

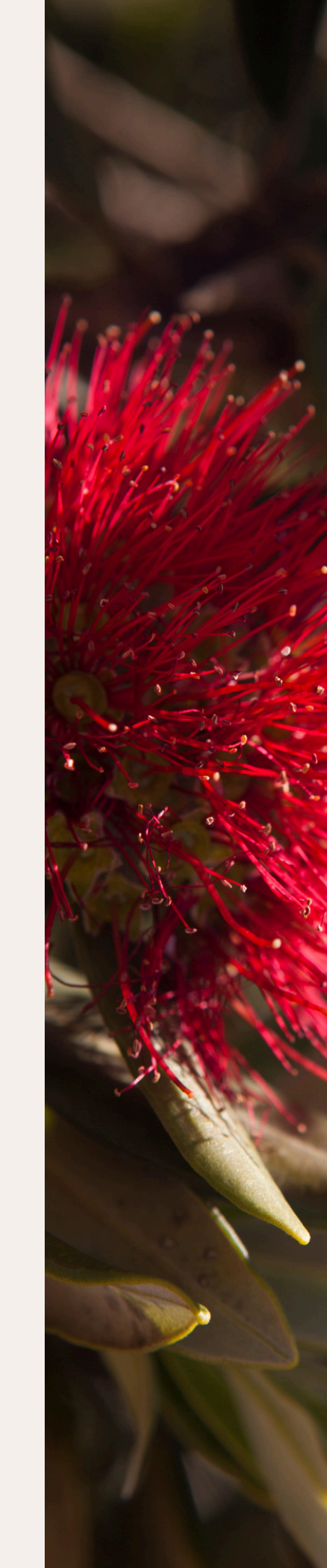


Understanding the difference between parenting challenges, challenging behaviour and Child to Parent Violence and Abuse

From everyday stress to unsafe dynamics



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Parenting challenges —

Green zone

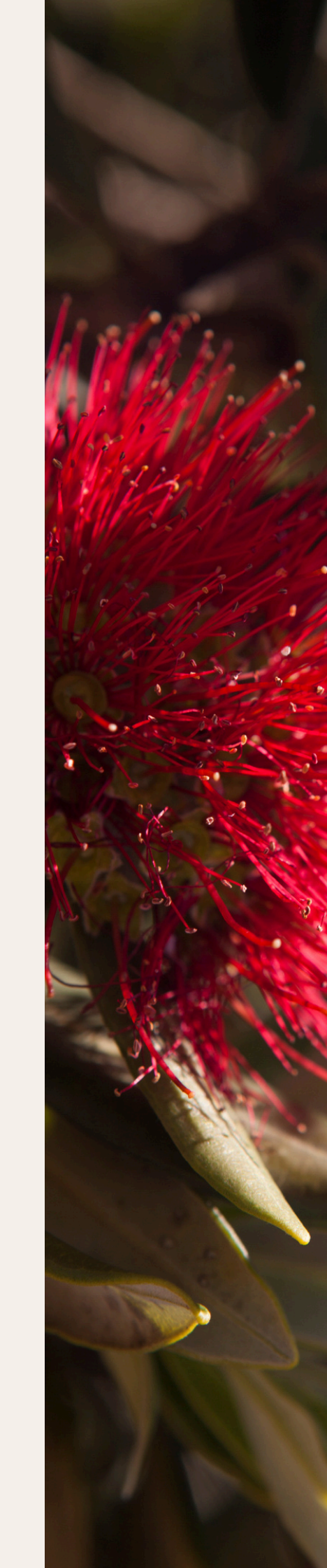
Everyday difficulties are a normal part of raising children. These situations are stressful but not unsafe.

Examples:

- Morning or bedtime struggles
- Homework resistance
- Sibling arguments
- Occasional emotional outbursts

Impact on parents: Stress or frustration but not fear.

Key idea: “This is hard, but it’s normal.”



Challenging behaviour —

Amber zone

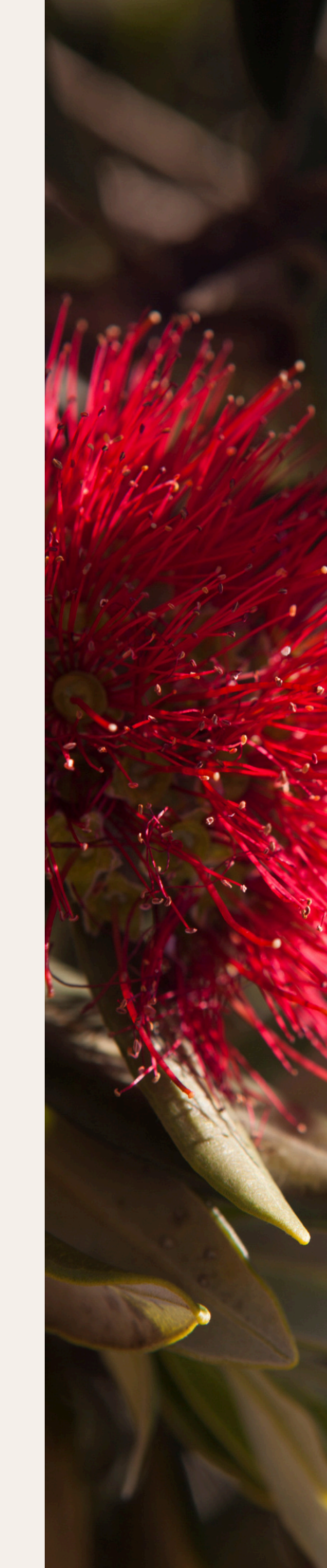
Behaviour that is more intense, frequent, or disruptive than typical and affects family life. Parents may feel exhausted, burnt out and stressed but still safe.

Examples:

- Explosive outbursts
- Refusal to follow instructions
- Yelling, slamming doors, throwing small objects
- Emotional dysregulation linked to stress, trauma, or neurodiversity/neuro-disability

Impact on parents: High stress and disruption to daily life, but no fear for safety.

Key idea: “This is more than typical, and we need support and strategies.”



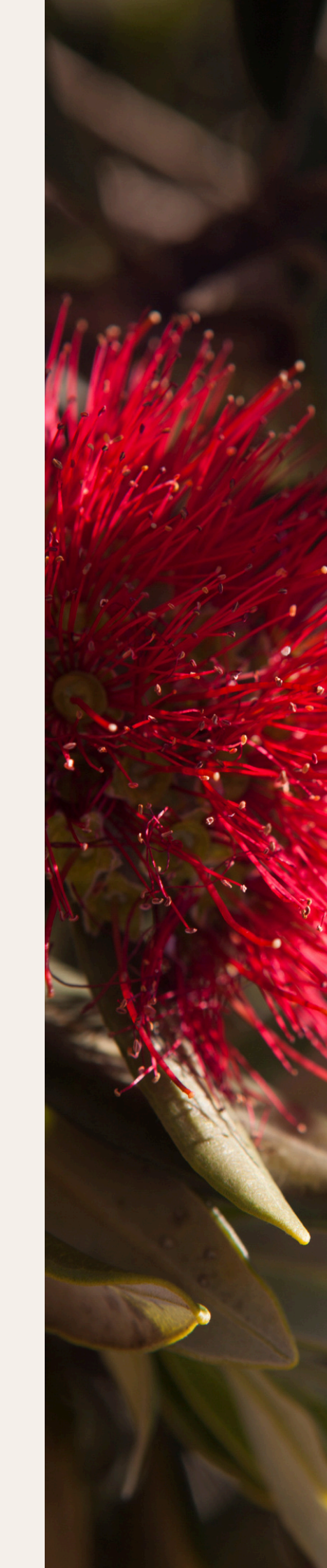
Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) —

Red zone

A pattern of harmful, violent, intimidating, or controlling behaviour directed at a parent or caregiver. The violence can occur multiple times a day. Safety is compromised.

Examples

- Physical harm (hitting, strangling, biting, restraining, using weapons, hurting pets)
- Verbal harm (threats, insults, intimidation, shouting, humiliating)
- Coercion (pressuring, controlling, emotional manipulation, gaslighting, threats to harm self)
- Property damage (holes in walls & doors, smashed windows and furniture, personal belongings destroyed)
- Financial (stealing money, demanding money, stealing personal items and selling them)
- Sexual harm (unwanted sexual acts, posting sexualised images of others without consent)
- Digital harm (online bullying, posting online content about a person without their consent)



Impact on parents: Fear, exhaustion, suicide ideation, deep layers of trauma and blocked care.

Key idea: “This is unsafe. We need specialised help and a safety plan.”

VisAble is a disabled-person-led organisation based in Aotearoa New Zealand

We work to strengthen national capabilities across agencies and sectors to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, and neglect affecting disabled people and their whānau.

Our focus includes tāngata whaikaha Māori and whānau, tagata sa'ilimalo and āiga-tele, d/Deaf, neurodivergent, and Adults at Risk.



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Enabling Safer Lives and Communities

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