

The CoolKids and Adolescent Health Program:
Helping distressed children & adolescents suffering from somatic health complaints (including recurring headaches, stomach-aches etc).



About 40% of children and adolescents may experience functional somatic health complaints, which are medically benign (that is, they have no identified organic cause). The most common somatic-health complaints experienced by children and adolescents include ***recurring abdominal pain, gastro-intestinal symptoms, recurring headaches, chest pains, dizziness and nausea***. Research has shown that these children are prone to have increased rates of school absenteeism, and this may also have an impact on their learning, peer relations and overall quality of life. Studies have also indicated that up to 80% of children and adolescents struggling to cope with these recurring functional somatic health complaints may also be experiencing anxiety and/or depressive problems.

Our new, **CoolKids and Adolescent Health Program** is designed to specifically help children learn how to concurrently cope and manage their somatic symptoms as well as learn stress management skills. This program is specifically designed for children aged 7 to 17 years who are experiencing recurring somatic health complaints for at least 3 months (and which a GP or medical specialist has confirmed that the symptoms are medically benign). The program is individually based and involves 10 x 1 hour weekly therapy sessions held either in-person at the Centre for Emotional Health (CEH) Clinic at Macquarie University or via Skype or telephone. Interested families will be invited to attend a screening assessment to determine eligibility.

Organisation: Centre for Emotional Health, Macquarie University.

Researchers: Associate Professor Maria Kangas, Prof Ron Rapee, & Prof Mike Jones.

Who is eligible? Children and adolescents aged 7-17 years who are experiencing recurring somatic health complaints for a minimum of 3-months.

Contact: For more information, please contact **Assoc. Professor Kangas and her team** (email: CoolKidsHealth@mq.edu.au or maria.kangas@mq.edu.au) or telephone (02) 9850 8599 or (02) 9850 4082.