

# Family Law Pathways Network

presents

**Dr Margaret Spencer**

## **Complex Needs: Parents with Intellectual Disability**



Wednesday, 24 June 2020  
11:00am-12:30pm AWST

As part of our **free webinar series** the Family Law Pathways Networks across Australia invite you to join a free webinar by leading expert Dr Margaret Spencer

**Dr Margaret Spencer** is a lecturer and the Director of Field Education in the Social Work Program in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney. She holds qualifications in nursing, theology and social work. Margaret has more than 30 years of experience as an advocate for parents with intellectual disability and their children and is highly recognised for her knowledge and contribution to these families nationally and internationally. Her doctorate and ongoing research focus is on the intersectionality of women, disability, and reproductive justice. She is currently the executive secretary on the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities' Special Interest Research Group (Parenting with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities). Prior to taking up her current academic position in 2014, Margaret created and coordinated a specialist advocacy program for parents with intellectual disability involved in care and protection matters. In 2009, she was appointed a judicial officer (general member) in the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Adult Guardianship Division) and remains a serving member. Margaret is also currently a serving member on the Board of the Intellectual Disability Rights Service and a member of the NSW Council for Intellectual Disabilities.

### **Are we asking the wrong questions?**

In this webinar, Margaret Spencer will argue that assessing what the best interest of a child, based on the current reliance on assessment of parenting capacity is a flawed process. She will look specifically at this in relation to families where one or both parents have disabilities. Relying on the UNCRPD and contemporary disability research, policy and practice, Margaret will propose from a right perspective what we should be focusing on is concept of parenting support. In other words, instead of asking, "Is this parent capable of parenting? We should be "How can the parenting of this child be supported?" In reorientating the focus on to support not only is in keeping with securing reproductive justice but also rightly acknowledge parenting as a shared responsibility.

**Register Here**

Registered participants will be emailed a link for the webinar within 24 hours of the scheduled start time and will also have access to a recording of the webinar for a period of time following the live stream.



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