

## PRESENTATION SESSION 3 • STREAM 2

WEDNESDAY 22 JULY

4.00pm - 4.30pm

Hearing from the experts: Parents' knowledge of what works for their children

Presented by

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### Abstract

Given that children and young persons with ASD require support both at home and school, one of the fundamental factors for the success of all types of supports, services and interventions is the effective collaboration and open communication between families, schools, other professionals and organisations. The inextricable nature of partnerships has its own complexities, and if interventions and supports are to be successful, there needs to be a better understanding of ways in which the supports are perceived to be useful and effective by families. This presentation is drawn from a small research project undertaken in New Zealand in the form of a national survey to understand parents'/ caregivers' of children and young persons with ASD aged 0-21 of what works for their children and whānau. The research focused on the supports at home, out of home/after school care arrangements and educational settings. Data was gathered using an e-survey sent to parents using the Autism New Zealand database, followed by a small number of families participating in focus groups and five case studies. This presentation will report on the e-survey findings of 335 families who participated in the survey that was distributed through Autism NZ database.

Broadly, themes that emerged from parent responses to key questions indicate that parents were accessing a range of services for supporting the communication, behaviour and social difficulties of their children with ASD. These supports were provided either by individuals or organisations, but often their access was dictated by what was available rather than what was needed. While specific therapy needs were identified by some, there was an overarching desire from parents for their children to be in educational settings alongside their peers, supported by adequate and appropriate resources. More training and support for classroom teachers as well as parents was emphasised strongly. This presentation will share these findings and more.

The topic of presentation aligns well with the conference themes and will be of interest to all those who work with and support families, children and young persons.