



ABN 27 084 251 669

## **A REPORT ON**

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# **“YOUNG PEOPLE YOUNG DRAGONS”: CONVERSATIONS WITH CHINESE FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON SOLVING INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICTS**

**A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT BETWEEN THE, BLACKBURN  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL, CITY OF WHITEHORSE,  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT EASTERN REGION MANNINGHAM  
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE, MIGRANT INFORMATION  
CENTRE (EASTERN REGION), SBS RADIO AND VICTORIAN  
TRANSCULTURAL PSYCHIATRY UNIT**

*August 2002*

**FUNDED BY THE VICTORIAN MULTICULTURAL  
COMMISSION**

Design and Publication by the  
Migrant Information Centre  
(Eastern Melbourne) © Melbourne Australia

**ISBN 1 876735 12 0**

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## **1. Objective**

The objective of the project was to increase awareness of the impact of intergenerational and intercultural issues within the Cantonese speaking communities, particularly on the younger generation. The aims were to improve family access to community services and promote harmony in the family.

The medium of the project was a weekly radio program on SBS Radio over a 3-month period commencing in April 2002. The program concluded with the showing of a film, *Floating Life*, that explored the experience of three generations of a family from Hong Kong when they migrated to Australia.

## **2. Project management**

A steering committee oversaw, supported and monitored the project.

Steering group members were:

Warren Anderson	Youth Worker, City of Whitehorse
Margaret Bianchi	School Social Worker, Education Department, Eastern Region
Rob Colla	Principal, Blackburn English Language School
Sue Herbst	Manager, MIC Eastern Melbourne
Doris Leung	Cantonese Head of Group, SBS Radio
Maria Piu	Psychologist, Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit
Khai Wong	Psychologist and Counsellor, Manningham Community Health Service
Dorothy Yiu	Project Worker, MIC Eastern Melbourne

## **3. Activities undertaken with grant monies**

### **3.1 Consultation with the service providers**

The project worker contacted over thirty agencies and groups including Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) speaking and mainstream social workers, psychologists and counsellors either via telephone or direct contact. The purpose of the contact was to identify parents, young people and high achievers who are in unconventional occupations to share their experiences with the audience.

### **3.2 Consultation with the community**

Three focus groups were conducted at Mullauna and Doncaster East Secondary Colleges and Nunawading Recreational Centre. The purpose of running focus group discussions was to explore views and beliefs of parents and children on intergenerational and intercultural issues and identify their impact on families.

### **3.3 Selection of interviewees**

All interviewees were sourced either through referrals from service providers or direct contacts with the project worker.

### 3.4 Interviews

The project worker in consultation with the SBS interviewers developed a series of questions for the interviews. SBS interviewers conducted the interviews.

### 3.5 Promotion

The radio broadcasts were promoted through Chinese media both print and through SBS radio.

### 3.6 Radio programs

The programs involved interviewing young people and parents who have experienced conflicts in the family and people from the community who are successful in 'unconventional' fields of trades such as tradesmen and artists. Interviews were also held with psychologists. The interviews were designed to address some of the issues raised by the personal stories of the young people and parents. The psychologists also led a talk-back segment where listeners had the opportunity to ring in with their own questions. The radio program schedule is detailed below:

<b>CYCLE</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> WEEK</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> WEEK</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> WEEK</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> WEEK</b>
	Parent	Adolescent	The Dragon	Health care professional, including talk-back segment
<b>First cycle APRIL</b>	<b>7 April</b> Male	<b>14 April</b> Female Year 12 student	<b>21 April</b> Clara Law, film producer/director	<b>28 April</b> Carol Schmidt Psychologist, MRC, Preston
<b>Second cycle MAY</b>	<b>5 May</b> Female	<b>12 May</b> Male Year 12 student	<b>19 May</b> Tom Huynh Graphic designer	<b>26 May</b> Khai Wong Psychologist and Counsellor, Manningham Community Health Service
<b>Third cycle JUNE</b>	<b>2 June</b> Female	<b>9 June</b> Female year 9 student	<b>16 June</b> Ming Leung Car mechanic	<b>23 June</b> Ina Tan Counsellor, Karinya Counselling Service

Summaries of the interviews are attached. (see attachment 1)

The radio broadcasts attracted additional interest from Chinese media. An article on the issues raised was published in Sing Tao newspaper which is a national publication. In addition presenters of the Cantonese group of SBS radio have expressed interest in doing more programs of a similar nature. Following the scheduled broadcasts an additional interview was arranged with Kwai Wong.

### 3.7 Celebrating the Project

“Floating Life”, a Cantonese movie produced and directed by a Melbourne-based Chinese film producer was screened free of charge to the Chinese community in July at the Whitehorse Performing Arts Centre. Floating Life depicts a family’s adjustment to their new life after migrating to Australia. The objective of showing this film was to help parents better understand the impact of migration process on intergenerational conflicts within the Cantonese community. Use of the film was donated by Footprint Films and Whitehorse Council subsidised the use of the theatre.

Over 300 people attended the film. The film was promoted widely including through Chinese media both print and radio, schools across the Eastern Region and Chinese clubs and support groups. (see attached flyers in attachment 2). The film was opened by Tong Robinson M.P. and the director and two of the films actors attended the showing.

One hundred and seventy seven people who attended the film completed a feedback sheet. The feedback sheet was translated in Chinese. The results of the feedback indicated a high level of satisfaction with the film and the radio programs. Comments in relation to what people had learnt from the radio programs recorded on the feedback sheets included, *“Encouraging and motivating”, “How to communicate with children to promote harmony in the family”, “How to communicate”, “How to help and care for each other” “Learn to negotiate and accommodate each other.” “Understand the importance of communication between two generations” and “Learned how to deal with conflict and how to educate our children.”*

Attachment 3 details the results of the participant feedback.

## 1. Background

<b>Parent interview :</b>	<b>“Mr Chan”<sup>1</sup></b>
Interviewer:	Thomas Sung, SBS broadcaster/journalist
Interviewee:	“Mr Chan” a father of 3 children with oldest daughter Mary who is fourteen.
Venue:	SBS Radio
Duration of Recording:	approximately 20 minutes
Actual segment duration	(edited interview): 10 minutes.
Date of broadcast:	7 April 2002

The content of the interview was based on the suggested questions provided to the interviewer prior to the recording. The interviewee was prompted to talk freely about his experiences. The interviewer also presented an introduction to the program.

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Different cultural values and life-styles led to different expectations between the parents and their children.
- Financial security appears to be of prime concern rather than self actualization.
- Lack of communication led to conflicts.
- Need for parents to understand the developmental needs of teenagers.

## 3. Interview summary

### Expectations of children

Mr Chan stated:

“We, Chinese, wish our children to become “dragons” and “phoenixes”, to be independent and have a comfortable life in their adulthood. I am not an exception. That is what I aim for my children”

### Career aspirations for his children

Mr Chan told his story about his eldest daughter. He said, at the beginning of the interview, that he did not have high expectations of his daughter becoming one of those highly regarded professionals (doctors, lawyers and accountants), he hoped his daughter would be an IT programmer. However, he did admit that while his daughter is good at arts and crafts, he still believed that his daughter should study IT since having a career in fine arts did not guarantee a good salary. He believed that young people should be more practical in planning their future.

Mr Chan commented that, unlike other Chinese parents, he did not have higher expectations of his children while living in a “foreign country”, but he expected his daughter to perform well academically. Despite these wishes, he was very concerned that his daughter was not coping with Maths and that she has learning difficulties. He said that his daughter attended Chinese classes and another course to improve memory skills, which she disliked.

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<sup>1</sup> For reasons of confidentiality Mr Chan is a pseudonym.

### **Parental and child relationship**

Mr Chan revealed that he had set very firm rules for his daughter to observe at home. For example, her uniform must cover her knees, low-cut T-shirts could not be worn, and she must tidy her room everyday. Otherwise her 'pocket money' would be stopped. He commented that her peers were taking control of his daughter, *"I don't understand my child sometimes – she listens to her friends but not me! She told me that all her friends never tidied their rooms and therefore she will not do it either"*.

Mr Chan also stated that he sometimes felt confused and helpless because he did not know what to do, and was often frustrated because his daughter could not meet his expectations.

Mr Chan pointed out that he was learning to compromise with his daughter for minor matters, but would not succumb to other important decisions. He said that children should be disciplined from a very young age and he regretted that he had not taken an active role in disciplining her daughter when she was young.

### **Accessing professional assistance**

Mr Chan said he had approached social workers and pastors for help, which he claimed helped him to some extent. Mr Chan stated, *"counselling helped him view things from a different perspective."*

### **Interviewee's message**

The interview ended with a message from Mr Chan to the audience, *"communicate more with your children and control your anger – even though it is easier said than done."*

### **Note**

The counsellor who will present a 5-6 minute talk on intergenerational issues on the third week after the broadcast of this interview will receive a summary of this interview prior to her program. The counsellor will also comment on the issues brought up in the interview.

## 1. Background

**Teenager interview :** “Ping”<sup>2</sup>

Interviewers(broadcasters): Anna Chow and Derek Wong, TRY Team, SBS Cantonese Group

Interviewee: “Ping”, a year 12 student, is currently living in supported accommodation. Her father is currently living with her stepmother in Melbourne, and her biological mother is in China.

Venue: SBS Radio

Duration of Recording: approximately 35 minutes

Actual segment duration (edited interview): approximately 10 minutes.

Date of broadcast: 14 April 2002

The content of the interview was based on the suggested questions provided to the interviewers prior to the recording. The interviewee was prompted to talk freely about her experiences. The interviewer also presented an introduction to the program.

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Different cultural values led to different expectations between the parents and their children.
- Financial security and prestige appear to be of prime concern rather than self actualization.
- Need for parents to understand the developmental needs of teenagers.
- A father, being the head of the family, appears to have the authority to control and make decision for the child and expects obedience from the child.
- Privacy and ‘space’ of a child is not recognized.

## 3. Interview summary

### Parent’s expectation

Ping stated:

“Dad wanted me to be a doctor or another professional in the science field because he believes that those jobs provide secure income and prestige. But I am more inclined to art and sport.”

### Career aspirations of the teenager

Ping described her story about her relationship with her father. Ping said, in the beginning of the interview, that she is in year 12. Because her father wanted her to become a doctor or another science professional so that she can earn more money and gain prestige, she took Maths and Science subjects. Ping’s father also expected her to spend all her time to study and obtain good results. Ping, however, would have loved to take other arts subjects because she is interested in graphics or fine arts. Because she did not want to continue the constant battle with her father, she listened and has even tried to train herself to do well to please her father. Ping also stated that she is lucky in a way because she can be good in both art and science subjects.

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<sup>2</sup> For reasons of confidentiality Ping is a pseudonym.



### **Parental and child relationship**

Ping left home and went to live in support accommodation with another girl mainly due to complex issues with her stepmother who has 'abused' her physically by treating her like a maid in the family. Ping's stepmother also has not provided her any care and affection.

Ping's father has typical 'old fashioned' values and beliefs. He wanted Ping to become a doctor. The relationship between the father and the daughter was not close. Ping felt that her father did not understand the needs of young people. *"He always complained that I chat too much over the phone and waste all my time."* Ping said they hardly went out together. The only thing they did together was going to the library.

Ping enjoys living independently at the moment because she has more privacy apart from feeling safe and can manage her time for study. Ping said her father always read her diaries and opened her letters when she lived with him. Ping remarked that her father believed that he had the right to do anything to keep track of his daughter.

### **Accessing professional assistance**

Ping sought help with a counsellor in seeking accommodation and advice. Other times she likes to have chats with her own friends.

### **Interviewee's message**

The interview ended with a message from Ping to the audience, *" don't do the same thing as I did. I had no choice but to compromise. Young people should do what they are interested in."*

### **Note**

The counsellor who will present a 5-6 minute talk on intergenerational issues on the third week after the broadcast of this interview will receive a summary of this interview prior to her program. The counsellor will also comment on the issues brought up in the interview.

## 1. Background

<b>“Dragon” interview:</b>	<b>Clara Law</b>
Interviewer	Doris Leung
Venue:	SBS Radio
Duration of interview:	20 minutes
Actual segment duration	approx. 10 mins
Date of broadcast:	21 April 2002

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Different cultural values led to different expectations in career choice.
- The image, prestige and financial security in a career are more important than self-actualization for parents.
- It is important for children to convince their parents of their talents with persistence.

## 3. Interview Summary

Clara was born in Hong Kong and came to Australia approx 15 years ago (not too sure) with her husband who was also a well-known film director in HK. Clara directed the famous award-winning film, “The Floating Life”, which depicts intergenerational and intercultural issues of a Chinese family in Australia.

Clara talked about her educational background in the interview. She graduated with a science degree and further studied in England majoring in drama. After graduating with flying colours in drama, her parents started to recognise her talents. During her secondary school and university years, she was involved in drama clubs, writing scripts and directing dramas. She started her career in directing after trying a few respectable jobs such as teaching and found that she totally disliked them.

Although her parents did not openly stop her pursuing her career in drama and film making, they always commented that being an artist is always financially insecure. Furthermore, film directors and producers are not respected Hong Kong society. Clara fully understood her parents’ unsupportive attitude. She realised the cultural differences in their beliefs.

Clara has the view that every individual can be successful in any trade if one works hard and pursues it. Even Chinese people are known to say *that “every trade has a scholar.”* She believes that self-actualization is the most important thing in life. *“No one can be successful as a ‘dragon’ if one is not interested in the work one does, especially when one is not born with the talents and inclination. It is a shame if someone is talented in certain trades and does not have the career pathway to pursue one’s interest. So it is better to follow the heart.”*

### Interviewee’s message

Clara advised it is very important for teenagers to convince their parents of their success in their own talents. *“Parents should guide and support them with sincerity and love, and let their children follow their heart.”*

## Summary of Talk Back segment

Date of broadcast: 28 April 2002  
Duration: Talk-back segment 15 minutes  
Presenters: Aaron Wan and Thomas Sung  
Counsellor: Carol Schmidt  
Number of calls: 2 (both female)

The content of the interview was based on the issues raised in Ping's and Mr Chan's stories.

### Major points commented by Carol

1. Intergenerational conflicts are unavoidable and part of life.
2. Conflicts are accentuated when:
  - Both parents and children are facing transitional periods when one party tries to maintain stability in the family and the other party seeks independence and control.
  - Compensation- parents hope their children to fulfill their "lost" dreams and become "dragons"
  - Change of environment - migration.
  - Disrespect of children's privacy
  - Different expectations exist, especially in regards to academic studies and career choice.
  - Both parties cannot compromise in their values and beliefs.
3. Parents, through positive communication, should understand the needs, interests and potential of their children; and help them develop their full potential.
4. Children are not owned by their parents and they should respect the aspirations of their children.
5. Parents should solve problems together with their children, not FOR them.
6. Seek professional help when "stuck".
7. Consequences of intergenerational conflict.

In the interview, they also talked about the life experience of a famous Chinese singer in Taiwan who died at the age of forty, and how with the support of her parents, turned out to be a successful and accomplished singer.

### Callers

1<sup>st</sup> caller

Requested advice regarding his ex-husband who always complained about her in front of her son during "contact" period and how to deal with sibling rivalry.  
(Although this is not related to intergenerational issues, Carol gave her brief advice).

2<sup>nd</sup> caller

*Had communication problems with her teenage children who hardly speak to her at home.*

## 1. Background

### Parent interview : “Auntie Ling”<sup>3</sup>

Interviewer: Doris Leung SBS broadcaster/journalist  
Interviewee: “Auntie Ling”, a divorcee with no children, is currently taking care of her sister’s daughter who came to Australia to study. Ling is the guardian of her niece, Yan, who will also be interviewed in this program.  
Venue: SBS Radio  
Duration of Recording: approximately 30 minutes  
Actual segment duration approx. 10 minutes  
Date of broadcast: 5th May 2002

The content of the interview was based on the suggested questions provided to the interviewer prior to the recording. The interviewee was prompted to talk freely about her experiences.

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Different values and beliefs led to intergenerational conflicts.
- Consequences of harsh discipline.
- Perceived authoritarian role of parents/guardians

## 3. Interview summary

### Expectations of children

#### Career aspirations for his children

Auntie Ling expected her niece to perform well academically and study hard to “catch up” with her studies. She was very concerned that her niece was not coping with English and she arranged tuition for her.

#### Parental and child relationship

Auntie complained that Yan did not listen to her and was very rebellious at this young age and did not listen to her advice which she believed was good for Yan.

Auntie Ling said,

“I just want her to learn English as much as possible. She never listens to me and drives me crazy. I can’t “control” her and convince her that she is wrong. Children don’t understand why adults are firm and strict to them. They just want freedom.”...“In fact I always let her choose whatever she wants.”

Auntie Ling expected her niece to follow her instructions including hair style, outfits, hobbies and many other ways in her daily routine. Sometimes she felt confused and helpless because she did not know what to do and was often frustrated because her niece could not meet her expectations and they both ended up fighting.

### Accessing professional assistance

*“I had to seek help from a social worker. I have asked Yan to see her as well since she doesn’t listen to me, she will listen to someone else. Things have changed a lot since we*

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<sup>3</sup> For reasons of confidentiality Auntie Ling is a pseudonym.

*have received counselling.* ” Auntie Ling pointed out that she was learning to compromise with her niece, as long as it is not beyond limits.

**Interviewee’s message**

The interview ended with a message from Auntie Ling to the listeners, “ *seek help if you are stuck. Social workers or counsellors are able to help you address the problems even though it may not fully solve the problems.*”

**Note**

The counsellor who will present a 5-6 minute talk on intergenerational issues on the third week after the broadcast of this interview will receive a summary of this interview prior to her program. The counsellor will also comment on the issues brought up in the interview.

## 1. Background

**“Dragon” interview: Tom Huynh**

Interviewer	Thomas Leung
Venue:	SBS Radio
Duration of interview:	30 minutes
Actual segment duration	approx. 15 mins
Date of broadcast:	May 19 2002

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Adolescents should try to find and explore their own interests.
- Parents should broaden their children’s horizon by providing them opportunities, and never force them to do what they want them to do.

## 3. Interview Summary

Tom, born in Vietnam, came to Australia over 20 years ago and has three children. Tom started an advertising company ten years ago. It has expanded over the last few years. Currently this company is the biggest Chinese owned advertising company in Melbourne. Tom is also a partner in a Chinese newspaper business.

Tom said he returned to study graphic design after working many years in a factory. Apart from his interest, he chose graphics instead of the fine arts because he believed that it was more “practical”. *“I liked drawing since I was a child and learnt sketching when I was in secondary school in Vietnam.”* Tom said he was very lucky because his parents did not object him when he decided to take up graphics, although they did not encourage him at all. Tom joked, *“Perhaps they knew I made the right choice. My brother was a bit unlucky. My dad broke his guitar and threw it away because he doesn’t want him to be a musician”. “If I were back home, I would have been helping my father in his business instead of in advertising business.”*

Tom mentioned that he came across some unhappy adolescents who did work experience in his office because their parents forced them to do subjects that they did not want to do.

Tom also briefly talked about his children and their interests. *“It is quite natural that parents have certain influence in their children’s interests. For example, my daughter is interested in the arts too. I let her explore and find her own interests.”*

### Interviewee’s message

*“It is very important for parents to give opportunities for their children, for example bringing them interstate or overseas, to expose and explore things when they are little. If their children are interested and good at certain things, parents should encourage them to pursue it. Parents should never force their children to do what they want them to do.”*

### **Summary of Talk Back segment**

Date of broadcast:	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2002
Duration:	Talk-back segment, 20 minutes
Presenters:	Aaron Wan and Mr Choi
Counsellor	Khai Wong
Number of calls	Nil

The content of the interview was based on issues raised in Tom and Robert's stories.

### **Major points commented by Khai**

1. Parents' unrealistic expectations will impact negatively on the personal development of a child.
2. Parents should provide opportunities for children to explore and develop their interests instead of putting pressure on their children.
3. Parents, through active listening to their children's "stories", will be able to understand their needs, interests and potential, and help them excel in their development.
4. Parents should respect and be non-judgmental when they listen to their children.
5. Seek professional help when necessary.

In the interview, Khai also introduced Manningham Community Health Service and advised parents to seek counselling if they experience difficulties in coping with their children. Khai also briefly talked about narrative therapy and its effectiveness in facilitating client's therapeutic change.

\*Did not receive any calls in this talkback segment.

## 1. Background

**Parent interview :** "Pauline"<sup>4</sup>

Interviewer: Doris Leung, SBS broadcaster/journalist  
Interviewee: Pauline is a mother of two children with older son Robert who is eighteen and younger son who is twelve.  
Venue: SBS Radio  
Duration of Recording: approximately 40 minutes  
Actual segment duration: 15 minutes.  
Date of broadcast: 2 June 2002

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Lack of understanding of adolescent's developmental changes often creates conflicts between parents and teenagers.
- Migration creates further conflict between parents and children. For example, there is a great difference in education systems between Australia and overseas countries.
- Parents need to support their children during this period of time.
- 'Work hard and try your best' is a reasonable expectation on children. While it creates pressure on their children, it also provides them a goal.
- Parents should offer opportunities for children to broaden their horizons, and allow them to make their own choices in their studies and career path.
- Parents should 'learn' to adapt themselves through different stages in the family life cycle.
- If you want to be a 'Dragon', you have to prepare to work harder than many other people.

## 3. Interview summary

### Career aspirations for her children

Pauline is very understanding and supportive of her son as she is aware that her son has always had learning difficulties at school since he was young. She hopes that her son will work hard and get a good result in his studies. Pauline does not have any long-term plans for her son.

"I wish my son, Robert, to have a good education, learning broadly in various areas, and obtain a good result in his studies. As long as he has tried his best, I am happy. I do have expectation on him that he should work hard to obtain good results for his exam. I believe having a reasonable expectation from the children is quite okay. It mobilizes them to work towards a goal. I believe if one wants to be outstanding, one has to prepare to work a lot harder than other people.

### Parental and child relationship

Pauline admitted that she had gone through a lot of 'pain' during her son's 'stormy' adolescent period. Although there were unavoidable conflict between Pauline and Robert, her relationship with him has been quite positive. She understood her son's

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<sup>4</sup> For reasons of confidentiality Pauline is a pseudonym.



physical and emotional changes and has given him support. Pauline strongly believes that a successful student should be an all-rounder. Therefore she gave Robert opportunities to attend extra curriculum activities such as art and cricket classes. She allowed her son to explore and find out what he was interested in doing. She learnt to calm down and allowed 'time out' for herself to avoid confrontation with her son.

### **Accessing professional assistance**

Pauline did not know where to seek help in the beginning. Finally she approached church and welfare agencies for assistance.

### **Interviewee's message**

The interview ended with a message from Pauline to the listeners, "*support your children, give them opportunities, and let them make their right choices.*"

### **Note**

The counsellor, who will present a 5-6 minute talk on intergenerational issues on the third week after the broadcast of this interview, will receive a summary of this interview prior to her program. The counsellor will also comment on issues brought up in the interview.

## 1. Background

Teenager interview : “Yan”<sup>5</sup>

Interviewers(broadcasters): Anna Chow and Derek Wong, TRY Team, SBS Cantonese Group

Interviewee: “Yan”, a year 9 student, is currently living with her aunt, her guardian, in Melbourne. Her parents are in Hong Kong. She came three years ago as an overseas student.

Venue: SBS Radio

Duration of Recording: approximately 35 minutes

Actual segment duration approximately 10 minutes.

Date of broadcast: 9 June 2002

The content of the interview was based on the suggested questions provided to the interviewers prior to the recording. The interviewee was prompted to talk freely about her experiences. The interviewer also presented an introduction to the program.

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Different cultural values led to different expectations between the parents and their children.
- Consequences of harsh discipline.
- Need for parents/guardians in providing “space” and respect for their children
- Communication issues

## 3. Interview summary

### Parental expectations

### Career aspirations of the teenager

Yan said in the beginning of the interview that she was coping at school although she has to work very hard to improve her English skills particularly since that was what her aunt expected her to do. Yan was also told to take Mathematics because her aunt believes that Mathematics is very useful for her future. Yan unfortunately always fails this subject because she is not good at it and not interested in it either. Yan has plans to be a fashion designer.

### Parental and child relationship

Yan had a few issues with her aunt who is her guardian. She was restricted in many ways in her daily routine, and was often forced to obey her aunt. Yan made the following comment that *“My aunt is very strict to me. She expects me to listen to her all the time, from nitty-gritty things to important matters. She always interrupts me rudely and never listens to me. If I don’t agree with her, she gets really mad and tells me off. She has to win all the time and I have to give in to her. I can’t reason with her at all. Sometimes I feel really angry because she can scold me the whole day”*. In frustration, Yan has attempted to cut her wrist a couple of times. *“I didn’t know exactly why I did it. I didn’t feel painful at all. I just wanted to release my frustration and sadness, and I felt better after I did it. Perhaps I wanted to seek attention that I am suffering!”*

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<sup>5</sup> For reasons of confidentiality Yan is a pseudonym.

Yan understands that her aunt has very different values and beliefs. *“It is very hard to change adult thinking! Perhaps her intention is good but she needs to understand how I feel, and listen to my story!”*

### **Accessing professional assistance**

Yan’s aunt sought professional help with a social worker. She also encouraged Yan to talk to the social worker as well. Conflicts eased to a certain level after both Yan and her aunt received counselling.

### **Interviewee’s message`**

The interview ended with a message from Yan to the audience, *“ I wish adults can give some respect to their children who are human beings too”*.

### **Note**

The counsellor who will present a 5-6 minute talk on intergenerational issues on the third week after the broadcast of this interview will receive a summary of this interview prior to her program. The counsellor will also comment on the issues brought up in the interview.

## 1. Background

<b>“Dragon” interview:</b>	<b>Ming Leung</b>
Interviewer	Thomas Leung
Venue:	SBS Radio
Duration of interview:	30 minutes
Actual segment duration	approx. 15 minutes
Date of broadcast:	16 June 2002

## 2. Issues identified in the interview

- Adolescents should have confidence in themselves to convince their parents of their abilities.
- Parents should broaden their children’s horizon by providing them opportunities, and never force them to do what they want them to do.

## 3. Interview Summary

Ming came to Australia over 20 years ago and has three children. *“Initially I planned to be a policeman. I thought I could contribute to the community by being a policeman. While I was waiting for my cadetship, an opportunity came to me to work as an apprentice in an auto service. After three months, I began to develop my interests in car mechanics. Looking back, I think I made the right choice. I enjoyed fixing cars because it is very dynamic and interesting.”*

Ming has been in this trade for over 20 years and has built up his business through hard work. Ming stated that many people believe that only professionals can make a living. He said he has proved that people with certain skills do well also. *“Being a car mechanic does not mean that you are a failure, a drinker, a gambler, or a womanizer as a lot of Hong Kong people perceive they are. I am not. I am doing very well in my auto services.”*

Ming also said he was lucky because he did not encounter objections from his parents when he started his apprentice as a car mechanic. *“My parents have been very supportive in my career but my parents-in-law were strongly against it in the beginning. They are not keen to have a care mechanic to be their son in law. I have proved to them that car mechanics can be successful in their career too. Chinese has a saying, “every trade has a scholar. Like many artists, they go through a lot of hurdles before they are successful.”*

Ming does not have particular expectations on their children. He said he let them explore and find out for themselves. As a parent, he will provide opportunities for his children to broaden their horizon, either at school or at home, and never force them to do what he wants them to do.

### Interviewee’s message

*“It is very important for parents not to give too much pressure to their children. Parents should give opportunities to them, observe them and guide them in their growth and development.”*

## Summary of Talk Back segment

Date of broadcast:	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2002
Duration:	Talk-back segment, 20 minutes
Presenters:	Aaron Wan and Ms Ling
Counsellor	Ina Tan (Karinya Counselling Service)
Number of talk back calls	2

## Major points commented by Ina

1. Migrant children are caught between two different cultures which make it hard for them to adjust to the new environment, for example, mixing with their own peers and searching for their own identity. Intercultural conflict exacerbates intergenerational conflict within Chinese migrant families.
2. While conflict is unavoidable, parents and their children could always find means to reduce the impact of this conflict at home.
3. Intercultural and intergenerational conflict could be minimised if parents encourage their children to talk to them. Through listening to their children, parents could reflect on their own preconceived beliefs and make appropriate negotiation and adjustments. It is important that parents explain to their children the rationale behind their thoughts.
4. Giving children space does not mean that parents have lost their authority.
5. It is important to spend time with children to gain their trust: *“Watch the World Cup together with your children even though you are a total stranger to soccer.”*
6. Parents should develop their personal growth as parents at the same time as their children are growing up.

## Talk back callers:

Q1. Adolescents complain that their parents are not fair to them but they do not realise that they are not fair to their parents as well. For example, children are expecting too much from the parents. *“They want this and that!” Is this what we are talking about “fairness” in this society!* Comment.

Q2. *“Many parents, due to language difficulty, rely heavily on their teenage children to deal with documents or other important matters at home. This has become the children’s weapons to negotiate with their parents because they perceive themselves to have more power than their parents. This has also created a lot of disrespect towards the parents. How do parents deal with this issue?”*

## Note:

Dorothy Yiu (Project Officer) thanked SBS Radio and all the presenters who participated in the program on air during the segment.

Due to time constraint, talkback segment was extended after air time (callers rang back after the program and Ina answered the calls for a duration of half an hour.)

## Young People Young Dragons

Thank you for coming. Please complete this form, your feedback will help us develop programs in the future.

**1. Please tick the box.**

Male 72          Female 105

**2. What country were you born in?**

China 65   Hong Kong 46          Australia 22          Other 44

**3. Please tick the box that best represents your age.**

Under 20 years	26
20 – 29 years	2
30 - 39 years	17
40 – 49 years	26
Over 50 years	106

**4. Please circle the picture that best represents your overall impressions of the film.**



**Pleased**  
90 responses



**Neither pleased nor disappointed**  
63 responses



**Disappointed**  
3 responses

No answer    21

**5. Please tell us what you thought of the film?**

- A very touching movie with a good theme but unfortunately creating a negative image due to obscene scenes.<sup>6</sup>
- A movie with depth which needs a lot of thought in understanding its subtle meaning; unclear connection.
- Hard to follow the movie, too fragmented.
- Very subtle connection.
- Generally good but did not understand certain parts of the movie.
- No comment; watched this movie before.

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<sup>6</sup> The obscene scenes referred to are believed to be 3 or 4 scenes where people were having sex.

- Detail description of the thoughts and emotions of migrants; touching scenes; too many obscene scenes, unsuitable for children. (cannot relate ejaculation with migrant's life) It has unfortunately spoiled the theme of the movie.
- Reflects the life of migrants and intercultural and intergenerational issues. I came from China and could relate myself in the movie.
- Presents extreme intergenerational issues. I think in reality it does not reflect the life of Chinese migrant communities in here; story line a bit simplified.
- Very touching except for those obscene scenes.
- It is a process that everybody has to go through in migration. It is a bonus for older people to live in Australia because of the great living environment.
- Reflects difficulties of migrants in adjusting to a new environment.
- Touching and practical
- Educational, entertaining, and inspirational.
- Entertaining
- Very touching
- Did not quite understand the theme of the movie
- Empathetic towards the characters in the movie.
- A price to pay for migration
- Outstanding theme, very educational
- Meaningful and good acting
- Too many obscene scenes.
- Migrants should anticipate that it is natural that there will be cultural shock. Migrants should assimilate themselves in the society.
- Not suitable for children; the movie does not have a powerful message for younger people, but it helps older people adjust themselves in a new country
- Learned from the movie that while there is intergenerational conflict in a family due to educational and cultural differences, it could always be resolved by family members caring and loving each other, especially in difficult times. This movie has successfully reflected these issues.
- A simple story reflecting family issues.
- The story reflects many of the issues that migrant families have to face. However, it does not mention how to address those issues.
- A very good production but conveying a negative connotation to life.
- A good production but finding it hard to follow.
- The movie reflects intergenerational problems in Chinese migrant families.
- Intergenerational conflict is due to lack of tolerance.
- Too many obscene scenes; should promote youth education.
- I found it a bit hard to understand the movie. However, at the end of the movie I felt that if family members can be more tolerant, forgiving and considerate to each other, family conflict could be resolved and eventually will promote harmony at home.
- Hard to understand the movie, very fragmented.
- Very exciting.
- Not suitable for people whose are under 15; should have let us know before we came.
- I liked the movie very much.
- On the whole good.
- Dialogue should be all in Chinese. Too many obscene scenes. It would be much better without those scenes.

- It takes a while for a new migrant to assimilate into a new country. It is good to see that the family in the movie has a good ending. Australia is a very good country.
- A touching movie about migrant families that stimulates reflection.
- A small part exaggerated but on the whole very practical.
- Did not bring up common issues relating to migration!
- Depicts grief and loss in migration
- Depicts the 'voice' of migrants.
- Can relate with the movie; very touching.
- Very good
- Very good.
- excellent
- Good
- Good
- Good
- Educational
- Educational
- Educational
- If you adapt , you survive.
- If you adapt , you survive.
- Lack of connection in the storyline

**6. Did you listen to any of the SBS radio Young Dragons Radio programs on intergenerational issues broadcast in April, May and June on a Sunday morning.**

Answers to this question did not correspond to answers to the following question, with more people answering question 7 than question 6. As this indicates there was a misunderstanding of the questions meaning answers have been disregarded.

**7. Please circle the picture that best represents your overall impressions of the radio program.**



Pleased



Neither pleased nor disappointed



Disappointed

Answers to this question did not correspond to answers to question 6 with more people answering question 7 than question 6. As this would indicate there was a misunderstanding of the questions meaning answers have been disregarded.

**8. What did you learn from the radio programs?**

- I am very pleased with this program. It 'teaches' the young people how to behave.
- Encouraging and motivating



- How to communicate with children to promote harmony in the family.
- How to communicate
- How to help and care for each other/
- Love and care among family members.
- Learn to negotiate and accommodate each other.
- Understand the importance of communication between two generations.
- Learned how to deal with conflict and how to educate our children.
- Parents should be good models for their children.
- No comment.
- Not much
- Learned that family education plays a very important role in bringing up children.
- Parent should set good examples for their children so that children can learn from their parents indirectly.
- Very encouraging
- Honesty and sincerity
- How to deal with intergenerational conflict.
- Parents should respect the opinions and wishes of their children and at the same time children should communicate with their parents and excel themselves.

**9. Please indicate how you found out about the Film today.**

1	SBS Radio	21
2	Fiends	65
3	Newspaper	12
4.	Posters and Leaflets	11
5	Workers Promotion	42
6	Other	28
	No response	11

**10 So we can plan other sessions please indicate your areas of interest. You can mark more than one box.**

1	Women's health	90
2.	Men's health	46
3.	Parenting	58
4.	Young people	39
5	Problem gambling	11
6.	Drug & Alcohol services	15
7.	Employment	32
8.	Other	6
	(aged services, youth camps, health services for older people, housing, Chinese medicine)	
9.	No response	19

**11 Any Comments**

- Should produce more similar type of movies; very useful for migrants.
- This was a very educational and useful program.
- No comment (2 comments)
- More educational movies

- More discussion on adjustment of migrants in Australia.
- Introduce Australian government's infrastructure and policies. This will help us have peace of mind.
- Introduce different government departments such as social and welfare departments and services and more information sessions.
- Provide opportunities for secondary students to do voluntary work during school holidays.
- Organize more educational activities.
- More activities.
- A lot of older people have foot problems. I would appreciate it if you could recommend Chinese herbalists who could give me advice and consultation. Can you arrange information session on this topic?