



## About Cool Kids ASD

Macquarie University have created a successful Cool Kids Program that has been adapted for children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This program uses the same principles as the standard Cool Kids Program however the presentation of the skills has been adapted to better suit the learning and thinking styles that are common to ASD.

The program is family-based and utilises Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy with the aim to provide children and parents with skills and strategies to help them better manage anxiety. These skills include:

- Understanding anxiety
- Relaxation
- Parenting strategies that encourage brave behaviour
- Identifying and using helpful (realistic) thoughts, and most importantly,
- Facing fears, building independence and increasing confidence through stepladders (gradual exposure).

Social skills are also touched on in the program as they are often a crucial part of building a child's confidence, however parents should note that social skills are not the primary focus of the program and consequently the program will not replace programs or treatments that focus on social skill development.

The program is delivered over 10 sessions and is offered in individual format for children and adolescents of any age.