The Centre for Emotional Health Clinic at Macquarie University is commencing a new program for adolescents with anxiety and depression that is conducted online. The program has 8 online modules and is accompanied by a 30-minute phone call, per module, with a therapist. The program is based on cognitive behavioural treatment, incorporating the latest research and techniques in working with motivation and negative emotions. Adolescents will learn creative ways to manage emotions and accomplish their immediate goals.

**How can I participate in this program?**
If your adolescent is aged between 12 and 17 years, please contact us to register your interest on 02 9850 6741 or chilledplus@mq.edu.au. Once you have registered your interest, your adolescent will be carefully assessed to determine if the Chilled Plus program is suitable for their needs.

For suitable adolescents: Half of the cohort will be given access to the online treatment program straight away, while half will be put on an 8-week waitlist. Which group your adolescent is allocated to is determined at random, like drawing names out of a hat. However, for adolescents allocated to the waitlist, they will be offered the same online treatment after 8 weeks.

Like all research at the Centre for Emotional Health, your adolescent will be closely monitored by an experienced team of psychologists, who will be available to your family throughout the therapeutic process. We will also look at whether this research has long-term success by monitoring and assessing anxiety and depression levels in adolescents who are part of this program for 3 months after treatment finishes.

**How do you determine suitability for placement in the Chilled Plus program?**
Suitability for a place in this treatment program is based on several factors, which will be assessed via an initial clinical phone assessment interview.

However, the Chilled Plus online program is not suitable for your adolescent if he or she is currently:

- At risk for suicide
- Actively self-harming
- Experiencing unmanaged psychotic symptoms
- In a physically/sexually abusive environment
- Receiving pharmacological treatment and not willing to keep medication stable throughout the duration of the study
- Experiencing bipolar depression
- Unable to speak English
- Unable to access the Internet

These exclusions are in place to ensure that our treatment programs are delivered to adolescents who are most likely to benefit from the program and for whom we are best equipped to offer services. If you are unsure whether your adolescent may have issues in these areas please contact us to discuss their situation.

**How much will the program cost?**
All assessment and treatment costs are subsidised by your participation in research activities.

For adolescents allocated to the Chilled Plus online treatment group first: $100 bond: With $50 refunded after post-treatment interviews/questionnaires and $50 refunded after 3 month follow-up interviews/questionnaires.

For adolescents allocated to the Waitlist group first: $100 bond: With $50 refunded after post waitlist interviews/questionnaires and $50 refunded after post-treatment interviews/questionnaires.

Photo: Chris Stacey
WHAT DOES THE PROGRAM INVOLVE

INITIAL ASSESSMENT:
To determine the suitability of the program we will ask adolescents and their primary caregiver to complete a clinical assessment interview over the phone. The clinical assessment includes separate interviews with both the adolescent and their primary caregiver. Overall, it takes around 2 hours.

This assessment will be conducted by a Clinical Psychologist or Provisional Psychologist. Adolescents and their primary caregiver will also be asked to complete questionnaires on areas such as the adolescent’s thoughts, feelings and behaviour, along with parental experiences and demographic information.

After the assessment, if the Chilled Plus program is deemed suitable, adolescents will be randomly allocated to the treatment group or waitlist group. The online treatment runs for 8 weeks. Adolescents in the waitlist group will be offered the same treatment program after they have waited 8 weeks.

If the program is not considered to be suitable for your adolescent, alternative referral options will be provided.

TREATMENT:
As part of the Chilled Plus Online Treatment Program, adolescents will complete 8 modules of online treatment, over 8 weeks. Each module will be accompanied by a weekly 30-minute phone call with a trained therapist. The therapists will also have contact with the primary caregiver throughout the program.

Importantly, regardless of which group your adolescent is allocated to (treatment or waitlist), all adolescents will eventually receive the same treatment via the Chilled Plus Online Treatment.

ONGOING ASSESSMENT:
As part of our research, and to determine if further intervention is needed, we will ask adolescents and their primary caregiver to complete the questionnaires and phone interviews again.

Adolescents (and primary caregivers) allocated to the Chilled Plus Online Treatment first: Must complete the questionnaires/phone interviews after they complete the online treatment and 3 months later.

Adolescents (and primary caregivers) allocated to the Waitlist group first: Will only be asked to complete the questionnaires/phone interviews after waiting 8 weeks (that is, they do not have to complete the questionnaires/phone interviews following completion of the online treatment program or 3 months later).

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE’LL BE REQUIRED TO DO DURING THIS PROGRAM?

After completing the initial clinical assessment interview, we ask that adolescents do not start any psychological treatment or pharmacological treatment for their anxiety and depression symptoms. This is so that we can determine whether any improvements are due to our Chilled Plus treatment program. We also ask that adolescents receiving pharmacological treatment keep their medication stable throughout the duration of the study. That is, they maintain the same dosage.