

# Understanding My Child's Autism: Caregiver Group

## INFORMATION SHEET



### What is the Understanding My Child's Autism: Caregiver group?

Understanding My Child's Autism is a group for parents and caregivers to help you understand and support your child with autism. It also provides an opportunity to meet other families.

The group is jointly facilitated by an experienced Clinical Psychologist and Speech Pathologist who work within our CliniKids diagnostic and intervention team. The group includes 5-sessions and runs on a fortnightly basis.

SESSION	THEME
1	My child has a diagnosis... now what?
2	Thinking about my child's strengths and differences
3	Thinking about my child's communication
4	Thinking about my child's wellbeing
5	Bringing it all together

This group has been developed as a response to family feedback and uses the evidence-based SCERTS (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports) framework to understand your child's skills. SCERTS is a model for working with children with autism and related disabilities, and their families. The SCERTS model aims to target functional goals that are developmentally appropriate for the child and priorities for the family.



### What does the research say?

The core areas explored through the program are drawn from feedback received from families, our family consumer reference group and current research and guidelines.

It is no doubt that families' experiences of an Autism diagnosis are varied and impacts the family system in different ways. It can be a confusing time and it is normal to feel a range of emotions. Navigating information may be hard as families find ways to support their child and understand what it might mean for them now and in the future. Families often want more positivity and optimism for their child rather than a focus on their child's difficulties. This group aims to address some of these concerns in a positive way.

Coming together as a group is important as families with a child diagnosed with ASD are more likely to experience more stress. Informal support networks (such as meeting other families in similar situations) can be effective stress buffers for families and has been linked to improved family well-being and better relationships with children.

This group aims to support families and build capacity in the beginning of their journey with ASD. Research with similar groups in the United Kingdom has found caregivers reported increased understanding of autism, improvements in their communication with their child and understanding their behaviours and valuing the opportunity to meet other families.

### Who is the Understanding My Child's Autism Caregiver group suitable for?

If you have a child who has recently been diagnosed with autism or would like to better understand your child's strengths and needs, then this group may be for you. This group is for families with a child aged between 2-10.

#### How can I get involved?

CliniKids is currently taking enquiries from families who would like more information about the Understanding My Child's Autism Caregiver Group. If you would like to register your interest or access further information, please contact us:

[clinkids@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:clinkids@telethonkids.org.au) | (08) 6319 1133.