



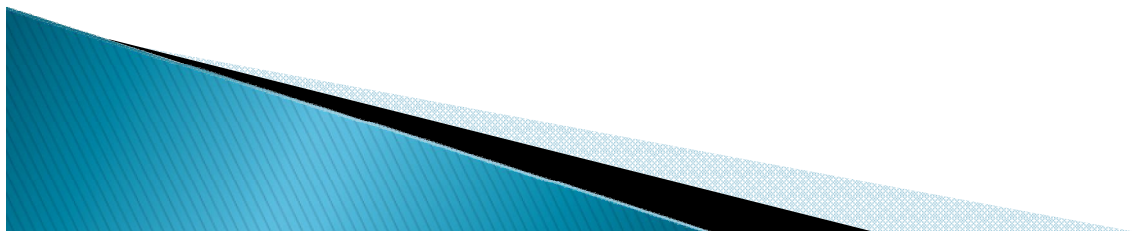
Attitudes to Sexuality, Relationships and Child- Rearing:

A Study about people with genetic disorders
and intellectual disabilities.

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A bit of background to my research

- ▶ Relationships, and sexuality are an important and fundamental part of adult life.
- ▶ While we may take these things for granted, not everyone has the same opportunity to experience these things.
- ▶ In particular, individuals with intellectual disabilities have long faced challenges in this area of life.
- ▶ The key argument: "Would they be competent to raise a child?"



Why is this research important?

- ▶ Sexuality defines us on so many levels, whether we have a disability or not.
- ▶ People with intellectual disabilities WANT to experience relationships, love and parenthood – but in denying or ignoring their sexuality, it has denied them the right to even understand it.
- ▶ This can result in many problems, such as sexual exploitation or unwanted pregnancies.



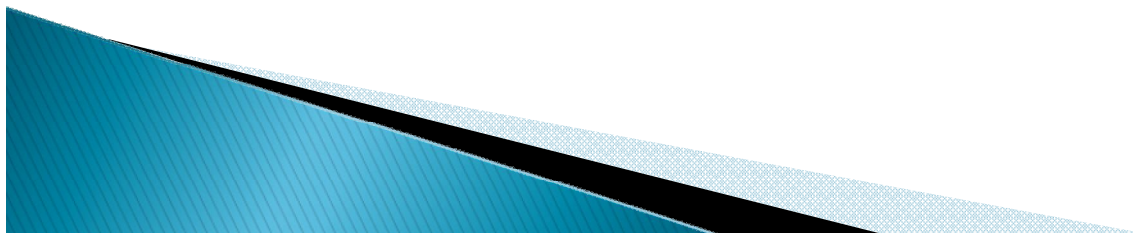
So where does VCFS fit in?

- ▶ There's a lot of research looking at these attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities.
- ▶ But not nearly as much research looking at these attitudes towards individuals with genetic disorders and developmental disabilities.
- ▶ The issue here is not just "will they be competent to raise a child?" but "will they pass on their genetic disorder?"



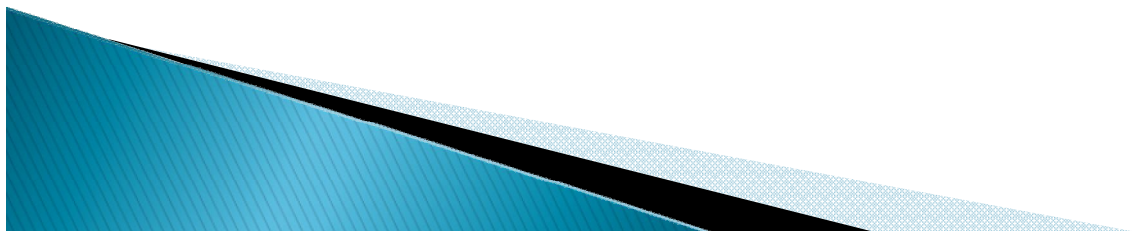
The design of my research

- ▶ My research is looking at general community attitudes towards sexuality, relationships and child-rearing.
- ▶ Specifically, I'm looking at 3 groups within the general community:
 - Parents
 - Health Professionals
 - The broader community



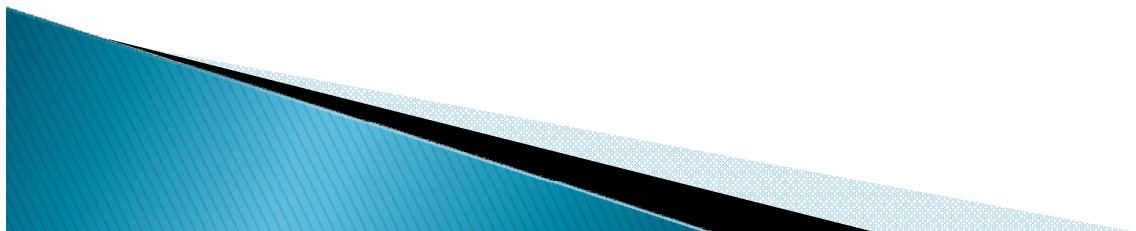
The design of my research cont.

- ▶ We recruited parents through Facebook parent support groups, health professionals through NGO's in the Newcastle area and the broader community through the University.
- ▶ Participants had to complete an online questionnaire – you may have even done it yourself!



Our hypotheses

- ▶ How important are your demographics? (e.g. age, gender, education)
- ▶ Does knowing someone with a genetic disorder, as well as the quantity and quality of that contact impact on attitudes?
- ▶ Do parents, health professionals and people from the broader community have different attitudes?



So what have we found?

- ▶ You'll have to wait and see!
- ▶ We would love to know what your attitudes are though!
- ▶ Go to <http://www.wix.com/attitudesresearch/researchproject>

Or grab a flyer!

If you'd like to know what we found, email me at madeleine.randell@uon.edu.au in a month or two and I can let you know.



