This project aims …
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects half a million Australians, creating a growing demand for provision of appropriate education services and family support. A two-tiered project, Autism Spectrum Disorders: From mindblindness to mindfulness, investigates the experience of learners with ASD (Study one) through a large-scale survey to increase our knowledge of ASD. It provides a mindfulness intervention for learners with ASD and problems with aggression, and their carers (Study two), to decrease children’s behaviour problems and increase parenting skills and satisfaction.

This project requires participation from …
Parents and teachers of learners with ASD can share their views, based on their parenting and teaching experience, regarding their child/student’s inner experience. They will be asked to complete an online survey (click here), which will take about 25 minutes (Study one). Parents of learners with ASD with an age range of 12 to 20 and an IQ range of 60 to 80 will be taught mindfulness practice over a period of eight weeks. Their child will also be taught mindfulness practice, through an individual home-based programme.

This project expects to benefit …
The lived experience of parenting and teaching will together inform us of the inner world of learners with ASD who have communication problems. This will assist educators who strive to provide responsive education for these learners. If the effects of mindfulness practice for Australian learners with ASD and their parents are similar to those of their international counterparts, mindfulness practice is expected to facilitate an improvement in their parenting skills and satisfaction levels, which may spill over into a reduction of their child’s psychological and behavioural problems. Mindfulness practice may also directly address these behavioural and psychological problems. These possibilities are yet to be explored in the Australian context. The outcomes are expected to improve the level of education and family support, and therefore the quality of life, of people living with ASD.

For more information …
Please contact a chief investigator, Dr Yoon-Suk Hwang, on yoonsuk.hwang@griffith.edu.au or (07) 3735 5660 (office).