

Understanding and Managing Challenging Behaviour

A talk given to Chinese Parents Association on 11/6/16 by
Joyce Man, Clinical Psychologist, Ageing, Disability and Home Care

Acknowledgements

- ▶ This is to acknowledge that some slides have been taken from joint presentations with Dr Hester McMillan, Clinical Psychologist and Tanya Franic, Psychologist, ADHC.

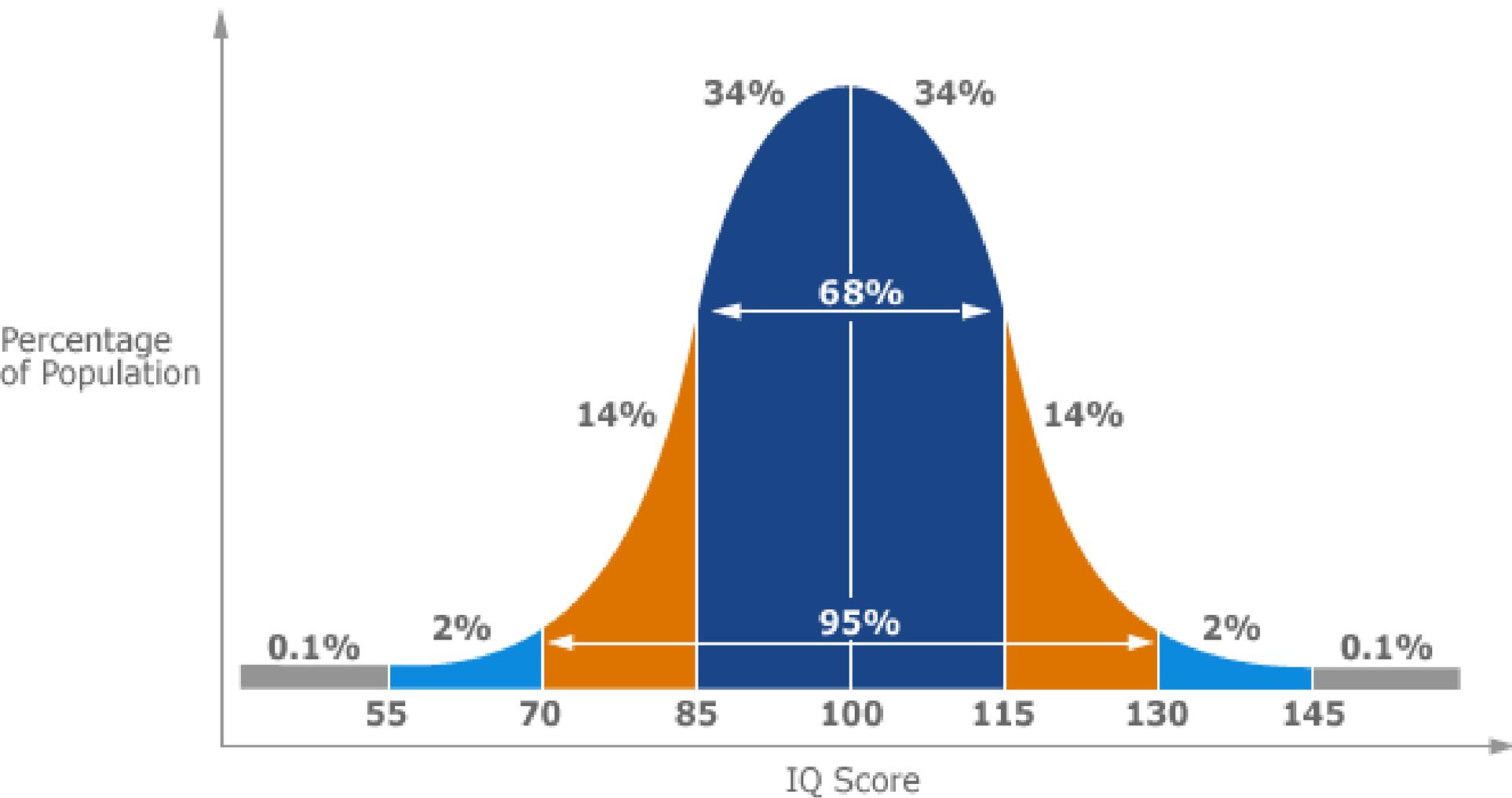


What is Intellectual Disability?

1. Intellectual functioning measured at 2 or more standard deviations* below the mean for the full-scale score on a recognised test of intelligence.
(This means an IQ score of 70 and below)
2. Significant deficits in adaptive functioning in one or more areas such as communication, social participation, independent living
3. These deficits in cognitive and adaptive functioning manifest during development



IQ Score Distribution



Global Developmental Delay

- ▶ Preferred term for children less than 2 years old
- ▶ Delay in two or more of the following developmental domains that have overall implications for cognitive development
- ▶ Significant delays evident in comparison with the skills attainment of same-age peers (defined as 2 standard deviations or more below the mean on standardised testing)



What is a **Challenging** behaviour?

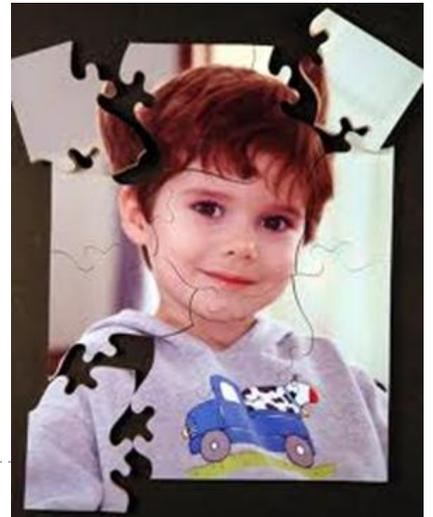
- Intense, frequent and occurs for a long time
- Challenging for the carer
- Pose safety risks
- Impact on access to services





Why do challenging behaviors occur?

- ▶ All behaviour serve a purpose
- ▶ Behaviour that can be learnt and be unlearnt
- ▶ Challenging behaviour is a person's way of coping



Common functions of challenging behaviour:

I. **Communication:**

- ▶ **How does my child understand others?**
- ▶ **How does my child express his/her needs?**
- ▶ **What could my child be trying to communicate?**
- ▶ **What needs are not being met?**



I have something to tell you.



2. Expressing feelings:

- **What usually upsets my child?**
- **How does my child usually show he/she is upset?**
- **Does my child have any control over the environment that is making them distressed?**
- **Am I role modelling ways to stay calm?**
- **Am I acknowledging my child's feelings?**
- **Have I tried to understand how my child feels?**



3. Escape and avoidance of undesirable situations:

- ▶ **What in the environment could be upsetting my child?**
- ▶ **Does my child have control over the environment?**
- ▶ **Can my child cope with the demands of the environment?**
- ▶ **Has my child been informed what's happening and what to expect?**



4. Sensory:

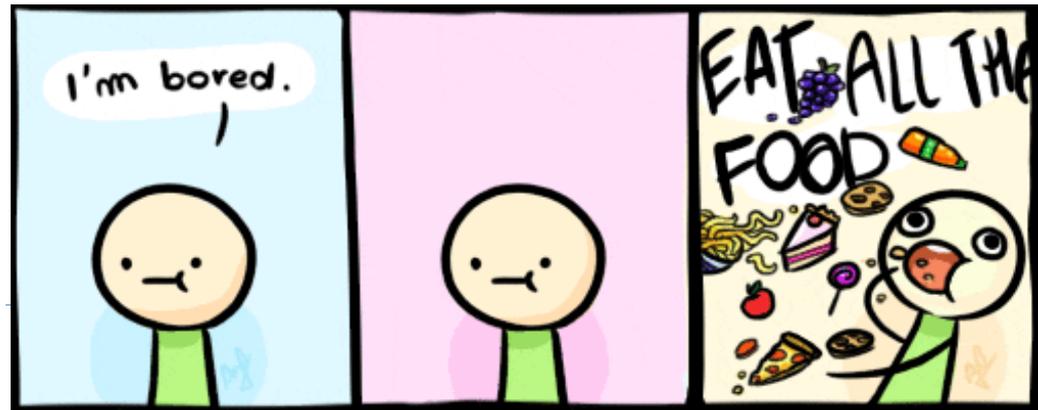


- ▶ **Am I aware of my child's sensory sensitivities?**
- ▶ **What sensory experiences does my child need more or less of?**
- ▶ **Can the sensory experience be avoided?**
- ▶ **If not, what I am doing to help my child tolerate the sensory experience?**



5. Entertainment/stimulation

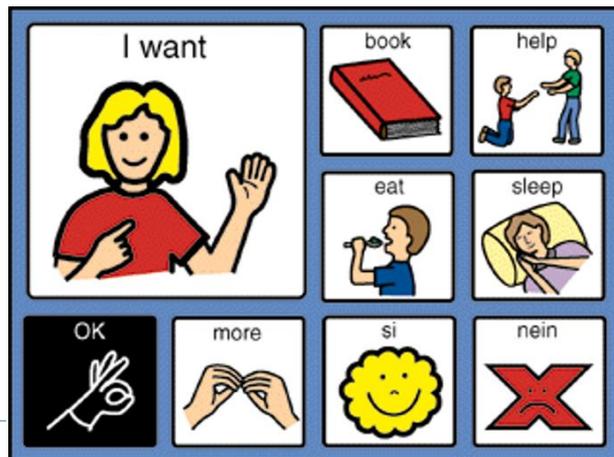
- ▶ **What activities are meaningful and engaging for my child?**
- ▶ **Are these activities available and accessible to my child?**
- ▶ **Can my child request these activities?**
- ▶ **Does my child need help to engage in these activities?**



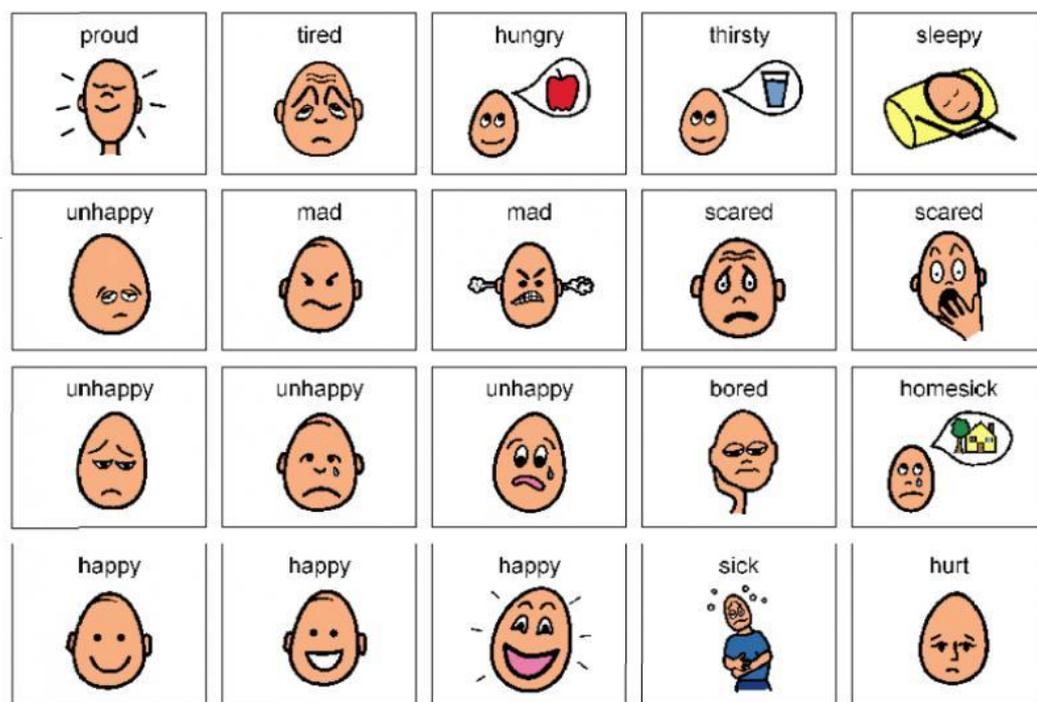
Managing Challenging Behaviours based on their function

I. Communication

- ▶ **Augmentative communication systems e.g. Photos, signing, pictures**
- ▶ **Communicate at your child's level**
- ▶ **Teach your child to ask for help, to request for things they want and to make choices**



2. Expressing feelings



- ▶ Teach calming strategies
- ▶ Role model calm behaviour
- ▶ Reduce demands on your child
- ▶ Limit your talking
- ▶ Check safety of your child and of others
- ▶ Acknowledge feelings
- ▶ Remove environmental triggers if possible



3. Avoidance/ Escape

- ▶ Make expectations on behaviour clear from the beginning
- ▶ Prepare your child eg. Using a visual routine, social story
- ▶ Repeat and remind your child
- ▶ Provide choices
- ▶ Choose your timing
- ▶ Offer rewards/incentives



4. Sensory regulation

- **Consider getting a sensory assessment**
- **Understand your child's sensory regulation needs**
- **Avoid situations that are distressing or uncomfortable for your child if possible**
- **If not, find alternatives sensory strategies for your child**





5. Entertainment/ stimulation

- **Be realistic about how long your child can wait**
- **Provide enjoyable activities**
- **Structure meaningful routines each day for your child**
- **Teach your child how to play**
- **Praise your child for playing independently**
- **Provide a variety of activities to choose from**



Case study

- ▶ Tom is 25 years old and attends a business unit three times a week. On the days he does not go to work, Tom wanders around his neighbourhood and will ask strangers for money. Tom's parents do not feel he has the skills to manage his money and as a result Tom does not have access to his money.
- ▶ Jenny is 10 years old and attends a special school. She will go up to her classmates and will scratch them when they laugh or yell too loudly. The teacher responds by separating Jenny from her classmates.



A Quick Checklist for Carers



How long has it been since you

- ▶ Did something that was just for you?
- ▶ Had fun?
- ▶ Shared with others what is it like to be a carer?
- ▶ Last had a refreshing sleep?
- ▶ Acknowledged how you feel?



A Quick Checklist for Carers

How often do you:

- ▶ Dread getting up each day?
- ▶ Feel tired most of the time?
- ▶ Feel exhausted?
- ▶ Eat regularly?
- ▶ Have trouble concentrating?
- ▶ Feel frustrated, lonely or helpless?
- ▶ Feel as though you aren't coping, or won't be able to cope?
- ▶ Feel irritable or angry, especially over things that, at other times, you would find quite insignificant?



What can I do to better look after myself?

- ▶ Share your worries and feelings with those who will listen eg. Family, friends, counsellor
- ▶ Stay healthy. Eat well. Exercise and practise relaxation. Get enough rest as much as possible
- ▶ Ask for help when you need it.
- ▶ Plan regular breaks from your caring role
- ▶ Keep your expectations in check



Resilient Families

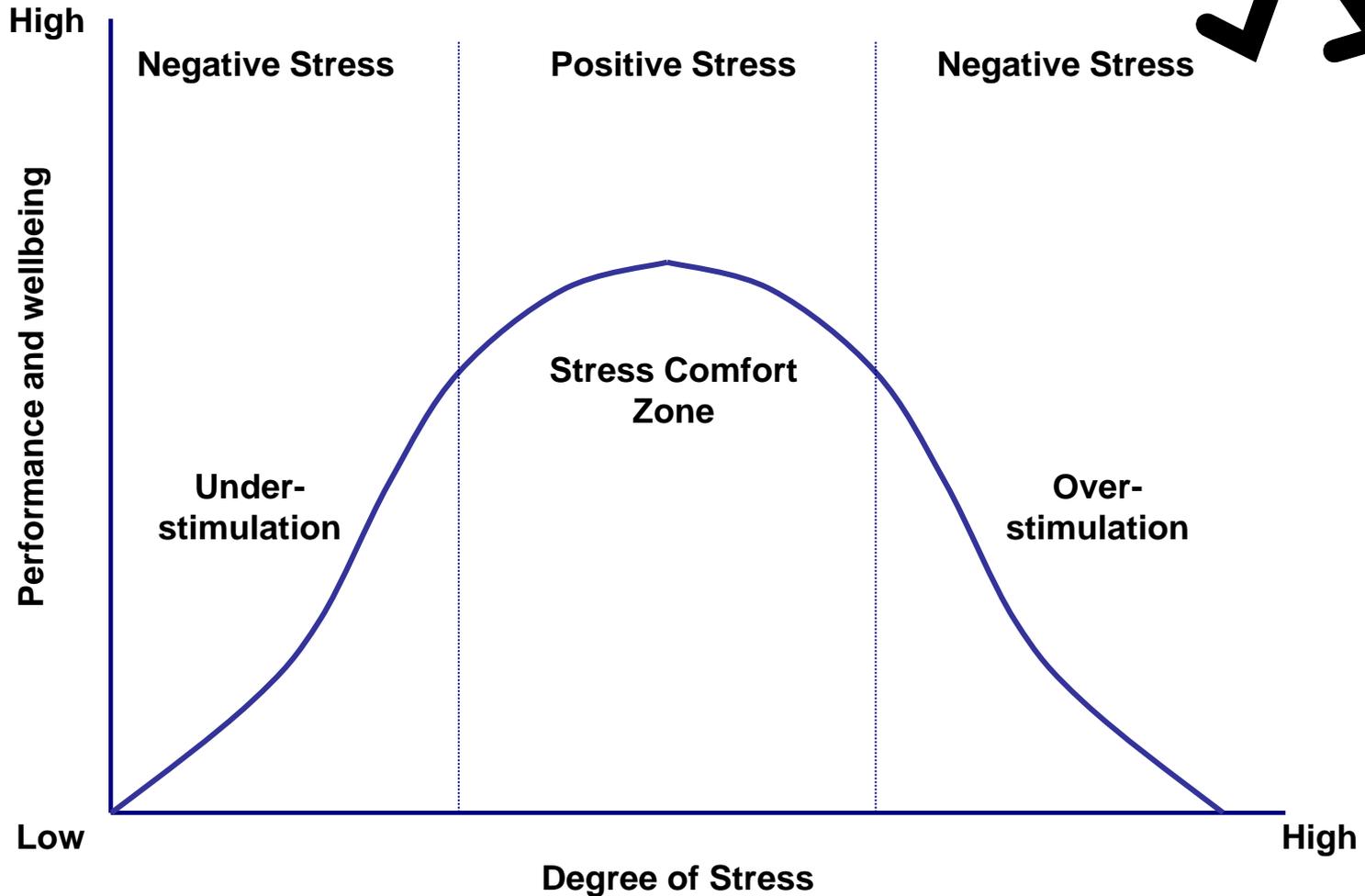
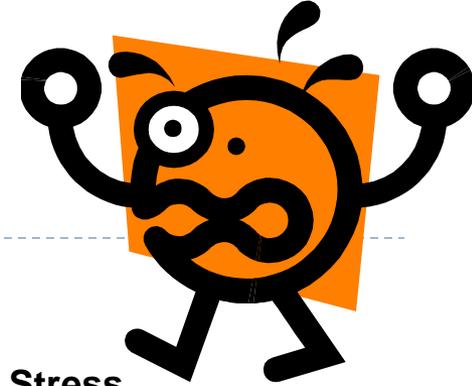
- ▶ Accept their child's diagnosis
- ▶ Make efforts to understand how this diagnosis impact on their child
- ▶ Sees their child as just another member of the family
- ▶ Works together as a team
- ▶ Celebrates the uniqueness of their child
- ▶ Sees the funny side to things their child does
- ▶ Works collaboratively with professionals



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- ▶ Reflects on themselves and how they can change
 - ▶ Seeks help when they need it
 - ▶ Finds strength eg. From social support, religion/faith
 - ▶ Has realistic expectations of their child
 - ▶ Celebrates the gains of their child



Is Stress Always Negative?



How can I look after myself



- ▶ **Physical Strategies**, eg exercising
- ▶ **Mental Health Strategies**, eg relaxation
- ▶ **Active Strategies**, eg goal setting



Physical Strategies



Good physical health helps to avoid the stress involved in being a support person.

- ▶ Exercise regularly.
- ▶ Adopt a healthy, well-balanced diet and try not to skip meals.
- ▶ Develop a healthy sleep routine and take rest times.
- ▶ Learn and use relaxation techniques.
- ▶ Reduce consumption of alcohol or other drugs



Mental Health Strategies

- ▶ Learn and practise problem-solving.
- ▶ Check and change any negative beliefs.
- ▶ Practice self-talk that helps reduce pressure
 “I can cope by breaking this task into smaller steps”.
- ▶ Learn and practice visualisation and meditation techniques.
- ▶ Talk to others



Action Strategies

- ▶ Practise time management and goal setting.
- ▶ Maintain or commence enjoyable
- ▶ Learn to be assertive in communicating what you need.
- ▶ Create a support team for yourself. This may include friends, family and professionals.
- ▶ Consider the benefits of getting support or counselling for yourself.
- ▶ Develop a clear action plan to deal with crises.



Where to get extra help

- ▶ **Bilingual Counsellor's Program**

46 Charlotte Street, Ashfield 9798 5111

Bilingual counselling services, information and referral.

Languages spoken: Arabic, Italian, Greek, Portuguese,
Vietnamese



▶ **Health Care Interpreter Service**

South Western Sydney 9828 6088

- ▶ Provides professional interpreting services, free of charge in more than 50 languages (including Sign language), to people using public health services around the State.
- ▶ In metropolitan areas, services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, depending on urgency.
- ▶ In some areas, interpreters are also able to provide services for Telemedicine consultations.





- ▶ **Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW**

9891 6400 Freecall 1800 629 072 www.mdaa.org.au

Provides advocacy for people from non-english speaking backgrounds with a disability and their families

- ▶ **Parent Line**

1300 301 300



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- ▶ ***Ethnic Child Care, Family and Community Services Cooperative Care, Family & Community Services Co-operative Ltd***
 - ▶ Address: Building 3, 142 Addison Road, Marrickville, NSW, 2204
 - ▶ Phone: 95691288
 - ▶ Service Description: Organises education and information sessions for family carers of people with a disability who have a physical, intellectual or mental illness from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the Canterbury and Marrickville local government areas. Organises carer support/working group for carers of people with a disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds



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- ▶ Centrelink Family Assistance Office 136 150
 - ▶ Centrelink Multilingual Services 13 12 02
 - ▶ Telephone Interpreter Service (24hrs/7 days) 131 450
 - ▶ National Disability Insurance Scheme
<http://www.ndis.gov.au> 1800 800 110



Are you a parent/guardian
of someone with an
intellectual disability?



MACQUARIE
University
SYDNEY · AUSTRALIA

- **What are your experiences with services addressing your child's mental health/challenging behaviour?**
- **How helpful have these services been?**

You are invited to participate in an online survey to have your say. You must have accessed services for challenging behaviours and/or mental health concerns via hospital or community health settings, government or non-government disability services within the past two years. Information gathered will assist in the evaluation of current mainstream services. Participants will also go in the draw to win 1 of 3 \$50 gift vouchers.

" This study has been approved by the
Macquarie University human ethics committee.

Please contact Joyce Man at
joyce.man@students.mq.edu.au for more information.

QUESTIONS??

