

PARENTING CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME: POSITIVE APPROACHES TO SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT

Prior research has highlighted the positive impact of positive parenting on children with Down syndrome and the benefits on the family. This research study aimed to look at the positive approaches that parents and carers use to support the development of their child with Down syndrome, particularly:

- Communication
- Resilience
- Independence



Ten mothers of children and young people with Down syndrome aged 2-27 years old took part in online interviews about their experiences. There were five themes:

- Development of social connection and family relationship
- Communicating to others and talking about feelings
- Learning through modelling and overcoming challenges
- Teaching autonomy and responsibilities
- Future expectations and professional support.

Mothers spoke about the importance of supporting their child's communication skills to enable them to express their feelings and needs to others, have good relationships with friends and families and develop their independence. Support from families, professionals and support networks was seen as helpful, but mothers expressed worries about lack of medical and community support, people's lack of knowledge and other concerns that may affect their current development and adulthood.