

# CHAMPS PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

### What is Champs?

**CHAMPS** is a peer support program for children aged 8-12 who have a parent who has a mental illness or mental health issues and their parents/carers.

CHAMPS is based on the belief that being a parent is both challenging and rewarding. Most families experience a range of difficulties at some stage. Living with a mental illness or mental health issues can make coping with such difficulties and looking after children even more stressful. Talking about mental illness and mental health can be tricky, but we know it helps a lot when families can talk about it together.

### What do we do at a Champs School Holiday Program?

CHAMPS is an 8 week after school program. It aims to provide education and support with lots of games and activities as well.

The Child peer support group aims to give children opportunities to

- Meet others in similar circumstances,
- Receive information and support
- Learn about healthy coping strategies
- Share food together

In a fun and supportive environment

The parent peer support group aims to give parent/carers the opportunity to

- Meet others in similar circumstances
- Discuss some of the joys and challenges of parenting
- Learn about some of the key messages that children will be discussing in their group

**We encourage parents/carers to attend the parent peer support group but it is not essential.**

### Who runs the Champs group?

The group will be facilitated by staff from NEAMI Life Connect, Wellways and Eastern Health. Bronwyn Sanders (FaPMI programs Coordinator) coordinates referrals for the group. All children attending the group must have a completed referral form. Bronwyn will contact all families prior to the commencement of the group.

Is there a cost to attend?

There is no cost for children or parents to attend the group.

**We welcome opportunities to catch up with you either at the beginning or the end of group time or, over the phone. We welcome your feedback and will be distributing evaluation forms at the beginning and end of the program.**

**Please do not hesitate to contact Bronwyn on 0408 291 580 if you have any questions or concerns.**

The group will run on Wednesdays from 4.00-5.30pm on

21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> July

4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> August

1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> September

We would prefer children to attend as many weeks as they can.

Afternoon tea will be provided so let us know about any allergies

Venue:

*The Avenue Uniting Church*

*46 Blackburn Rd*

*Blackburn. Park in The Avenue*