

# Peaceful Kids program

'Peaceful Kids' is a Mindfulness and Positive Psychology based program to lessen anxiety and stress and increase resilience in children. The program gives children the skills, practice and support to utilize coping strategies that lessen the symptoms of anxiety and stress. The program also involves parental involvement and commitment to supporting the strategies at home.



## Outcomes of the Peaceful Kids program:

- Lessen symptoms of anxiety and stress in children
- Teaches children to self-calm
- Empowers children to manage their own anxiety
- Develops emotional intelligence skills
- Teaches children life-long skills to manage stress and prevent stress build up
- Supports children so they know that they are not alone with suffering from anxiety

## Peaceful Kids is based on evidence based therapies and research:

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program (MBSR)
- Mindfulness-integrated Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (MiCBT)
- Positive Psychology
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

## Program structure:

- Peaceful Kids is a 8 week program for children
- Sessions are for approximately 1 hour each week. (40-50 minutes for Prep and Year 1's)
- Sessions include learning a range of mindfulness strategies and meditations and positive psychology exercises.
- Students are guided through meditations daily online via the Peaceful Kids website: [peacefulkids.com.au](http://peacefulkids.com.au)

## Parental involvement:

- A parent session is run for interested parents to explain the program and the pivotal role of mindfulness to lessen and prevent anxiety symptoms.
- Each week the children learn a new mindfulness meditation and positive psychology strategy that they can share with you at home. It would be great to give your child the time to practice these strategies at home so they learn to incorporate these into their daily lives.

## Program Content

### Children learn about:

- Basic theory on Mindfulness and how it affects the brain and lessens stress and anxiety
- The different ways to practice Mindfulness and integrate it into their lives
- Their feelings and how this relates to anxiety and stress levels
- Understanding stress and how it relates personally to them
- Understanding triggers for stress and how to calm down when feeling stressed
- Physical symptoms of stress and learning to identify when they need to take time out to calm themselves
- Worrying and how it affects their happiness
- Different types of thinking that increase anxiety or lessen anxiety
- Noticing their own self-talk and how this affects worrying and stress levels
- Creating a balanced lifestyle including lots of chill out time and being in the flow



### Children learn life skills of:

- A range of Mindfulness meditations
- Positive psychology exercises
- Techniques to lessen worrying
- A variety of coping strategies
- A variety of problem solving strategies
- Journaling and expressing their worries
- Facing challenges and fears step by step
- Preventative strategies to help prevent stress build up
- Being attuned to their own bodies and minds
- Being in the flow more regularly and enjoying more of the present moment

## Research:

If you would like to learn about Mindfulness and Positive Psychology and its benefits, the following links may be useful to outline the science and evidence based research that the program is based on.

- <http://au.reachout.com/what-is-mindfulness>
- <http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/research/>
- <http://www.mindfulschools.org/about-mindfulness/research>
- <http://www.mindful.org/the-science/medicine/the-science-of-mindfulness>
- <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/01/110121144007.htm>
- <http://www.actionforhappiness.org>
- <http://mindfullearning.com.au/about-mindful-learning/authors/>
- <http://www.mindfulness.net.au/what-is-micbt.html>



# Forward by Dr. Craig Hassed

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The modern world seems to be literally and metaphorically 'driving us to distraction' more than at any other time in history. This is contributed to by its faster pace, the overuse of technology and the unquestioning adoption of multitasking. Among other problems, poor attention is associated with impaired learning, memory, emotional development and empathy. Amidst this are also rising rates of poor mental health, stress, poor self-esteem and ADHD among children and adolescents. To prevent and manage problems such as these we need to address the root causes of the problem. This is where mindfulness comes in. There is an enormous need for children to develop the skills they will need to cope with the modern world including learning to manage attention and developing skills in stress management, compassion and resilience.



There is a rapidly growing research-base on the positive role of mindfulness for healthy childhood development and learning. Georgina Manning's 'Peaceful Kids' program makes a great contribution to helping children to develop these skills early in life - a skill that will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives. It is practical, systematic and can help children to understand themselves better and to develop ways to not just to survive in the modern world but to thrive in it. It is also likely that the adults who learn and teach the program will derive as much from it as the children who experience it which is an added bonus. Let's face it, if adults are not teaching children to be mindful then we are teaching them to be unmindful.

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