

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 mental health concerns and their parents/carers.

CHAMPS is based on the belief that children, parents and families do well when they have a range of resources and supports – and can build a shared understanding of mental health and wellbeing. 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 Program?

CHAMPS runs as an 8 week program which aims to provide education and support with lots of games and activities as well. We also offer School Holiday Programs throughout the year.

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
- Try new activities and games
- Share food together

...In a fun and supportive environment!

We offer a parent peer support group which aims for parent/carers 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/carer peer support group but it is not essential.

Who runs the CHAMPS group?

The groups will be facilitated by staff from Eastern Health and Wellways. Our team is made up of mental health, carer support and peer support staff.

Michelle Hegarty (FaPMI Programs Coordinator) coordinates referrals for the group. All children attending the group must have a completed referral form. Michelle 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/carers – but you must register 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 also welcome your feedback and will be distributing evaluation forms at the beginning and end of the program.

If you have any questions please contact Michelle on 0481913607 or email:
michelle.hegarty@easternhealth.org.au

Or complete an Eastern Health FaPMI program referral form available at
<https://www.easternhealth.org.au/services/mental-health/families-where-a-parent-has-a-mental-illness-fapmi/>

