

Cool Kids Program

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT ANXIETY ASSESSMENT & TREATMENT

Please read through the following information carefully, which will help you determine whether assessment and treatment at the Centre for Emotional Health Clinic is suitable for your child and family.

ABOUT THE CEH CLINIC

The Centre for Emotional Health Clinic (CEHC) is a research and training clinic aimed at furthering our understanding of child & adult emotional disorders and improving our methods of treatment. The Clinic is part of the Centre for Emotional Health, Macquarie University. Families who seek help at the CEHC will receive state of the art assessment and treatment based on internationally recognised research, much of which has been conducted by our team over the past 20 years.

By seeking services from a research and training clinic, there is an expectation that families will participate in various research activities related to developing better assessment and treatment methods, and, better understanding the causes of anxiety and related disorders.

ABOUT THE COOL KIDS PROGRAM

Cool Kids is a 10 session program aimed at treating anxiety disorders in children and adolescents. It uses a cognitive behavioural approach which means that it focuses on teaching skills to manage anxiety. Core skills include how to identify anxious thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, discovering realistic thoughts and expectations and gradually building independence and confidence by facing fears. If needed, coping skills such as problem solving, assertiveness and relaxation are also introduced to manage difficult situations. In addition to teaching parents to support their child in the use of these new skills, a section of the program focuses specifically on parenting strategies that can encourage children to manage anxiety. During each session, families receive information on the topic being covered and are offered the chance to engage in discussion, games and role play to learn new skills and then to use their skills in real life situations. Practice tasks are a crucial part of the program and are given following every session. Practice tasks encourage use of new skills in everyday situations.

WHO IS COOL KIDS DESIGNED FOR?

The Cool Kids Program is designed for children:

- Who are 7-17 years old, and
- Where anxiety is currently the main problem and it is significantly affecting his or her day-to-day life.

The Cool Kids program will not be suitable for your child if he or she:

- Is significantly below grade for literacy or is not in mainstream class placement.
- Has Autism or a related disorder (a separate Cool Kids program is available for children who have an Autism Spectrum or Related Disorder).
- Is currently seeing another therapist
- Has recently started or has changed the dose of psychological medication (in the past 2 months), or plans to change medication while completing treatment.
- Is considered at-risk due to abuse or neglect, reports suicidal risk, is self harming or has been school refusing for a significant length of time.

These exclusions are in place to ensure that our treatment programs are delivered to children who are most likely to benefit from the program and for whom we are best equipped to offer services. Each child will be carefully assessed to determine whether our treatments are appropriate or whether other programs or services may better meet their needs.



Photo Credit: Chris Stacey

WHAT DOES THE ASSESSMENT INVOLVE?

To determine the suitability of our programs we will ask you to complete a clinical assessment that typically takes 3 – 4 hours. The clinical assessment includes interviews separately for a child and his/her parent(s) and you and your child may participate in a variety of activities including tasks designed to observe anxiety levels in children. You and your child will also be asked to complete questionnaires about your child's thoughts, feelings and behaviours and questions related to your own experiences.

After the assessment, the assessing clinician will discuss your child with a supervisor and a recommendation for treatment or referral will be communicated to you. Assessments are valid for 6 months, after which time a reassessment would be needed to ensure that we have current information on your child.

You and your child may be invited to participate in other research projects (for example collection of genetics to help us understand anxiety). You will be asked to give separate consent to additional research and as such can refuse to participate without impacting your assessment and treatment.

WHAT TREATMENT WILL WE BE OFFERED?

The CEHC is a world leader in research into treatment of child anxiety. Research is conducted on ways to enhance Cool Kids treatment outcomes (for example by adding additional cognitive-behavioural skills), ways to improve access to treatment (for example by providing treatment online) or investigating what types of treatment best suit specific types of anxiety.

Participating in treatment research means: 1) you must be willing to be randomized to a treatment approach (that is when 2 or more treatment approaches are offered, the particular treatment approach you receive is selected at random, like pulling names out of a hat); 2) you must be willing to participate in assessment at the conclusion of treatment and then at typically 1-2 follow up points (usually 6 months after finishing treatment); and 3) the treatment provided must be the only treatment that you are accessing for your child's anxiety. In other words, you agree not to see another therapist at the same time.

If we believe, after assessment, that the current Cool Kids research program is suitable for your child, you will receive an invitation to participate. This invitation will provide exact details of the different treatment approaches being investigated and treatment consent. If the research version of Cool Kids is not appropriate, you will be offered access to the Cool Kids program through our training or private treatment services if anxiety is the main problem for your child. For children where other issues are the main problem or if you choose not to participate in the offered treatment research you will be offered appropriate referrals (which may include accessing our private treatment services).

WHO PROVIDES THE SERVICES?

All staff at the CEHC who provide assessment and treatment for the Cool Kids program have, or are completing, postgraduate qualifications in clinical psychology. They are nationally registered psychologists or interns who are working towards registration. All clinicians receive supervision from senior clinical psychologists who have expertise in child and adolescent anxiety.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

An initial clinical assessment would typically cost \$390. However, in return for your participation in our research and training activities we offer a discounted cost of \$180.

Costs for treatment vary depending on whether you are participating in a research or training program as these fees are subsidised. Exact costs will be provided to you after assessment however as a general indication the upfront cost of participating in a Cool Kids research or training program is \$550 (covering approximately 10 sessions). If you are participating in the Cool Kids research program up to \$250 of the cost will be reimbursed on completion of after-treatment (multiple) assessments. Alternatively, accessing private treatment costs \$165-225 per session depending on the qualifications of the therapist.

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

If you would like to have your child assessed regarding his/her anxiety please complete the online intake available at [Cool Kids Intake](#). Once we receive the completed form we will contact you to book a time for the assessment. We may also contact you to clarify if the program is likely to be suitable for your child.

Please feel free to contact the Clinic on (02) 9850-8711 if you have any questions regarding the research program or other services at the Centre for Emotional Health Clinic.



FIND OUT MORE

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