

Cool Kids Program

About the Cool Kids Program

The Cool Kids program has been running at Macquarie University since 1993. It is a structured, skills-based program that teaches children (including teenagers) and their parents how to better manage the child's anxiety. It involves the participation of both children and their parents, and focuses on teaching clear and 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.

Topics covered in the program include:

- Learning about feelings and anxiety
- Detective thinking, and learning to think more realistically
- Ways that parents can help
- Fighting fear by facing fear (stepladders)
- Learning to solve a problem
- Building assertiveness and dealing with teasing

The main Cool Kids program is designed to target children aged 7 to 17 years. There are slightly different versions for younger (up to around 12 years) and older (13-17 years) children. There are also variations of Cool Kids for specific groups and particular delivery including: An outreach version (delivered over the internet, CD, or telephone for children who cannot come for face to face treatment), a version for delivery through schools, a version for teenagers with a mix of anxiety and depression, and a version for children with additional high functioning autism or Asperger's Disorder.

The Cool Kids program has been [translated](#) into a number of languages and it is currently used by therapists in many countries. Thousands of children around the world have benefitted by participating in Cool Kids.