

# Educational Case Management

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PSYCHOLOGY

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM OF PROFESSIONALS

SPEECH PATHOLOGY

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

## GROUP PROGRAMS

### EVIDENCE BASED

#### **Cool Kids Anxiety Program**

The Cool Kids Program is a world renowned skills-based program that teaches children (including teenagers) and their parent(s) how to better manage anxiety. The program has been running at Macquarie University since 1993 and numerous research studies have found that most young people who complete our programs show significant improvement. Topics covered in the program include:

- Learning about feelings and anxiety.
- Learning to think realistically.
- Parenting an anxious child.
- Fighting fear by facing fear (stepladders).
- Learning coping skills such as building confidence or problem solving

The Cool Kids Anxiety Program is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), with a focus on teaching practical skills. The program has undergone continual scientific evaluation and development to include the latest understanding of anxiety and its treatment. Current results indicate that most young people who complete our programs show significant improvement. Following treatment, there are marked increases in school attendance, academic achievement, confidence, number of friends and involvement in extra-curricular activities and decreases in worry, shyness, fear and family distress.

#### **Evidence based research**

**Published in Australian Journal of Psychology, 52(3), 125-129** Children in the intervention group who completed nine sessions of group intervention (now Cool Kids) improved significantly more, than children who were in the control group on several measures of anxiety. The improvements maintained and, in several cases increased, at 1-year follow-up

**Published in the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 48(5), 533-544.** Children were randomly assigned to either Cool Kids or a control condition, where they did not complete the Cool Kids program.

Results indicated that the Cool Kids program was significantly more efficacious compared with the control condition. At posttreatment and follow-up, a significantly greater proportion of children in the Cool Kids condition no longer met criteria for any anxiety diagnoses, compared with the children in the controlled condition.

## **Westmead Feeling Program**

The Westmead Feelings Program is a suite of therapeutic materials that health, education and disability professional can use to support children with autism, and develops cultures of emotional learning around the child by providing parents and teachers with skills to be emotion coaches at home and school. The Westmead Feelings Program (WFP) has a strong research basis and has been studied in more than eight research studies evaluating teaching content, teaching materials and outcome measures in a range of settings (including hospital outpatient department and school settings) and by a range of WFP facilitators (including psychologists, school counsellors and special educators). WFP has consistently demonstrated clinically significant treatment benefits, resulting in improved emotional competence, social skills and mental health for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families.

- Results of WFP research have been presented by the authors of the program at national and international conferences and studies of WFP (formerly known as Emotion-Based Social Skills Training, or EBSST) have been published in peer-reviewed journals. WFP in schools significantly improves teacher-reported emotional competence in children with autism spectrum disorder and mild intellectual disability, comparing treatment to a control group.
- There are clinically significant improvements in mental health for treatment compared to control groups in children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder.
- Completing WFP results in positive trends for parent-reported emotional competence, parent- and teacher-reported social skills and parent mental health.

## **‘Peaceful Kids’**

Peaceful Kids is a Mindfulness and Positive Psychology based program to lessen anxiety and stress and increase resilience in children from Prep to Year 12. The program gives children the skills, practice and support to utilise coping strategies that lessen the symptoms of anxiety and stress. This program helps children to build their emotional resilience, so they are better equipped to deal with the day to day stresses that life brings them. The program also involves parental involvement and commitment to supporting the strategies at home.

### **Evidence based research**

Peaceful Kids is based on evidence based therapy and research from the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program (MBSR), Mindfulness-integrated Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (MiBCT), Positive Psychology and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

The Peaceful Kids program is endorsed by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES). Peaceful Kids was researched through the Murdoch University for Beyond Blue - Be You, and has now been approved as an evidence based school program. Research has also been conducted through EACH on both the Peaceful

Kids and Peaceful Parents program, and evaluated by Save the Children for their 'Cool for School' Program.

## **Group Therapy – DRUMBEAT**

Holyoake's DRUMBEAT program is based on documented research that identifies key issues related to health and social outcomes. It also incorporates recent development in neurological research which notes the beneficial impact of rhythmic interventions on primal brain systems associated with anxiety and emotional control

DRUMBEAT incorporates hand drumming, behavioural therapeutic principles and cognitive and dialectical elements to achieve positive outcomes.

### **Evidence Based Research**

**Published in Journal of Public Mental Health**, Vol 12, No 2, 2013 Positive changes were observed on several measures, including a 10% increase in self-esteem scores by program completion. School data showed a decrease in reported behaviour incidents for 29% of participants. The teacher feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with observed benefits including positive changes in behaviour, outlook on future opportunities, willingness to learn and follow instructions, confidence, interactions with others, sense of pride and belonging and group cohesion.

**Published in the Journal Reclaiming Children & Youth**, Vol 21, No 3, 2012 Over 2,000 students assessed in schools across Australia with statistically significant improvement in group members' relationship with peers and other adults. Improvements also recorded in self-esteem, emotional regulation and group cooperation.

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ECM Management Standards 2019 <a href="https://ecmonhudsoncom.sharepoint.com/sites/DocumentControl/Shared">https://ecmonhudsoncom.sharepoint.com/sites/DocumentControl/Shared</a>	05/02/2021	12/04/2021	01/01/2022