

Fix the Child or the Parent

- **How to Raise A Great Child in a Different Culture**

Xiaobo LENG

Chief Executive of the Great Families Charitable Trust

Mandarin Facilitator for Toolbox Parenting Groups



Overview

- To most Asian parents, though New Zealand is an attractive place for children's education, there are fears of lack of competitiveness to either Kiwis on literacy or to home country peers on academic achievement.
- Asian parents are facing with challenges of appropriate parenting skills compatible to local practices yet still maintain their ethnic and cultural identity.
- Solution - how to achieve an ideal model of taking advantages of bicultural traits to raise a great child.

“Asian Parents”

- must win
- choose schools for academic performance
- supervise learning
- after school classes/extra homework
- put less emphasis on social activities/sports
- ignore children's (psychological) feelings
- set goals and make decisions for children
- good children are obedient and study hard



How “Asian”

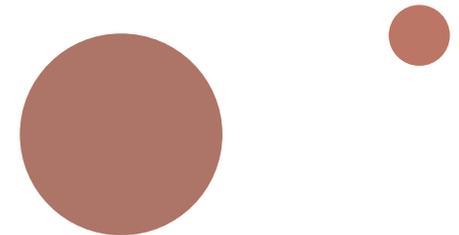


- The majority of the Asian immigrants grew up in a monoculture and do not have a sufficient understanding of how to raise bicultural children in New Zealand.
- A common expectation by Asian parents is that their children will automatically be happy and grateful to have a comfortable life in NZ. children’s negative behavior may be interpreted as a lack of appreciation and respect for the parents.
- Achievement and education are status symbols in Asian society.
- In many Asian families, shame and guilt are mechanisms used to gain compliance from family members.

- conflicts between parents and school/tension between parents and children
 - stress of developing their own identities and places for children vs parents' expectation
 - school assessment vs parents' view
- better academic results vs failure
- more mental issues/suicide rate because of isolation and depression



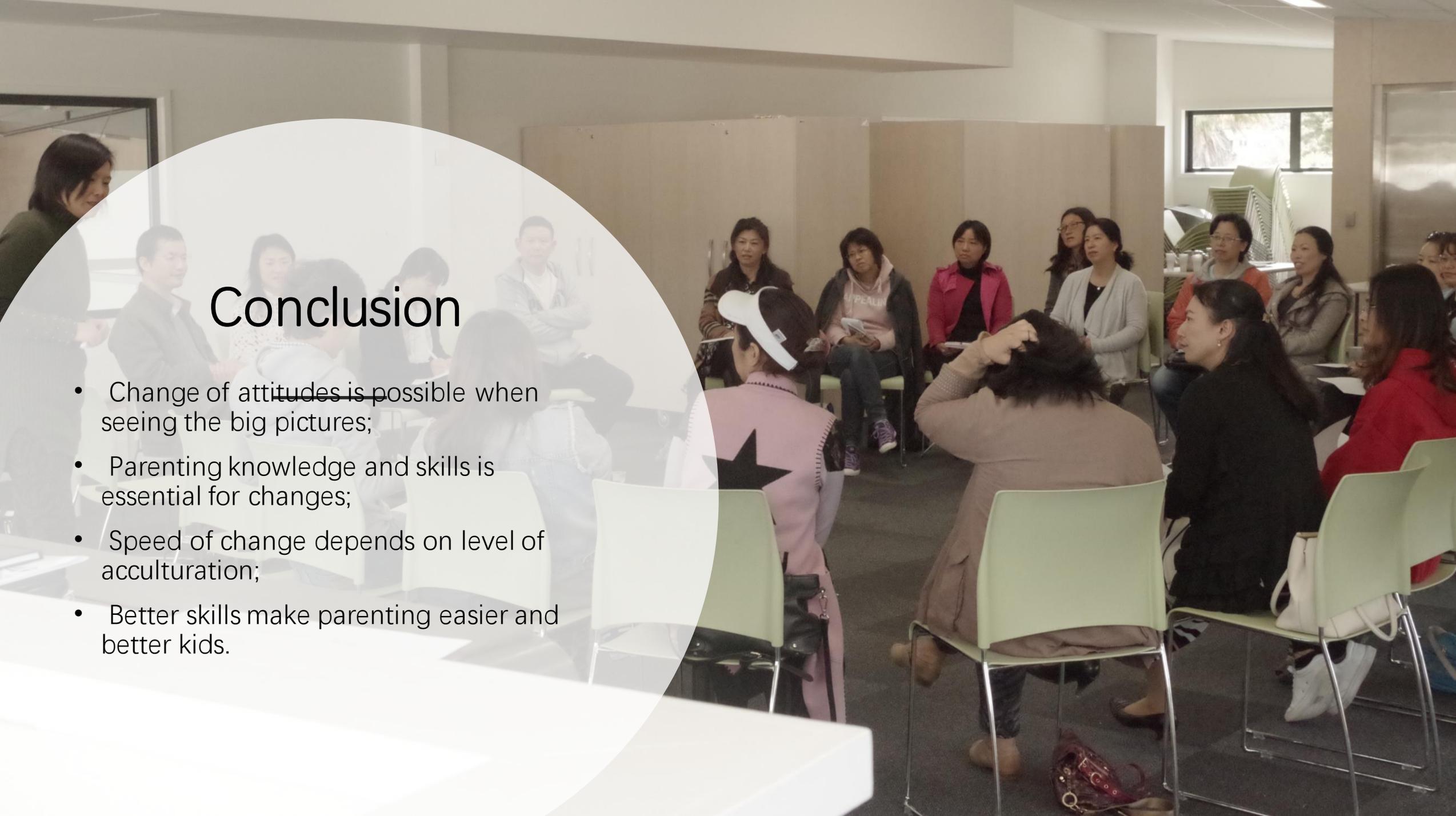
Results



Strategies to work with Asian Parents

- Keep the Parents Close
 - understand and state their value orientation
 - Respect their views and do not use direct confrontation
 - acknowledge their efforts and good intentions
 - get dads involved
- Direct them to big pictures and suitable tools
 - clear vision and mission
 - understand themselves and acculturation
 - set goals and break into small steps
 - tools: parenting knowledge and skills



A group of people, mostly women, are seated in a circle in a room, engaged in a discussion or meeting. They are sitting on light green chairs. The room has a white wall and a window in the background. A large white circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text.

Conclusion

- Change of attitudes is possible when seeing the big pictures;
- Parenting knowledge and skills is essential for changes;
- Speed of change depends on level of acculturation;
- Better skills make parenting easier and better kids.

Our Help

- Hot tip events to provide overall information regarding parenting and academic assessment
- Parenting courses to equip parents with knowledge and skills
- Family team building by building relationships
- Family building activities, such as family sports, tramping, making traditional Chinese food on Festivals, etc.
- Dialogue with schools

