



Converging
PROFESSIONAL WISDOM
FOR Family Well-Being

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Message from Mrs. Patricia CHU, Chairperson, CIFA



With the lifting of restrictions, activities returned to normal. The various committees/working groups of CIFA have been meeting to work out further details regarding various activities including the planning of 2nd CIFA Webinar, those to be organised to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, including the Regional Campaign on Family We-Time, Expert Group Meeting on Ageing of Population in Asia and the Asian Family Summit. Much efforts have been made to finalise the proposal on Cross Country Study on “Application of Information and Communication Technology in Family Services in Post-Pandemic Era in Asia”.

In this issue, we are pleased to share the keynote speech delivered by Mr. Derek McCormack at the CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022 in Singapore, on “Strong Families: The Whats, Whys and Hows” exploring the characteristics of strong families and how they can be recognised and supported by parents, early educators, professional service providers and policy makers. The paper also highlights information-seeking behaviours of parents and efforts in developing digital parenting support in Australia.

Another interesting piece is presented by the team from Heep Hong Society, the Gold Award and Most Innovative Award winner of Wofoo 3A Project 2022 sharing their knowledge, experience and insight in conducting the Brain Challenge Intervention (BCI) for ADHD Secondary School Students in Hong Kong. An aspect is the development of innovative ways to work with the students, their parents and the teachers under the pandemic situation.

The two announcements include the 2nd CIFA online Webinar to be held on 21 April with the theme on “Father’s Involvement in Helping Families during COVID 19 in Asia”, an interesting subject which has often been neglected; and the Regional Campaign on Family We-time, with the aim to promote the importance of spending quality time with family members in building family resilience. We would like to appeal for your full support and active participation in these activities coordinated by CIFA in Asia.





CIFA REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM & MSF ASIAN FAMILY CONFERENCE 2022

Keynote Speech 1

Strong Families: The Whats, Whys and Hows

Mr. Derek McCormack

MSc, BSc (Hons)

Director, Raising Children Network

Honorary Fellow, Murdoch Children's Research Institute

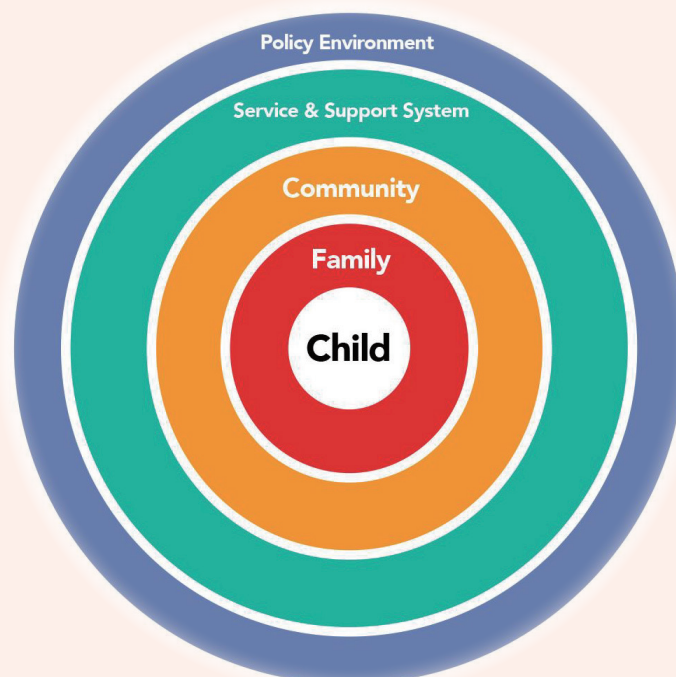
Former Principal Specialist, Parenting Research Centre

Australia



Mr. Derek McCormack presenting at the CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022.

In this paper, three questions have been raised to explore what makes a family strong, what matters to families now and in the future, and how can we do better to support families to be strong. In examining these issues, an ecological model is adopted, seeing the child in the context of the family, community, service and support systems as well as the policy environment. This presentation explores the characteristics of strong families and how they can be recognised and supported by parents, early educators, professional service providers and policy makers.



The Ecological Model

In building strong families, we need to have strong connections to others outside the family, help children feel safe and secure, have warmth, care and good communication, as well as show predictability. To achieve positive parenting, efforts have to be made to build loving, safe and responsive relationships for children to learn how to think, understand, communicate, behave, express emotions and develop social skills. Through play, it enables children to explore, observe, experiment and solve problems and build resilience with focus on autonomy and responsibility, creating opportunities for perceived challenges, and managing emotions. At the same time, we need to promote family resilience through talking at shared values, keeping lines open, provide regular opportunities to interact, looking after each other, staying positive and keeping boundaries and routines.



Building resilience in children

Understanding what matters to families in the 21st century helps guide policy directions that lead to improved services and supports. Focusing on strengths and resilience in children and families, the paper offers insights on the needs and priorities of contemporary parents, drawing on more than 15 years of data from a range of parenting research and support initiatives including the Raising Children Network platform accessed by 150,000 parents daily, the Parenting Today in Victoria (2022) representative survey of 2600 Victorian parents, and research exploring factors influencing parent engagement and support.

The paper also highlights information-seeking behaviours of parents—particularly in online environments— as well as key considerations on how we convey messages about parenting and implications for the service system and policy-makers. There is a special focus on the future and digital parenting support, to explore the question 'what does contemporary support for strong families look like in 5 years?' recognising that parents no longer 'going online' but 'living online'. It shares the range of supports developed by Raising Children Network including webinars, podcasts and the recent co-design of a mobile app for parents on social and emotional wellbeing in children.

In doing all these, it highlights the importance of providing evidence-based practice and guidance for families, focusing on equitable access and place-based support, significance of child focused and family-centred practice, incorporating family voice and work on barriers to parent engagement.

*Full powerpoint presentation is available at:
<https://www.cifa-afc2022.sg/programme/powerpoint-presentation-of-speakers/>



Wofoo 3A Project 2022

Gold Award & Most Innovative Award

Brain Challenge Intervention Program for ADHD Secondary School Students in Hong Kong

Heep Hong Society

Comprehensive Intervention Program for ADHD students in Hong Kong

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental disorder. Students with ADHD have slower brain development in executive functions, affecting their self-management. For example, they experience difficulties to manage their personal belongings, hard to maintain focus on assignments, uneasy in following daily routines and homework, have inappropriate social behaviors, etc. In Hong Kong, there is an estimation of 6.4%* of children and adolescents diagnosed with ADHD. The number of ADHD students studying at mainstream schools had more than doubled in the last 5 years**. However, the average waiting time for assessment and follow-up consultation at public hospitals is more than 12 months***. There's also a lack of support to families with ADHD children. The parents are usually under intense pressure in taking care of their ADHD children, and filled with frustrating experiences. Meanwhile, the school personnel is also exhausted due to the additional effort to work with ADHD students and burdening regular schoolwork.

Heep Hong Society (HHS) acknowledged the increasing service needs. We are dedicated to supporting ADHD students and their families. In May 2019, HHS kicked start the Brain Challenge Intervention (BCI) Program, the first comprehensive student-parent-teacher ADHD intervention program for secondary schools of Hong Kong by applying the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model. Multi-disciplinary team is comprised of occupational therapists and social workers who were deployed to provide training and support not just to ADHD students (Person), but also to their families and school personnel to cultivate a supportive environment (Environment); as well as motivating students to participate in self-initiated and rewarding activities (Occupation).



Figure - PEO model: the relationships of ADHD students' performance in self-management with Personal, Occupational, and Environmental Factors

The BCI Program aimed to help junior secondary ADHD students improve their executive functions and self-management skills. Through individual and structured group training with specially designed interactive games (balloon art, sport stacking, magic etc.), educational videos on application of executive functions, on-campus peer-recognition activities, and inter-school competition, students were guided to apply what they have learned from the training sessions to improve their self-management in daily life. In addition, our project team conducted counseling, home visits and training in a case-based approach to strengthen parents' skills in managing their ADHD children. Through workshops, consultation and coaching sessions provided to school teachers and student support teams, their awareness on ADHD and supporting skills for ADHD students was improved.

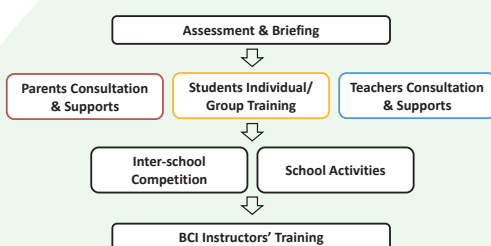


Figure - BCI Program Service Delivery Model



Student Group Training with therapeutic & interactive activities



BCI Inter-school Competition for 6 secondary schools on 10Jul2021

Responses under COVID-19

The BCI Program was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to prolonged suspension of schools and extra-curricular activities. The project team responded promptly by adopting online platforms to conduct intervention groups with students when face-to-face training was not available. The project team also made a series of home training videos and tailor-made online assignments and activities with posting training materials to students' homes. Besides, since parents needed to take care of their children at home for a long time due to the pandemic, it was difficult for them to squeeze time to participate in face-to-face activities. In view of this, the project team produced a series of educational videos (10 minutes each), and used YouTube as a medium, so that parents could freely choose when and where to access the information online. Counseling and home visits were conducted through zoom to maintain a close relationship with the parents. In the provision of online parent services, the project team found that the participation rate of parents was even higher than that of the general form of junior secondary school parent service. Therefore, despite the pandemic, the project team successfully developed a new model of parent support services.

Impacts & Effectiveness of BCI Program

The project team was able to provide services for a total of 69 students, parents, and 257 teachers from six secondary schools as originally planned, and conducted a total of 267 student training, 313 parent support and 157 teacher support sessions even though there were lots of challenges during the project period. From the evaluation study (using Randomized Controlled Trial) cooperated with the Department of Psychology of the University of Hong Kong, results showed that ADHD symptoms, executive function and functional performance of the ADHD students who had participated in the project were significantly improved, proving that the BCI program's service model can improve ADHD students' self-management performance.

Key Outcomes from the evaluation research conducted by HKU	
Students	↓ Reduced Problems from Hyperactivity & Inattention ↑ Improved Occupational Performance ↑ Improved working memory & Cognition Regulation ↑ Increased Satisfaction towards the Occupational Performance
Teachers	↑ Increased knowledge of the treatment of ADHD
Parents	↑ Increased knowledge of the cause & treatment of ADHD



Sustain and prolong the impact of the evidence-based BCI Program

Building on solid experience gained from the project, a set of training resources was published including the project overview booklet, instructor's manual, student handbook, and card game sets. To sustain the project impact, HHS is committed to providing more certification workshops starting from Jan2022, to train teachers, social workers and therapists in adopting the BCI program to benefit more ADHD students and their families in the community. Meanwhile, HHS will continue advocating the service model to the Government on ways of enhancing and complementing existing service protocols for children and youths with ADHD.



Publication of BCI Program

Reference:

- * Liu, A., Xu, Y., Yan, Q. & Tong, L. (2018). The Prevalence of Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder among Chinese Children and Adolescents. *Scientific Reports*, 2018, 8, 11169
- ** Hong Kong Education Bureau figures: academic years of 2012-2013 to 2018-19
- *** Cheung, et al. (2015). Experiences of adolescents and young adults with ADHD in Hong Kong: treatment services and clinical management. *BMC Psychiatry*, 2015, 15: 95.



BCI Instructors' Training Courses

2nd CIFA Webinar on Father's Involvement in Helping Families during COVID 19 in Asia

CIFA is organising Webinars with the view to provide opportunities for professional learning and exchange among family practitioners, researchers, policy makers and University students from the Asian regions and beyond!

This time, we have invited Prof. Kim Yeong Hee (Emeritua Professor, Chungbuk National University; Endowed Chair Professor, SolBridge International School of Business; Vice-Chairperson (Korea & Japan), CIFA) and Ms. Eliza Lam (Service Head of Caritas Family Service; Chairman of Membership Committee, CIFA) to share their views on the topic. For more details of the Webinar, you may access <http://cifa-net.org/content.aspx?urlkey=8Bz/hY9017yGiqEG>.

Date: 21 April, 2023 (Friday)

Time: 9:30am – 12:00pm (Hong Kong time)

Registration Fee: Free

Please register by filling the Google Form at <https://forms.gle/Qn8mwe5WaEK8HCcE8>

Zoom link will be provided upon successful registration

Please contact CIFA Secretariat at cifasecretariat@gmail.com for any enquiries.



Family We-Time Campaign

We are delighted to announce the upcoming Regional Campaign on "Family We-Time" in Asia which will be held from October 2023 to May 2024. The campaign aims to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF+30) declared by the United Nations and to promote the importance of spending quality time with family to build family resilience.

Last Autumn, CIFA organised the "Family We-time at Home" Challenge which was met with overwhelming support from the community. Families from Asian region actively participated in the event, promoting the need to maintain positive energy through togetherness in the critical time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Building on this success, CIFA is going to expand the campaign to a larger scale by involving more families from Asia Region in the year of 2023/24.

The sub-themes of the Campaign will be about Clothing (惜衣), Food & Nutrition (足食), Living & Environment (安居) and Travelling & Leisure (樂行). Photos or colour-filling artpieces will be collected to produce a photo collage, which will be presented at a presentation event to celebrate the International Day of Families on 15 May 2024.

Organisations in Asia are invited to become Supporting Organisations and take the leading and coordinating role to facilitate the promotion and organisation of the Campaign locally in your region/country. To ensure the smooth operation of the Regional Campaign, the Secretariat team of the Campaign will provide the master plan, promotional materials, and an online platform for registration in this Summer.

To make the promotional materials more user-friendly and appropriate to your region/country, it may be advisable for you to do some translation work to fit the use of the local participants.

May I appeal for your support and active participation in this regional wide campaign. If you would like to have more information about the campaign, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat at cifasecretariat@gmail.com.