School-Home Support

Engaging Challenging Parents to Bring About Positive Change

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July 09

Challenging Parents

- Close your eyes

- What is the first thing you think of when you hear the phrase …

CHALLENGING PARENT

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Google search

Angry parents	12,400
Pushy parents	15,300
Demanding parents	831
Aggressive parents	5,950
Irritating parents	2,190
Parents from HELL	6,550

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Challenging Parents - types

- Mr or Mrs Angry
- Defensive
- ‘My child is an angel’
- ‘My child is a genius’
- Home Angel/School Devil
- School phobic/casualty
- I don’t understand
- I’m in total control of my child
- Newly messy separated/divorced
- Very needy
- Revolving door parents

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Tell me about your day ...

Marie’s morning

Dave’s day

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Emotional Flooding ...

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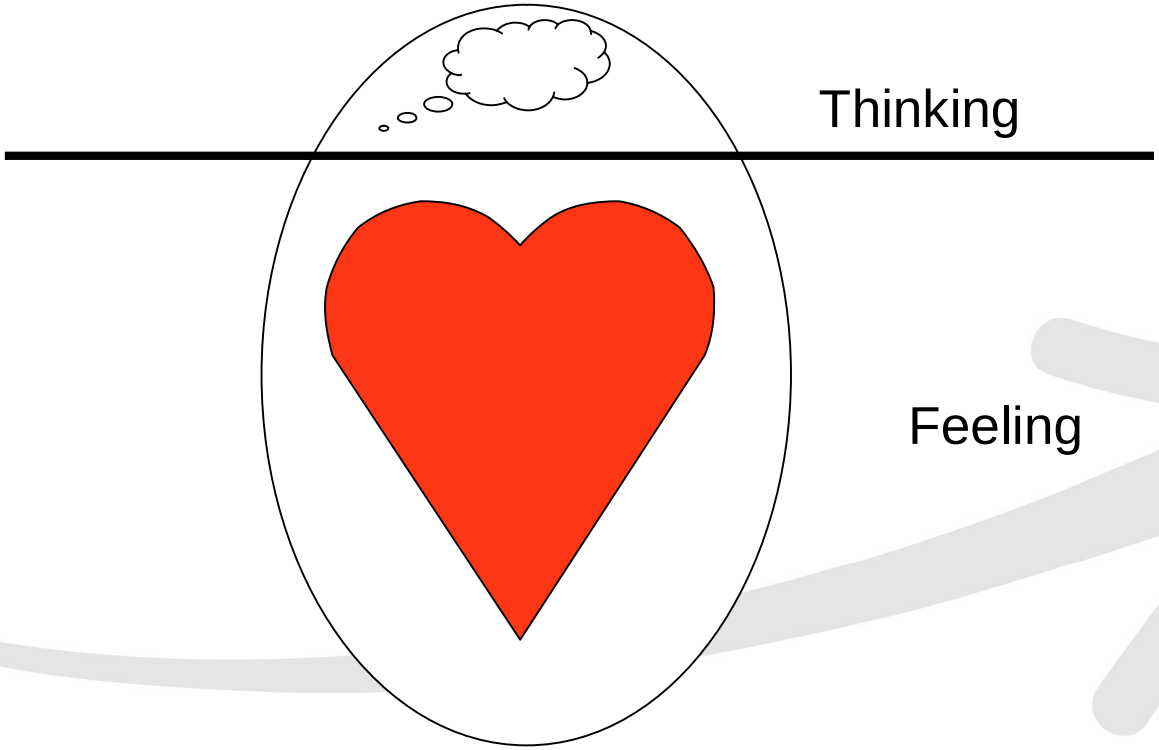
Emotional Flooding ...



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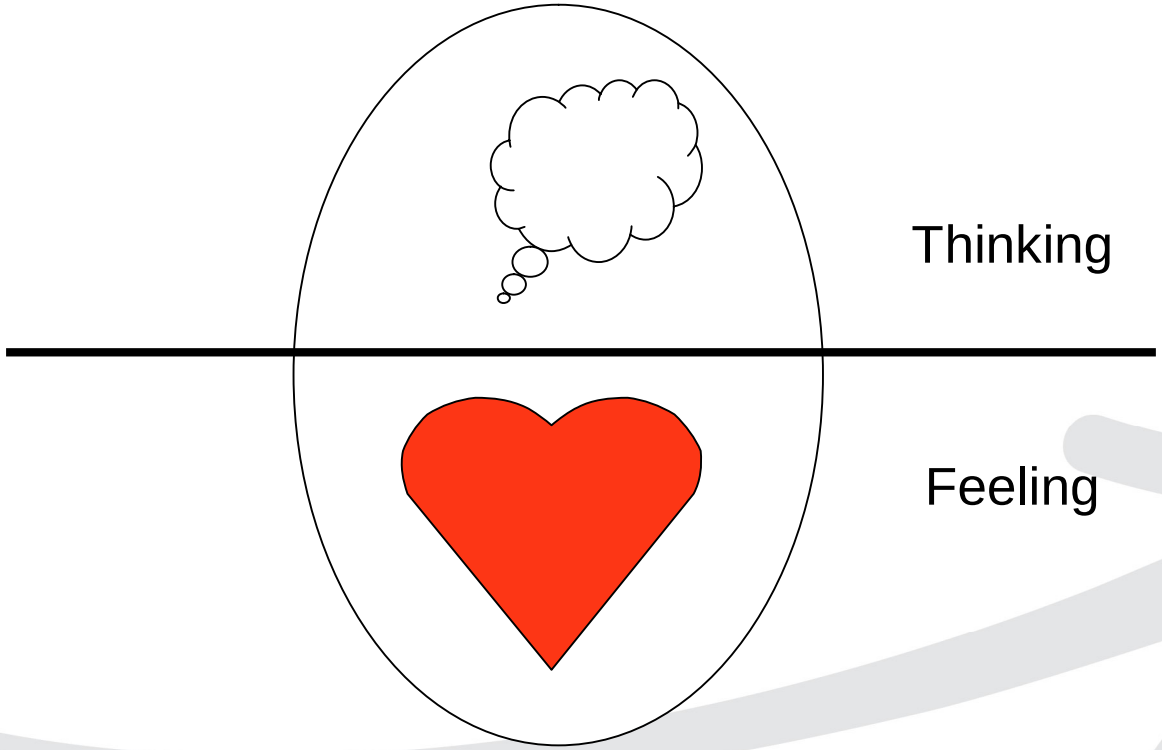
Emotional Flooding ...



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Now what do I do ?

- Keeping yourself safe
- Are you the best person to deal with this ? Right now ?
- Checking out the environment

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Now what do I do ?

- How to respond
  - Trigger words
  - I *am* listening!!
- Mirroring posture
- Importance of recording

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Now what do I do ?

- What next ?
- Promises versus reality
- Checking back

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The assume technique

A	*is for **ASSESS** the situation* What is the dispute about? Is it entirely the other person's fault or have you been unwittingly contributing to it?
S	*is for **STOP** wishing they were different* When you accept the difficult person for what they are, you will be able to stop hoping for a miracle cure
S	*is for **STEP BACK*** In order to respond constructively to the problem we need to take an objective standpoint
U	*is for **UNDERSTAND** your strategy* Once you've identified the pattern of difficult behaviour you can put together your plan of action
M	*is for **MASTER** the situation* Choose your moment if you can, preferably when you can be sure of the other person's full attention
E	*is for **EXPECT** to have to do it again* With most types of difficult person you can expect, at some time or other, to have to remind them firmly that you will not accept their behaviour. This should not be done in an "I've told you before" accusing sort of way.

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The salvage strategy

For dealing with angry people:	
S	Smile openly
A	Anticipate their hostility
L	Listen non-defensively
V	Verify their precise grievance
A	Agree with the true parts
G	Guarantee that something will be done
E	Encourage them to change direction

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Parents rights and responsibilities

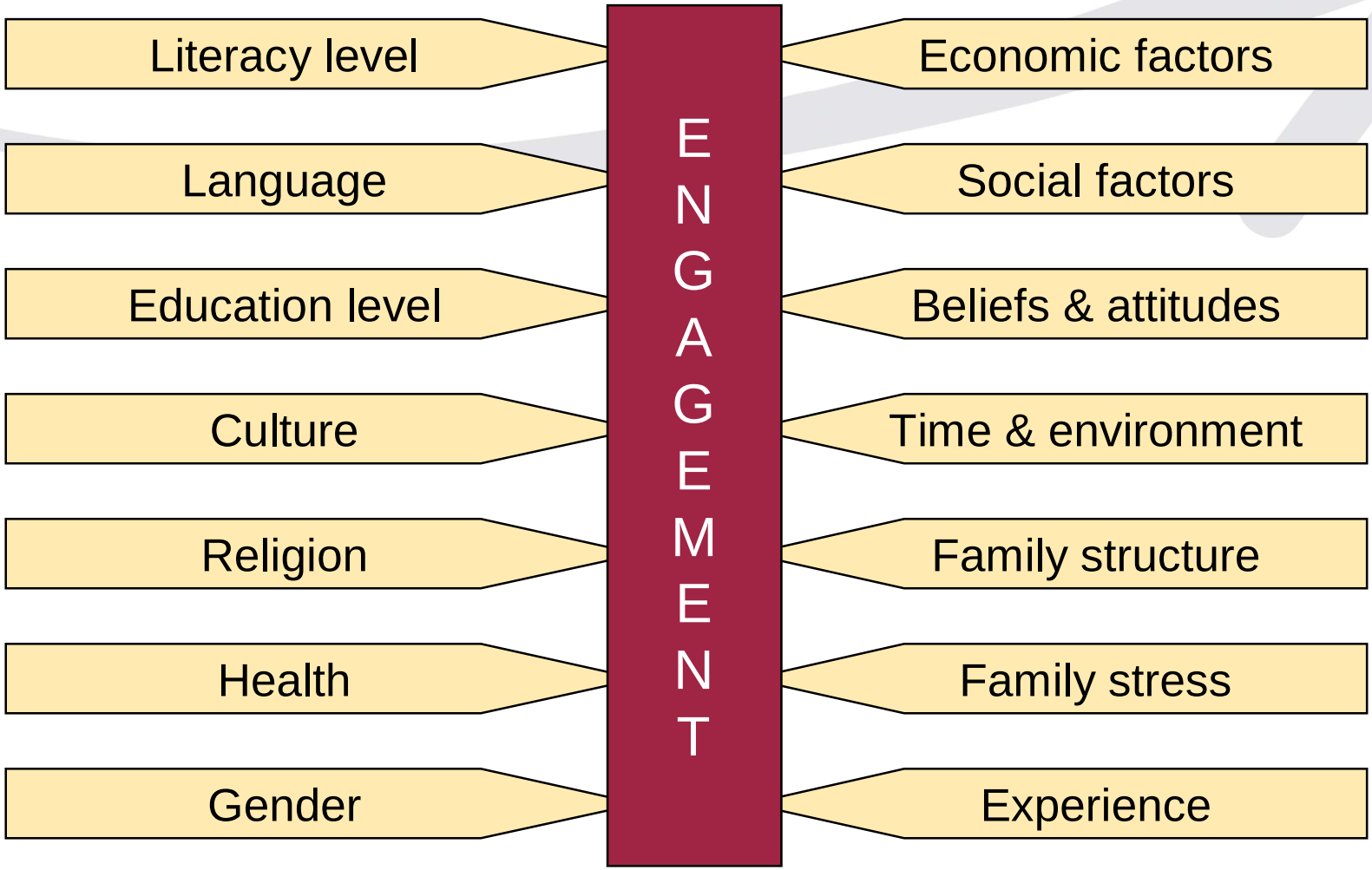
Parents
are responsible for:

- Raising their children in a loving, supportive, safe, healthy and financially secure environment
- Ensuring their children receive education

Parents
have the right to:

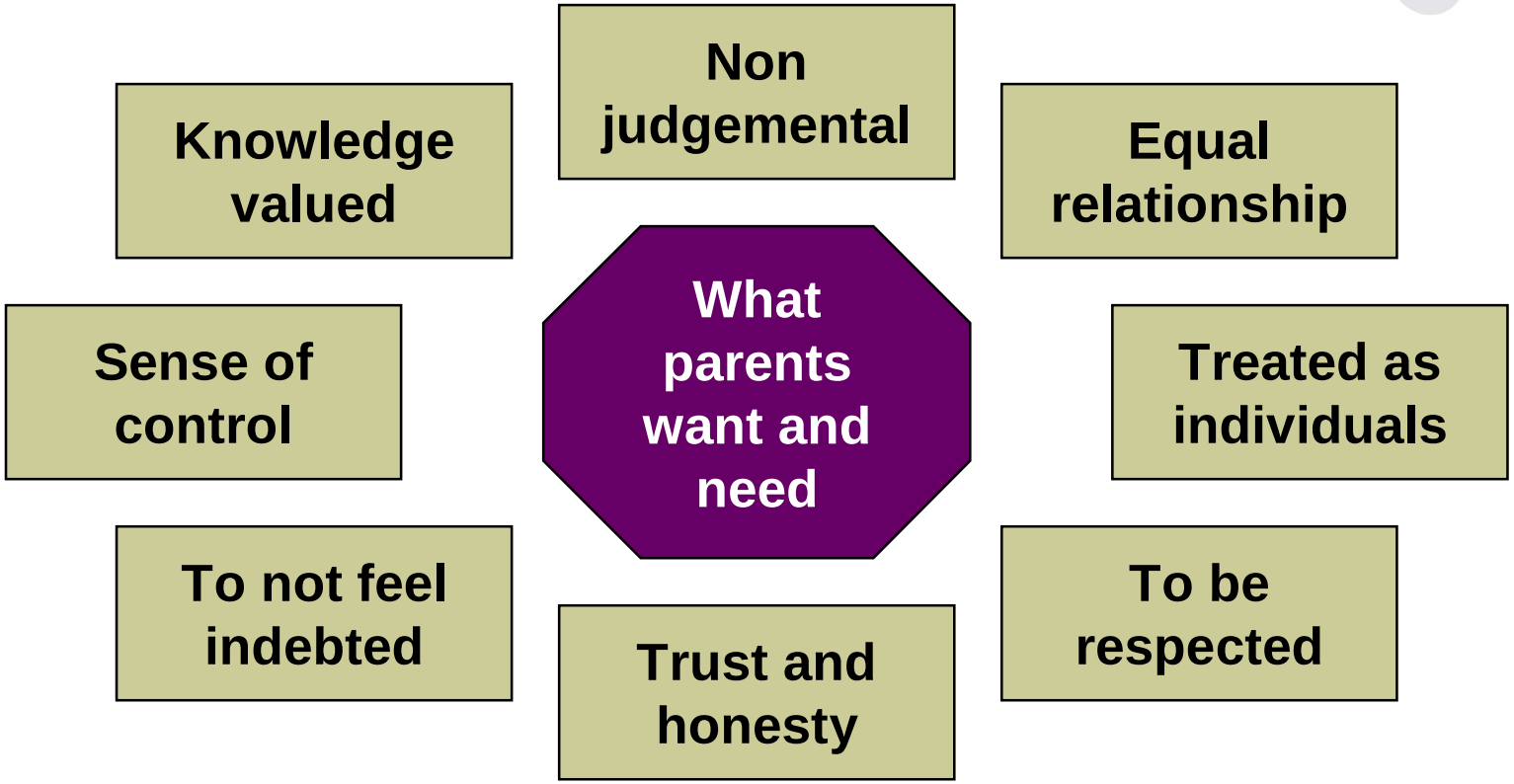
- Support from government in meeting their responsibilities if they want it
- Receive information from the school
- Participate in activities
- Be asked to give consent if they ask to be consulted
- Be told about meetings involving the child

Factors that impact on engagement



Factors that underpin effective engagement

'Recognising parents' expertise in their own lives, and emphasising partnership by doing things with families rather than to them, is crucial.'



Supporting parents key messages from research

- What parents do is influenced by many things including
  - Childhood experiences
  - Current circumstances (especially poverty)
  - Their own mental and physical resilience
  - The support they get

Parents are the main organisers of their own support

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What do parents want?

- Parents are very committed to retaining their independence, they want to feel in control
- Parents with long standing problems such as mental health difficulties can be especially concerned about a loss of control if they accept support.

Parents want services

- To treat them like adults
- As partners in problem solving
- To be practical and professional
- To take their needs seriously
- To be fast and responsive

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Risky behaviour ?

IN ALL SPECIFIC TOPIC AREAS BEYOND YOUR OWN PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE – DON’T MEDDLE! BY ALL MEANS EXPLORE THE ISSUES WITH PARENTS BUT GET THEIR INFORMATION AND SUPPORT NEEDS MET BY PEOPLE WHO ARE TRAINED AND INFORMED ON THE ISSUES AT HAND

DON’T GET SUCKED INTO TALKING ABOUT THINGS YOU DON’T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT!

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SHS learning

One size doesn't fit all … be prepared to change things

Bring new people through ALL the time - avoid cliques

Get out and see what works elsewhere

A quality service shouldn't be about a building

Outreach & befriending is as important as expertise

Truly listen and respond – don't be precious if something isn't working

Have a clear complaints policy in place and treat complaints positively

Celebrate success: tell parents about the good things,
as well as the bad

Talk more, write less!

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For further information

contact ...

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Further information/support ?

- www.hse.gov.uk/violence.index.htm
- www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg69.pdf
- www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf
- www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/13024.pdf
- http://agency/osha.en.int/publications/factsheets/24/factsheetsn24_en.pdf
- www.angermanage.co.uk
- www.schoolhomesupport.org.uk;

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