-0391).

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to Research Services, The University of Newcastle, telephone (02) 49216333, email Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au.

Appendix E

Coparenting Topics	Subtopics
1. Conflict resolution skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness, and respect of differences – Defusing conflict – Managing conflict healthily – Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive – Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right
2. Communicating respectfully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establishing rapport – The basics: tone, body language and using helpful expressions/phrases – Respect for other parent and respect for the child – Considering the other parent's point of view – Tone of voice, positive regard, being non-judgemental – Positive communication strategies – Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down
3. Listening skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Being able to just listen and not wait to interject – Active listening – Taking the time to talk to your co-parent – Paying attention, asking if you understood the other parent correctly – Non-judgemental listening – Using interest, warmth and humour – Turn taking
4. Working together as parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Respect – Decide what is ultimately in the best interests of children while understanding that each parent in their house may achieve this in different means.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing joint goals – Improving communication between parents – Why is it important to present a united front. How to deal with differences of opinion between parents
5. Developing strategies to de-escalate conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Listening skills and respect – What to do when you are in conflict with a co-parent – How to manage conflict healthily – Emotional regulation strategies, communication styles, communication strategies, communication methods – Consistency across different settings, empathy and negotiation skills
Child directed topics	Message
6. Behaviour management strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clear boundaries and consequences, rewards; noticing positive behaviours; – What ultimately is the child learning from these strategies – Range of behaviour management strategies. How to choose the right strategy – Behaviour management strategies - Using consistency in the reward and attention – Praise and rewards – Developing reward strategies – Positive parenting, consequences, rewards, attachment parenting, visuals, timetables
7. Participating in shared activities e.g. book reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developing listening skills – Having an activity each day for shared time that does not involve a screen – Selection of activities enjoyable to the child
8. Expressing affection and love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Warmth in relationships – Examples of ways to express affection and love – How do we express affection to those we love. Why is it important to do this well
9. Responsive parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encouragement and praise for desired behaviours

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Anchoring back to the child's core emotional/psychological need – Helping a child to tolerate and "surf" strong feelings – Education around why this is important and strategies to use – Responding positively without judgement of the other parent
10. Understanding a child's needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recognising triggers and how to manage them. – Why do children misbehave? – Limiting choices, providing age-appropriate choices – Parental self-education into child's age-appropriate needs – Child development
11. Understanding of child developmental needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Age appropriateness of behaviours; normalising behaviours – Why do children's needs change over time
12. Providing clear instructions to the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Simple instructions, don't phrase as questions, introduce more complex messages as child matures – Clear and concise communication – Keep it simple – Age appropriate
13. Providing safety and security for the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Essential for child to feel safe – Boundaries and risk taking
14. Building trust based on consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Routine – Education around why this is important and strategies to use – Establishing and maintaining consistent routines. – Consequences
15. Improved outcomes for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establishment of simple goals and outcomes for the child – Behaviour management e.g. self soothing and resilience
16. Parent-child communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Use of praise and rewards – Mutual respect, agree on appropriate behaviours in communication, modelling of behaviours/communication – Regular one-on-one chats – Tone, body language, invitational language

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Two way
17. Being able to reinforce positive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identification of a positive behaviour then actively reinforcing it. Reward system? – Praise and rewards – Encourage what you wish to continue
18. Understanding that children need to first feel comfortable and safe to take risks and be supported through learning from these	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Assist parents to recognise the differing needs at different times – Developmental needs – Responses to attempts at tasks, making mistakes as a part of learning and responses to these need to reflect this
19. Child development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Overall monitoring of child's development - milestone checks – Recognising your child's strengths and interests. – Parent child communication – Normal stages of development in children. Behaviours that result from stages of development and how to understand what your child needs when

Appendix F

Original Message Bank.

Coparenting Themes and Subtopics
1. Conflict resolution skills
Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences
Message1: As parents of a child or children with challenging behaviours, time out with only each other is crucial. This must be prioritised where possible and this time with your partner should be considered just as important as time with with your child. Positive and enjoyable time with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership enabling good communication and support.
Message2: Paying attention to the emotions of your partner <i>and</i> your own is an important step towards resolving family issues.
Message3: Remember, positive outcomes are much more likely when you and your partner are in an open, positive state before challenging conversations start. Positive and open communication is rarely possible when you are in a bad mood.
Defusing conflict
Message1: Hey [parent], identifying your thoughts and feelings regarding a problem and sharing them with your partner (without blaming or attacking them) will help you find effective solutions. Remember, a problem well stated is a problem half-solved!
Message2: Next time you find yourself in an argument ask yourself — is this how I would want my child to resolve conflict? Children learn from their parents how to resolve conflict in relationships so set the example by handling it the way you would want your child to.
Message3: Has something been bugging you? Identifying your feelings about a problem is the first step to solving it. So be honest with yourself and listen to your feelings to see what the <i>real</i> problem is. The answer might surprise you.
Managing conflict healthily
Message1: Managing conflict isn't easy but criticising your partner at the start of the conversation is likely going to ensure they <i>do not</i> listen to you. Instead of criticising, try to respectfully communicate what your problem is so your partner doesn't feel attacked.
Message2: Managing conflict healthily is one of the major keys to a successful relationship. One way to manage conflict is to restrain yourself from blaming your partner (e.g. "you're wrong") and instead try to share your perspective (e.g. "this is why I'm upset").
Message3: Accepting the differences of your partner may be difficult but it's important in keeping the relationship healthy, especially at times of conflict. Just because they have a different opinion does not mean they are wrong.....
Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive
Message1: Things can't always go our way and that's okay. We teach our children the same thing. Take into consideration the preferences and opinions of your partner and they'll be more likely to consider yours as well.
Message2: Many of us are busy working out our responses whilst our partners are talking. As a result, we often don't actually listen to what it is they are saying. Practice the art of listening to understand, rather than listening to respond. You may not agree with your partners perspective, however at least you may understand it.
Message3: Being aggressive towards your partner in times of conflict is never a healthy solution. If things get too heated, separate yourself from the situation to de-escalate and give yourself time and space to think. Time out may be exactly what you need.
Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right

Message1: Check in with your partner often to make sure you're both on same page as to what the problem actually is before you go about dealing with it.

Message2: Not sure you handled your child's problem the right way? Then talk to your partner and ask if you did. It's a great way to build your relationship with them and it shows you value your partners opinion.

Message3: When it comes to parenting a child with challenging behaviours, always check that you and your partner are clear on what **the** problem is...unless this is clear and clarified, much time and energy can be wasted on dealing with '*not the problem*'.

2. Communicating respectfully

Establishing rapport

Message1: Maintaining rapport with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis.

Message2: Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. It takes practice though, especially when you're tired, upset and/or angry. When you're next feeling this way, try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you when they're tired, frustrated and/angry.

Message3: Bonding with your partner builds trust and respect. When was the last time you guys did something together?

The basics: tone, body language and using helpful expressions/phrases

Message1: Talking to your partner in a calm, respectful tone will help make the conversation continue in a healthy manner. So listen and be aware to how you speak. It's important.

Message2: Body language talks just as loudly as the words you're saying. Be mindful that your words and body language are both saying the same thing when communicating with you're partner.

Message3: "*Think before you speak*" is a phrase that can save your relationship many times over.

Positive communication strategies

Message1: A good strategy for positive communication with your partner is to be genuine and empathetic. By doing this, you show sensitivity and care which will make you a better and more loving partner.

Message2: Try to understand your partners point of view and be open to doing things a different way. It'll help build positive communication between you and your partner for a healthier relationship.

Message3: Acknowledging your partner while listening to them effectively builds positive communication. Plus, actively listening is a great way to show your respect and love.

Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down

Message1: Hey [parent], are you finding it difficult to put your thoughts and feelings for your partner into words? Try writing it down and sending them an email. It'll give you more time to think about how you feel and allows you to carefully choose your words.

Message2: Hey [parent]! In case you didn't know, there are a variety of apps you can use that will help you and your partner to communicate better. Look into these, an app could be just what you need to start making things better.

Message3: Hey [parent], it's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting each other down. Instead, focus on the problem so you can both reach a solution.

3. Listening skills

Being able to just listen and not wait to interject

Message1: Listening to your partner is the first step to understanding them. So before explaining your point of view, don't interrupt and let them fully explain theirs. That way, the same courtesy can be returned to you.

Message2: Hey [parent], sometimes all you need to do for your partner is to sit down and listen to what they have to say. It may be difficult but the results may surprise you!

Message3: Hey [parent], you talking is just half of the conversation. Remember to actively listen to your partner when they talk so you can listen to understand, then go on to talk in an open and non-condescending way so that you can then be understood.

Active listening

Message1: Sometimes we have such strong feelings or opinions about things that we shut other perspectives down before we actually truly listen to the possibilities they could offer. Practice truly listening to your partner without interrupting them, or pre-determining your response.

Message2: Hey [parent], have you been actively listening to your partner? Sometimes, we forget that our partner's input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind as to how to deal an issue, however you'll often find they want the same outcome as you.

Message3: Actively listening to your partner is crucial in every relationship, [parent]. That means giving your partner your full undivided attention when it's necessary.

Taking the time to talk to your co-parent

Message1: Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust their parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Look after your personal and parenting relationship by prioritising time with your partner. Sometimes, all you both need is a few minutes of meaningful conversation without interruptions.

Message2 Hey [parent], if you're finding it difficult to find the time to talk to your partner try creating a schedule with them. It'll make your day more organised and give you the appropriate time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively.

Message3: When was the last time you had a quality 'date' with your partner? Parents of children with challenging behaviours benefit from more time out from their children so they can talk, re-connect and re-charge. Make regular date nights with your partner and this will benefit your family as a whole.

Paying attention, asking if you understood the other parent correctly

Message1: Hey [parent], not sure you always get where your partners' coming from or what they mean in a particular situation? Ask them to clarify in an open and non-confrontational manner. It shows you're trying to understand them better.

Message2: Hey [parent], if you're finding it difficult to understand your partner try being more attentive to not only what they say but their perspective. We all look at things differently and different perspectives are just that, different- not necessarily good or bad, or better or worse. Just different.

Message3: Paying attention to your partner during a conversation works wonders. Your partner will notice you're making a conscious effort to listen and they'll appreciate you more for it.

Non-judgemental listening

Message1: Hey [parent], it's easy to criticise but difficult to listen without judgement. Try doing the latter for your partner and see how it impacts the conversation.

When you listen to your partner without judgement you show them care and understanding — values that will improve any relationship.

Message3: We all do the best we can with the resources we have available at the time. If you or partner have had a difficult day with your child or children, don't judge their or your behaviours, just accept it was the best you or your partner could do at the time.

Using interest, warmth and humour

Message1: Parents of children with challenging behaviours need more time out to connect with each other and enjoy some downtime. Prioritising this time with each other to unwind and have a laugh is as valuable and important as time with your children.

Message2: Hey [parent], when was the last time you and your partner had a good laugh? Watch a comedy together, lighten things up or hang out with funny friends. With all you have to manage, having a laugh is a great anti-depressant!

Message3: Sometimes your partner just wants you to listen and give them a hug. They may not need answers or opinions, just your care, understanding and humour.

Turn taking

Message1: Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities in the house whether it's taking out the garbage or spending extra time with your child. Taking turns is also important when it comes to having some time out to do the things you want to do individually.

Message2: Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? Parents often benefit from having a 'roster of chores' properly negotiated so that everyone knows what is expected of them throughout the week. This alleviates additional tension that can come from underlying resentment where chore allocation is assumed and not negotiated.

Message3: Working from home as a full time parent is as demanding as working anywhere else. To assume anything less can lead to conflict and resentment. Value your partner's contribution and invest in taking turns to do the chores around the house.

4. Working together as parents

Respect

Message1: Working effectively together as parents is difficult when there's no perceived respect between each other. Be sure you both demonstrate respect for each other as often as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often seem disrespectful toward their parents, and having a partner that can behave the same way is debilitating and exhausting.

Message2: Showing and treating your partner with respect is the first step to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you. Respect is rarely a one-way street.

Message3: Parenthood is a team sport. The better you work with your partner, the better your family will be. So treat each other with respect and show your appreciation for one another at every opportunity.

Decide what is ultimately in the best interests of children while understanding that each parent may achieve this in different means.

Message1: Have you and your partner decided what is ultimately best for your children? If so, it's important to understand that you can each achieve this through different means. There's more than way to most destinations!

Message2: Deciding what is best for your children is one of the most important conversations you'll have with your partner. Understand that while your goal and interests are the same, the approach for each of you may be different.

Message3: We're all comfortable with our own way of doing things. Whilst our own way may be a great way, there are other ways too. Accept the fact that your partner may not always do things the way you'd like, however that doesn't mean they will not reach your desired outcome.

Developing joint goals

Message1: Hey [parent], developing shared goals with your partner is an effective way to grow as parents. It helps to start small - so sit down, have a conversation, and decide what you both want to achieve this week.

Message2: Couples that play together stay together... Plan out shared goals that you can work on together to make yourselves more aligned and in-sync for the benefit of your your children.

Message3: Plan an afternoon activity with your partner specifically for your kids to enjoy. It's short, easy, and will be a great opportunity for you to work together as parents.

Improving communication between parents

Message1: Parenthood isn't easy at the best of times, so it helps to consistently focus on quality communication between you and your partner when you are parenting a child with challenging behaviours. If you notice the quality of communication isn't great, take the initiative and resolve it with your partner.

Message2: Hey [parent], communicating with your partner isn't only a chance to share your thoughts and feelings but it's an opportunity to connect with them on a deeper level.

Message3: No matter how well you know your partner you *still* cannot read their mind. Talk to your partner to get the facts rather than rely on assumptions.

Why is it important to present a united front. How to deal with differences of opinion between parents

Message1: Hey [parent], while you and your partner may have different opinions, it's important to still be on the same team. Having a clear goal helps since it gives you a shared vision that can be achieved even if you're on different paths.

Message2: Never undermine your partner in front of your children. Child behaviour rules should be made between parents away from children. These rules, once agreed upon, should be held-up by both parents. Over-ruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety is dangerous. Disagree and re-negotiate with your partner about how to deal with things next time at an appropriate time when your children are not present.

Message3: Parenting disagreements should be dealt with via a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.

Appendix G

Round One Message Modifications. Messages in Yellow were removed from bank.

Total Original Items Out: 29

Total Consensus Items: 2

Total Reworded: 32

Total Round 1 to rate: 34

Original Message	Feedback	Modified Message for R1
<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences</p> <p>As parents of a child or children with challenging behaviours, time out with only each other is crucial. This must be prioritised where possible and this time with your partner should be considered just as important as time with your child. Positive and enjoyable time with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership enabling good communication and support.</p>	<p>Time out together as a couple.. make it clearer. I read it twice as thought you were talking about time out with the child...</p> <p>It is something that is very difficult for parents of young children to actually do. The "how" is often the difficult part.</p> <p>Many caveats to time out with partner. Wording around available opportunities maybe more applicable as statements for some families with severe challenging behaviour like above can be triggering for negative emotional responses.</p>	<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences</p> <p>Time out together as a couple is crucial. Positive and enjoyable activities with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership, enabling good communication and support. Take any opportunity available to take some time together.</p>
<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences</p> <p>Remember, positive outcomes are much more likely when you and your partner are in an open, positive state before challenging conversations start. Positive and open communication is rarely possible when you are in a bad mood.</p>	<p>Yes but most families in crisis might not have insight? Might not be able to change Provide calming down strategies as options Might be helpful to define what an open and positive state is and provide some examples.</p> <p>positive is used too many times</p> <p>I think this message is redundant - it,Äôs an obvious and common sense knowledge</p>	<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences</p> <p>Remember, challenging conversations have better outcomes when you and your partner approach them from a positive, open mindset. Productive communication is difficult when you are in a bad mood.</p>
<p>Defusing Conflict</p> <p>Hey [parent], identifying your thoughts and feelings regarding a problem and sharing them with your partner (without blaming or attacking them) will help you</p>	<p>Maybe include a strategy for how you could avoid blame/attack</p> <p>Don,Äôt like the last sentence as it could appear patronising</p>	<p>Defusing Conflict</p> <p>Hey [parent], identifying your thoughts and feelings regarding a problem and sharing them with your partner (without blaming or attacking them) will help you</p>

find effective solutions. Remember, a problem well stated is a problem half-solved!		find effective solutions.
Defusing Conflict Next time you find yourself in an argument ask yourself ,“is this how I would want my child to resolve conflict? Children learn from their parents how to resolve conflict in relationships so set the example by handling it the way you would want your child to.	Some people lack insight into their own coping as maladaptive. Examples might help.	Defusing Conflict Next time you find yourself in an argument ask yourself, “is this how I would want my child to resolve conflict?” Lead by example, handling it the way you want your child to act.
Managing conflict healthily Managing conflict isn’t easy but criticising your partner at the start of the conversation is likely going to ensure they do not listen to you. Instead of criticising, try to respectfully communicate what your problem is so your partner doesn’t feel attacked.	Maybe give an example phrase to use Only some people this is relevant to- it assumes a pattern of criticising and some people are not like this at all. Give an example of an assertive statement	Managing conflict healthily Be wary of criticising your partner as this reduces respectful communication and limits the chances they will listen to you. Try stating what you feel and why, without blaming your partner.
Managing conflict healthily Managing conflict healthily is one of the major keys to a successful relationship. One way to manage conflict is to restrain yourself from blaming your partner (e.g. ,“You’re wrong,”) and instead try to share your perspective (e.g. ,“this is why I’m upset,”).	consumer literacy, aim your words at a grade 3. ..ie Major key ..? The message elicits negative emotion when reading. It’s unpleasant and makes the message more resistant to acknowledgement I think that the addition of examples really helps the message - could be useful in other messages as well	Managing conflict healthily Managing conflict healthily is one of the major keys to a successful relationship. Sharing your perspective (e.g. “This is why I’m upset”) is better than blaming your partner (e.g. “You’re wrong”).
Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive Things can’t always go our way and that’s ok. We teach our children the same thing. Take into consideration the preferences and opinions of your partner and they’ll be more likely to consider yours.	I prefer this wording	Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive Things can’t always go our way and that’s ok. We teach our children the same thing. Take into consideration the preferences and opinions of your partner and they’ll be more likely to consider yours as well.
Compromising, agreeing to	Providing specific skills	Compromising, agreeing to

<p>disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>Many of us are busy working out our responses whilst our partners are talking. As a result, we often don't actually listen to what it is they are saying. Practice the art of listening to understand, rather than listening to respond. You may not agree with your partners perspective, however at least you may understand it.</p>	<p>would be helpful Great tip</p>	<p>disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>Practice listening to understand, rather than listening to respond. While you may not agree with your partners perspective, at least try to understand it.</p>
<p>Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>Being aggressive towards your partner in times of conflict is never a healthy solution. If things get too heated, separate yourself from the situation to de-escalate and give yourself time and space to think. Time out may be exactly what you need.</p>	<p>Mindfulness practice may prove beneficial</p> <p>de escalate is a word professionals use. Not parents (aim to grade 3) examples of what "time out" might look like could be useful. separate but try not to stom out?</p> <p>The last sentence isn,Äôt needed</p>	<p>Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think.</p>
<p>Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right</p> <p>Check in with your partner often to make sure you're both on same page as to what the problem actually is before you go about dealing with it.</p>	<p>Especially important for clear communication to children (good parenting).</p>	<p>Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right</p> <p>Check in with your partner often to make sure you're both on same page as to what the problem actually is before you go about dealing with it.</p>
<p>Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right</p> <p>When it comes to parenting a child with challenging behaviours, always check that you and your partner are clear on what the problem is,Ä¶unless this is clear and clarified, much time and energy can be wasted on dealing with 'not the problem'.</p>	<p>not the problem??</p>	<p>Clarifying the problem with a co-parent and asking if you got it right</p> <p>When it comes to parenting, always check that you and your partner are clear on what the issue is. Unless this is clear, much time and energy can be wasted without dealing with the actual problem.</p>
<p>Establishing rapport</p>	<p>Not many people are going to</p>	<p>Establishing rapport</p>

Maintaining rapport with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis.	want to "do something enjoyable together" need an example here	Maintaining rapport with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis.
Establishing rapport Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. It takes practice though, especially when you're tired, upset and/or angry. When you're next feeling this way, try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you when they're tired, frustrated and/angry.	Ways to identify triggers may prove helpful Great message needs re wording Yes - easier said than done - it does take practice. Caveat is the person,Ã interpersonal skills...	Establishing rapport Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. If you're tired, upset and/or angry. Try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you.
The basics: tone, body language and using helpful expressions/phrases "Think before you speak" is a phrase that can save your relationship many times over.	Again - takes practice Capacity for this is not always there needs a preframe example ie. We can take words back however they still inflict a wound...	The basics: tone, body language and using helpful expressions/phrases We can take our words back; however they may still have caused pain to our partner. "Think before you speak" is a phrase that can save your relationship many times over.
Positive communication strategies Try to understand your partners point of view and be open to doing things a different way. It'll help build positive communication between you and your partner for a healthier relationship.	Again, this message feels loaded. partner's Too general	Positive communication strategies Take the time to listen to and understand your partner's point of view. Different opinions may provide different solutions.
Positive communication strategies Acknowledging your partner while listening to them effectively builds positive communication. Plus, actively listening is a great way to show your respect and love.	maybe just keep the 2nd sentence. short and sweet too ambiguous Requires skill development for some	Positive communication strategies Active listening is a great way to show your respect and love. Acknowledging your partner builds effective, positive communication.
Options to communicate via apps, emails, written	clearer message needed	Options to communicate via apps, emails, written

<p>communication and avoiding putting the other parent down</p> <p>Hey [parent], it's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting each other down. Instead, focus on the problem so you can both reach a solution.</p>		<p>communication and avoiding putting the other parent down</p> <p>It's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting each other down. Instead, focus on the problem so you can both reach a solution.</p>
<p>Being able to just listen and not wait to interject</p> <p>Listening to your partner is the first step to understanding them. So before explaining your point of view, don't interrupt and let them fully explain theirs. That way, the same courtesy can be returned to you.</p>	not worded well	<p>Being able to just listen and not wait to interject</p> <p>Listening to your partner is the first step to understanding them. So before explaining your point of view, don't interrupt and let them fully explain theirs. That way, the same courtesy can be returned to you.</p>

Original (GA)	Feedback	Modified
<p>Active Listening (GA)</p> <p>Sometimes we have such strong feelings or opinions about things that we shut other perspectives down before we actually truly listen to the possibilities they could offer. Practice truly keeping an open mind.</p>	<p>no comments, 1x slightly clear and slightly relevant response</p>	<p>Active Listening</p> <p>Listening to your partner is the first step to understanding them. So before explaining your point of view, let them fully explain theirs without interruption or judgement. That way, the same courtesy can be returned to you.</p>
<p>Active Listening (GA)</p> <p>Actively listening to your partner is crucial in every relationship, [parent]. That means giving your partner your full undivided attention when it's necessary.</p>	<p>Fairly clear, helpful, relevant (x2) No comments</p>	<p>Hey [parent], have you been actively listening to your partner? Sometimes we forget that our partners input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind in terms of how to deal with an issue, however you'll often find they want the same outcome as you. You can practice active listening by giving your partner your undivided attention and reflecting what they have said so your partner feels understood.</p>
<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent (GA)</p>	<p>1x not helpful/not relevant</p>	<p>Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust their parents, leaving them with little patience</p>

<p>Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust their parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Look after your personal and parenting relationship by prioritising time with your partner. Sometimes, all you both need is a few minutes of meaningful conversation without interruptions.</p>	<p>Give examples of how this can be done thought there was a similar statement earlier This gives a good simple example; one that is relatively easy to do. Not appropriate for severe behaviours of concern</p>	<p>and energy. Look after your personal and parenting relationship by prioritising time with your partner. Sometimes, all that is needed is a few minutes to connect of meaningful conversation without interruptions. A good time to schedule this might be after the children are in bed or at school.</p>
<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent</p> <p>Hey [parent], if you're finding it difficult to find the time to talk to your partner try creating a schedule with them. It'll make your day more organised and give you the appropriate time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively.</p>	<p>1x slightly relevant and helpful When and where you are unlikely to be interrupted could be worded better though</p>	<p>Hey [parent], if you're finding it difficult to find time to communicate with your partner, try creating a scheduled time that suits you both. It'll make you feel more organised and give you some time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively. While this may be difficult to schedule, a good time to do this is before you go to bed or the children will be out of the house.</p>
<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent</p> <p>When was the last time you had a quality 'date' with your partner? Parents of children with challenging behaviours benefit from more time out from their children so they can talk, re-connect and re-charge. Make regular date nights with your partner and this will benefit your family as a whole.</p>	<p>1x not helpful Support may be required for the "how" to make it happen.</p> <p>benefit from one-on-one time without the children?</p> <p>need to address the 'yes but who will look after the kids?' part</p> <p>Lack of resources - often extended family make excuses not to provide care to avoid challenging behaviour</p>	<p>Parents of children with challenging behaviours benefit from more one-on-one time away from children to talk, talk, re-connect and re-charge. Making regular date nights with your partner will benefit your relationship, mood and family as a whole.</p>
<p>Non-judgemental listening</p> <p>Hey [parent], it's easy to criticise but difficult to listen without judgement. Try doing the latter for your partner and see how it</p>	<p>1 x Not helpful, not relevant 2x slightly clear</p>	<p>Hey [parent], when you listen to your partner without judgement, you show them care and understanding. Try acknowledging what your partner has expressed for example thank you for telling</p>

impacts the conversation.		me' and giving an action or response using 'I will' statements. This will make them feel more heard and validated.
<p>Non-judgemental listening</p> <p>We all do the best we can with the resources we have available at the time. If you or partner have had a difficult day with your child or children, don't judge them or your behaviours, just accept it was the best you or your partner could do at the time.</p>	<p>1x not helpful not clear not relevant</p> <p>1x slightly helpful</p> <p>Should "their" be them?</p> <p>this needs a powerful preframe like "your partner can be harsh at times"</p> <p>I don't think that this is the best idea to include a comment like this</p>	<p>We all do the best we can with the resources we have available at the time. If you or partner have had a difficult day with your child or children, try not to criticise and acknowledge that it was the best response that you or your partner could have had at the time. Instead you could offer support or a listening ear to discuss what could be done better in future.</p>
<p>Using interest, warmth and humour</p> <p>Parents of children with challenging behaviours need more time out to connect with each other and enjoy some downtime. Prioritising this time with each other to unwind and have a laugh is as valuable and important as time with your children.</p>	<p>1x not helpful, clear, relevant</p>	<p>Parents of children with challenging behaviours will benefit with more time out to connect with each other and enjoy some downtime. Prioritising this time with each other to unwind and have a laugh is as valuable and important as time with your children.</p>
<p>Turn taking</p> <p>Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities in the house whether it is taking out the garbage or spending extra time with your child. Taking turns is also important when it comes to having some time out to do the things you want to do individually.</p>	<p>1x not helpful</p> <p>1x slightly relevant</p> <p>Also sets an example or models desired behaviour</p>	<p>Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities in the house whether it is taking out the garbage or spending extra time with your child. This helps to set a shared standard that both parents are aware of. Taking turns is also important when it comes to having some time out to do the things you want to do individually.</p>
<p>Turn taking</p> <p>Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? Parents often benefit from</p>	<p>If practical help may be needed to implement</p> <p>Some wording could be simplified for demographic</p>	<p>Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? It may be beneficial to negotiate a 'roster of chores' so that</p>

having a 'roster of chores' properly negotiated so that everyone knows what is expected of them throughout the week. This alleviates additional tension that can come from underlying resentment where chore allocation is assumed and not negotiated.		everyone knows what is expected of them throughout the week. This can decrease any tension that can come from an unequal sharing of responsibility.
<p>Respect</p> <p>Working effectively together as parents is difficult when there is no perceived respect between each other. Be sure you both demonstrate respect for each other as often as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often seem disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner that can behave the same way is debilitating and exhausting.</p>	<p>1x not helpful, not clear, not relevant</p> <p>Functional analysis of behaviour - contaminated language</p>	<p>Working effectively together can be difficult when both parties do not feel respected between each other. Try complimenting your partner and validating their feelings as much as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often seem disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner behave the same way can be debilitating and exhausting.</p>
<p>Respect</p> <p>Showing and treating your partner with respect is the first step to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you. Respect is rarely a one-way street.</p>	1x not helpful	<p>Showing and treating your partner with respect is the first step to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you and show your appreciation for them at every opportunity. Respect is rarely a one-way street.</p>
<p>Developing joint goals</p> <p>Hey [parent], developing shared goals with your partner is an effective way to grow as parents. It helps to start small - so sit down, have a conversation, and decide what you both want to achieve this week.</p>	<p>1x not helpful, clear, relevant</p> <p>Goals - start small</p>	<p>Hey [parent], developing shared goals with your partner is an effective way to grow together as parents. It helps to start by making small manageable goals that you can achieve together, and have a conversation, and decide what you both want to achieve and regularly review these if they are not working. This will help you become more aligned and in-sync which will benefit your children long term.</p>

Improving communication		
No matter how well you know your partner you still cannot read their mind. Talk to your partner to get the facts rather than rely on assumptions.	***Go straight to Round 3	No matter how well you know your partner you still cannot read their mind. Talk to your partner to get the facts rather than rely on assumptions.
<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Never undermine your partner in front of your children. Child behaviour rules should be made between parents away from children. These rules, once agreed upon, should be held-up by both parents. Over-ruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety is dangerous. Disagree and re-negotiate with your partner about how to deal with things next time at an appropriate time when your children are not present.</p>	division can be exploited	<p>It is important to try not to undermine your partner in front of your children. Child behaviour rules are best made between parents away from children. These rules, once agreed upon, should be enforced by both parents. Over-ruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety can appear to a child as parental division. Instead, try disagreeing or re-negotiate with your partner at an appropriate time when your children are not present.</p>
<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Parenting disagreements should be dealt with via a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.</p>	**** straight thru to round 3	<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Parenting disagreements should be dealt with via a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.</p>

Appendix H

Round Two Message Modifications

Total Round 1 Items Out: 13

Total Consensus Items: 2

Total Reworded: 19

Start items for Round 2: 21

Original Messages at Beginning of Round 2 (n=21)	Feedback	Modified Messages R2
<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences</p> <p>Time out together as a couple is crucial. Positive and enjoyable activities with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership, enabling good communication and support. Take any opportunity available to take some time together.</p>	<p>add in the comment that it is absolutely essential</p> <p>examples needed</p>	<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences.</p> <p>Time out together as a couple is absolutely essential and your children will benefit. Positive and enjoyable activities with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership. Take any opportunity you can to prioritise time with each other, even if it's only watching a favourite show together for half an hour after the children are in bed.</p>
<p>Defusing Conflict</p> <p>Next time you find yourself in an argument ask yourself, "is this how I want my chikd to resolve conflict?". Lead by example, handling it the way you would want your child to act.</p>	<p>I would reword the last sentence "Children learn how to resolve conflict in relationships from their parents, so set the example by handling conflicts the way you would want your child to.</p> <p>Parents may need direction and education of effective communication skills as they often don't know how to do it.</p> <p>Use the phrase 'try set the example' to make the message non direct</p> <p>add in lead by example</p>	<p>Defusing Conflict</p> <p>Lead by example next time you find yourself in an argument with your partner. Children learn how to resolve conflict in relationships from their parents, so try to set the example by handling conflicts the way you would want your child to.</p>
<p>Managing conflict healthily</p> <p>Be wary of criticising your partner as this reduces respectful communication and limits the chance they will listen to you. Try stating what you feel and why, without blaming your partner.</p>	<p>I assume the first three words are not actually in the message. For the actual message - consider adding something about using "I statements". Also instead of using blaming. Could you rephrase the sentence?</p> <p>A little more information (strategies) to do this would be helpful for parents This may need a fresh start where previous triggers exist</p> <p>Refine language</p>	<p>Managing conflict healthily.</p> <p>If you are struggling to manage conflict with your partner, sometimes trying different ways to express yourself can be useful. Saying something like "I understand why you do [it] the way you do, however can we try it [another] way and see how it goes?" may generate a more favourable response from your partner. A few sessions with a parenting specialist may also be useful to create a parenting plan which works for both of you.</p>

Managing conflict healthily Managing conflict healthily is one of the major keys to a successful relationship. Sharing your perspective (e.g. This is why I'm upset) is better than blaming your partner (e.g. You're wrong).	A preframe is required about how old ways of communicating haven't worked and that a new way of communicating needs to start maybe worded differently	Managing conflict healthily When current ways of communicating with your partner aren't working, try something different. Sharing your perspective (e.g. This is why I'm upset) is better than blaming your partner (e.g. You should have done this...).
Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive Things can't always go our way and that's okay. We teach our children the same thing. Take into consideration the preferences and opinions of your partner and they'll be more likely to consider yours as well.	Giving the parents a sense of choice through language would be helpful here: try consider.. add more context. like: there are many ways of doing things. let your partner do things their way when they have the children 1x not relevant	Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive Things can't always go our way and that's okay. We try and teach our children the same thing. Consider letting your partner do things their way when they have the children next time
Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think.	A good response in the heat of the moment this could be seen as stonewalling 1x not clear	Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think. Letting your partner know you need 10 or 15 minutes to cool off before continuing the conversation may be helpful.
Establishing rapport Maintaining rapport with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis.	Important message and explains why quality time is needed- to improve communication and make the relationship as healthy as possible what might they do? Language could be refined (e.g., rapport = connection may be better for the parent population)	Establishing rapport Maintaining connection with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis, like watch a movie together or put the kids to bed and have a late dinner with each other.
Establishing rapport Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. If you're tired, upset and/or angry. Try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you.	The sentence would need different punctuation to be clear. I don't understand this one- remove it or reword Full stop after angry not needed - perhaps a comma try adding something on why respect is important There's lots like this. Another direction would be too	Establishing rapport Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. If you're tired, upset and/or angry. Try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you.

	<p>acknowledge where you are emotionally with your partner and collectively decide if this is a discussion for now....</p> <p>1x not clear 1x not relevant</p>	
<p>Positive communication strategies</p> <p>Take the time to listen to and understand your partner's point of view. Different opinions may provide different solutions.</p>	<p>Too provocative</p> <p>Short, snappy and direct. Good</p>	<p>Do your best to take the time to listen to and understand your partner's point of view. Different opinions may provide different solutions.</p>
<p>Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down</p> <p>Hey [parent], it's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting each other down. Instead, focus on the problem so you can both reach a solution.</p>	<p>The first interpersonal correction that doesn't bother me at all- fair go get rid of hey parent example needed</p>	<p>Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down</p> <p>It's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting your partner down. Instead, do your best to maintain focus on the problem- this way there's a better chance you'll both reach a solution.</p>
<p>Being able to just listen and not wait to interject</p> <p>Listening to your partner is the first step to understanding them. So before explaining your point of view, don't interrupt and let them fully explain theirs. That way, the same courtesy can be returned to you.</p>	<p>I think it's the directive language that makes me not like this advice</p> <p>A more non direct approach would be helpful needs an intro like "parents often assume what the other one is going to say before the other person finishes what they are trying to say". Often these assumptions are wrong, and if even if they are right, this will lead to denial or defensiveness in the other. neither useful. reword last sentence Good strategy and sits ok with me</p> <p>Education about active listening could be essential or at least important.</p>	<p>Being able to just listen and not wait to interject</p> <p>Parents often assume what the other one is going to say before the other person finishes what they are trying to say. Sometimes these assumptions are wrong, and if even if they are right, this will lead to denial or defensiveness in the other. Therefore, do your best to allow your partner to finish what they are saying.</p>
<p>Active Listening</p> <p>Hey [parent], have you been actively listening to your partner? Sometimes, we forget that our partner's input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind as to how to deal an issue, however you'll often find they want the</p>	<p>needs some spell check. it is also a bit long.</p> <p>Too much information + spelling mistake. Could be shortened down and the phrase 'active listening' removed to align with lay person terms</p> <p>this is a good message however</p>	<p>Active Listening</p> <p>Sometimes we forget that our partner's input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind as to how to deal an issue, however you'll often find they want the same outcome as you. By giving your partner your undivided</p>

same outcome as you. You can practice active listening by giving your partner your undivided attention and reflecting what they have said so your partner feels understood.	it could be worded clearer Very long 1x not helpful 2x not clear	attention and reflecting what they've said, your partner will likely feel more understood.
Taking the time to talk to your coparent Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Look after your personal and parenting relationship by prioritising time with your partner. Sometimes, all that is needed is a few minutes to connect of meaningful conversation without interruptions. A good time to schedule this might be after the children are in bed or at school.	Made effective by locating specific times for pre yes to talk Too long	Taking the time to talk to your coparent Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Sometimes, all that is needed is a few minutes of meaningful conversation without interruptions. A good time to schedule this might be after the children are in bed or at school.
Taking the time to talk to your coparent Hey [parent], if you're finding it difficult to find time to communicate with your partner, try creating a scheduled time that suits you both. It'll make you feel more organised and give you some time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively. While this may be difficult to schedule, a good time to do this is before you go to bed or the children will be out of the house.	Too long needs rewording	Taking the time to talk to your coparent If you're finding it difficult to find time to communicate with your partner, try creating a scheduled time that suits you both. It'll make you feel more organised and give you some time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively.
Turn taking Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities in the house, whether it is taking out the garbage or spending extra time with your child. This helps to set a shared standard that both parents are aware of. Taking turns is also important when it comes to having some time out to do the things you want to do individually.	the premise is good but the message unclear A good strategy all round needs to be worded better Good concept but many would struggle to put into action. Perhaps prompting them to consider. thinking to themselves... "when was the last time I took out the trash/bathed the kids etc"to help aide perspective taking behaviours	Turn taking Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities around the house. Ask yourself when was the last time you bathed the kids or cooked dinner? This helps to set a shared standard and feelings of respect.
Turn taking Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? It may be beneficial to negotiate a 'roster of chores' so that	Irritating to have a roster of chores. Maybe set time to do chores together for accountability	Turn taking Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? It may be beneficial to do as many chores as you can together or at

everyone knows what is expected of them throughout the week. This can decrease any tension that can come from an unequal sharing of responsibility.		the same time. This can decrease tensions that may come from an unequal sharing of responsibility.
<p>Respect</p> <p>Working effectively together can be difficult when both parties do not feel respected. Try complimenting your partner and validating their feelings as much as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often seem disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner behave the same way can be debilitating and exhausting.</p>	<p>will need some rephrasing to be clear Thats hilarious. Simpler language could be helpful here 1x not helpful</p>	<p>Respect</p> <p>Be kind to your partner and validate their feelings as much as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often be disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner behave the same way can be demoralising. Say something nice – and true- about your partner as often as you can. A few kind words may be all that is needed to let your partner know they're respected</p>
<p>Respect</p> <p>Showing and treating your partner with respect is the first step to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you and show your appreciation for them at every opportunity. Respect is rarely a one-way street.</p>	<p>Could include a call to action (e.g., "Have you complimented your partner today?") Remove the last sentence. It's unnecessary remove last comment Too much - not all partners want words of affirmation. They want other things from you. 1x not helpful, relevant</p>	<p>Respect</p> <p>Have you complimented your partner today? Showing your partner respect is crucial to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you.</p>
<p>Improving communication</p> <p>No matter how well you know your partner you still cannot read their mind. It is much better to talk to your partner to get the facts and have a conversation rather than relying on our assumptions.</p>	1x not relevant	<p>Improving communication</p> <p>No matter how well you know your partner you still can't read their mind. It's much better to talk to them to get the facts rather than relying on your assumptions.</p>
<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>It is important to try not to undermine your partner in front of your children. Child behaviour rules are best made between parents away from children. These rules, once agreed upon, should be enforced by both parents. Over-ruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety can appear to a child as parental division. Instead, try disagreeing or re-negotiate with your partner at an appropriate</p>	<p>Its a little confusing. I like what I think was being said about not modelling poor behaviour in front of the child Needs to be simplified for lay person and shortened Very long 1x not clear</p>	<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Do not undermine your partner in front of your children. Overruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety can appear to a child as parental division. This will increase challenging behaviours in your child which will have a negative impact on them. Instead, try re-negotiating with your partner at an appropriate time when your children are not present.</p>

time when your children are not present.		
<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Parenting disagreements are much more beneficial as a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.</p>	<p>Maybe state why? add the reason why the word beneficial should be changed to essential ie. It is essential parenting disagreements are a private discussion..... 1x not clear</p>	<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Parenting disagreements are much more beneficial as a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.</p>

Appendix I

Round Three Messages.

Total Round 2 Items Out: 0

Total Consensus Items: 4

Total Reworded: 17

Start items for Round 3: 21

NONE of the Round 3 ratings fell below a consensus of 80%

Original Messages at Beginning of Round 2 (n=21)	Feedback	Modified Messages R3
<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences</p> <p>Time out together as a couple is crucial. Positive and enjoyable activities with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership, enabling good communication and support. Take any opportunity available to take some time together.</p>	<p>add in the comment that it is absolutely essential</p> <p>examples needed</p>	<p>Communication skills, paying attention to emotions, awareness and respect of differences.</p> <p>Time out together as a couple is absolutely essential and your children will benefit. Positive and enjoyable activities with your partner will reduce your stress and strengthen your parenting partnership. Take any opportunity you can to prioritise time with each other, even if it's only watching a favourite show together for half an hour after the children are in bed.</p>
<p>Defusing Conflict</p> <p>Next time you find yourself in an argument ask yourself, "is this how I want my chikd to resolve conflict?". Lead by example, handling it the way you would want your child to act.</p>	<p>I would reword the last sentence "Children learn how to resolve conflict in relationships from their parents, so set the example by handling conflicts the way you would want your child to.</p> <p>Parents may need direction and education of effective communication skills as they often don't know how to do it.</p> <p>Use the phrase 'try set the example' to make the message non direct</p> <p>add in lead by example</p>	<p>Defusing Conflict</p> <p>Lead by example next time you find yourself in an argument with your partner. Children learn how to resolve conflict in relationships from their parents, so try to set the example by handling conflicts the way you would want your child to.</p>
<p>Managing conflict healthily</p> <p>Be wary of criticising your partner as this reduces respectful communication and limits the chance they will listen to you. Try stating what you feel and why, without blaming your partner.</p>	<p>I assume the first three words are not actually in the message. For the actual message - consider adding something about using "I statements". Also instead of using blaming. Could you rephrase the sentence?</p> <p>A little more information (strategies) to do this would be helpful for parents This may need a fresh start where previous triggers exist</p> <p>Refine language</p>	<p>Managing conflict healthily.</p> <p>If you are struggling to manage conflict with your partner, sometimes trying different ways to express yourself can be useful. Saying something like "I understand why you do [it] the way you do, however can we try it [another] way and see how it goes?" may generate a more favourable response from your partner. A few sessions with a parenting specialist may also be useful to create a</p>

		parenting plan which works for both of you.
<p>Managing conflict healthily</p> <p>Managing conflict healthily is one of the major keys to a successful relationship. Sharing your perspective (e.g. This is why Iâ€™m upset) is better than blaming your partner (e.g. You're wrong).</p>	<p>A preframe is required about how old ways of communicating haven't worked and that a new way of communicating needs to start</p> <p>maybe worded differently</p>	<p>Managing conflict healthily</p> <p>When current ways of communicating with your partner aren't working, try something different. Sharing your perspective (e.g. This is why I'm upset) is better than blaming your partner (e.g. You should have done this...).</p>
<p>Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>Things can't always go our way and that's okay. We teach our children the same thing. Take into consideration the preferences and opinions of your partner and theyâ€™ll be more likely to consider yours as well.</p>	<p>Giving the parents a sense of choice through language would be helpful here: try consider.. add more context. like: there are many ways of doing things. let your partner do things their way when they have the children</p> <p>1x not relevant</p>	<p>Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>Things can't always go our way and that's okay. We try and teach our children the same thing. Consider letting your partner do things their way when they have the children next time</p>
<p>Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think.</p>	<p>A good response in the heat of the moment</p> <p>this could be seen as stonewalling</p> <p>1x not clear</p>	<p>Compromising, agreeing to disagree, active listening, aggressive/passive/assertive</p> <p>If things get too heated, separate yourself from the conversation to calm down and give yourself time and space to think. Letting your partner know you need 10 or 15 minutes to cool off before continuing the conversation may be helpful.</p>
<p>Establishing rapport</p> <p>Maintaining rapport with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis.</p>	<p>Important message and explains why quality time is needed- to improve communication and make the relationship as healthy as possible</p> <p>what might they do?</p> <p>Language could be refined (e.g., rapport = connection may be better for the parent population)</p>	<p>Establishing rapport</p> <p>Maintaining connection with your partner is the first step to communicating respectfully with each other. Make it a habit to do something you both enjoy together on a very regular basis, like watch a movie together or put the kids to bed and have a late dinner with each other.</p>
<p>Establishing rapport</p> <p>Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. If you're tired, upset and/or angry. Try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you.</p>	<p>The sentence would need different punctuation to be clear.</p> <p>I don't understand this one- remove it or reword</p> <p>Full stop after angry not needed - perhaps a comma</p> <p>try adding something on why respect is important</p>	<p>Establishing rapport</p> <p>Communicating with respect is one of the cornerstones of a healthy relationship. If you're tired, upset and/or angry, try talking to your partner the same way you'd like them to talk to you.</p>

	<p>There's lots like this. Another direction would be too acknowledge where you are emotionally with your partner and collectively decide if this is a discussion for now....</p> <p>1x not clear 1x not relevant</p>	
<p>Positive communication strategies</p> <p>Take the time to listen to and understand your partner's point of view. Different opinions may provide different solutions.</p>	<p>Too provocative</p> <p>Short, snappy and direct. Good</p>	<p>Take the time to listen to and understand your partner's point of view. Different opinions may provide different solutions.</p>
<p>Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down</p> <p>Hey [parent], it's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting each other down. Instead, focus on the problem so you can both reach a solution.</p>	<p>The first interpersonal correction that doesn't bother me at all- fair go get rid of hey parent example needed</p>	<p>Options to communicate via apps, emails, written communication and avoiding putting the other parent down</p> <p>It's important to maintain a level of respect between you and your partner when communicating. One way to do that is to avoid putting your partner down. Instead, do your best to maintain focus on the problem- this way there's a better chance you'll both reach a solution.</p>
<p>Being able to just listen and not wait to interject</p> <p>Listening to your partner is the first step to understanding them. So before explaining your point of view, don't interrupt and let them fully explain theirs. That way, the same courtesy can be returned to you.</p>	<p>I think it's the directive language that makes me not like this advice</p> <p>A more non direct approach would be helpful needs an intro like "parents often assume what the other one is going to say before the other person finishes what they are trying to say". Often these assumptions are wrong, and if even if they are right, this will lead to denial or defensiveness in the other. neither useful. reword last sentence Good strategy and sits ok with me</p> <p>Education about active listening could be essential or at least important.</p>	<p>Being able to just listen and not wait to interject</p> <p>Parents often assume what the other one is going to say before the other person finishes what they are trying to say. Sometimes these assumptions are wrong, and if even if they are right, this will lead to denial or defensiveness in the other. Therefore, do your best to allow your partner to finish what they are saying.</p>
<p>Active Listening</p> <p>Hey [parent], have you been actively listening to your partner? Sometimes, we forget that our partner's input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind as</p>	<p>needs some spell check. it is also a bit long.</p> <p>Too much information + spelling mistake. Could be shortened down and the phrase 'active listening' removed to align with lay person terms</p>	<p>Active Listening</p> <p>Sometimes we forget that our partner's input is just as important as our own. They may have a different path in mind as to how to deal an issue, however you'll often find they want the</p>

to how to deal an issue, however you'll often find they want the same outcome as you. You can practice active listening by giving your partner your undivided attention and reflecting what they have said so your partner feels understood.	<p>this is a good message however it could be worded clearer</p> <p>Very long</p> <p>1x not helpful 2x not clear</p>	same outcome as you. By giving your partner your undivided attention and reflecting what they've said, your partner will likely feel more understood.
<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent</p> <p>Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Look after your personal and parenting relationship by prioritising time with your partner. Sometimes, all that is needed is a few minutes to connect of meaningful conversation without interruptions. A good time to schedule this might be after the children are in bed or at school.</p>	<p>Made effective by locating specific times for pre yes to talk</p> <p>Too long</p>	<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent</p> <p>Difficult behaviours in children can exhaust parents, leaving them with little patience and energy. Sometimes, all that is needed is a few minutes of meaningful conversation without interruptions. A good time to schedule this might be after the children are in bed or at school.</p>
<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent</p> <p>Hey [parent], if you're finding it difficult to find time to communicate with your partner, try creating a scheduled time that suits you both. It'll make you feel more organised and give you some time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively. While this may be difficult to schedule, a good time to do this is before you go to bed or the children will be out of the house.</p>	<p>Too long</p> <p>needs rewording</p>	<p>Taking the time to talk to your coparent</p> <p>If you're finding it difficult to find time to communicate with your partner, try creating a scheduled time that suits you both. It'll make you feel more organised and give you some time to gather your thoughts so that you can communicate more effectively.</p>
<p>Turn taking</p> <p>Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities in the house, whether it is taking out the garbage or spending extra time with your child. This helps to set a shared standard that both parents are aware of. Taking turns is also important when it comes to having some time out to do the things you want to do individually.</p>	<p>the premise is good but the message unclear</p> <p>A good strategy all round needs to be worded better</p> <p>Good concept but many would struggle to put into action. Perhaps prompting them to consider. thinking to themselves... "when was the last time I took out the trash/bathed the kids etc"to help aide perspective taking behaviours</p>	<p>Turn taking</p> <p>Taking turns with your partner is a great way to share responsibilities around the house. Ask yourself when was the last time you bathed the kids or cooked dinner? This helps to set a shared standard and feelings of respect.</p>
<p>Turn taking</p> <p>Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? It may</p>	<p>Irritating to have a roster of chores. Maybe set time to do chores together for accountability</p>	<p>Turn taking</p> <p>Is your partner tired of doing their usual chores or feeling they do more than you? It may</p>

be beneficial to negotiate a 'roster of chores' so that everyone knows what is expected of them throughout the week. This can decrease any tension that can come from an unequal sharing of responsibility.		be beneficial to do as many chores as you can together or at the same time. This can decrease tensions that may come from an unequal sharing of responsibility.
<p>Respect</p> <p>Working effectively together can be difficult when both parties do not feel respected. Try complimenting your partner and validating their feelings as much as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often seem disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner behave the same way can be debilitating and exhausting.</p>	<p>will need some rephrasing to be clear</p> <p>Thats hilarious.</p> <p>Simpler language could be helpful here</p> <p>1x not helpful</p>	<p>Respect</p> <p>Be kind to your partner and validate their feelings as much as possible. Children with challenging behaviours can often be disrespectful toward their parents and having a partner behave the same way can be demoralising. Say something nice – and true- about your partner as often as you can. A few kind words may be all that is needed to let your partner know they're respected</p>
<p>Respect</p> <p>Showing and treating your partner with respect is the first step to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you and show your appreciation for them at every opportunity. Respect is rarely a one-way street.</p>	<p>Could include a call to action (e.g., "Have you complimented your partner today?")</p> <p>Remove the last sentence. It's unnecessary</p> <p>remove last comment</p> <p>Too much - not all partners want words of affirmation. They want other things from you.</p> <p>1x not helpful, relevant</p>	<p>Respect</p> <p>Have you complimented your partner today? Showing your partner respect is crucial to working well together as parents. A good tip is to treat your partner the way you'd like them to treat you.</p>
<p>Improving communication</p> <p>No matter how well you know your partner you still cannot read their mind. It is much better to talk to your partner to get the facts and have a conversation rather than relying on our assumptions.</p>	<p>1x not relevant</p>	<p>Improving communication</p> <p>No matter how well you know your partner you still cannot read their mind. It is much better to talk to your partner to get the facts and have a conversation rather than relying on our assumptions.</p>
<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>It is important to try not to undermine your partner in front of your children. Child behaviour rules are best made between parents away from children. These rules, once agreed upon, should be enforced by both parents. Over-ruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety can appear to a child as</p>	<p>Its a little confusing. I like what I think was being said about not modelling poor behaviour in front of the child</p> <p>Needs to be simplified for lay person and shortened</p> <p>Very long</p> <p>1x not clear</p>	<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Do not undermine your partner in front of your children. Overruling a parent in front of their child for any reason other than pure safety can appear to a child as parental division. This will increase challenging behaviours in your child which will have a negative impact on them. Instead, try re-negotiating with your partner at an</p>

parental division. Instead, try disagreeing or re-negotiate with your partner at an appropriate time when your children are not present.		appropriate time when your children are not present.
<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Parenting disagreements are much more beneficial as a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.</p>	<p>Maybe state why? add the reason why the word beneficial should be changed to essential ie. It is essential parenting disagreements are a private discussion..... 1x not clear</p>	<p>Why is it important to present a united front; how to deal with differences of opinion between parents</p> <p>Parenting disagreements are much more beneficial as a private discussion between your partner and yourself. They are not for public display or discussion in front of your children.</p>