



MACQUARIE
University

Child/Adolescent & Parent Emotion Regulation (CAPER) Program

Information and Consent Form

What is the CAPER program and what is the purpose of the current treatment study for children and adolescents and their parents?

Some children and adolescents may experience difficulties in managing their emotions. In particular, these difficulties may be noticeable to parents, family members, teachers and/or peers in terms of the child/adolescent 'acting out', temper tantrums, irritable/anger outbursts, easily annoyed, argumentative for no good reason, verbally defensive or aggressive (e.g. being rude, ill-mannered), or acting impulsively (e.g., throwing things on floor or slamming doors when upset or distressed). We refer to such emotional and behavioural reactions as emotion regulation difficulties. This does not imply that the child is experiencing a mental health disorder. However, studies have shown that children who experience chronic (uncontrolled) emotional regulation difficulties may be at greater risk of developing mental health problems in future.

The aim of our newly developed program, the Child/Adolescent and Parent Emotion Regulation (CAPER) program is designed to help children and adolescents who are experiencing emotion regulation difficulties and their parents to learn effective strategies to manage their emotions, as well as improve effective communication interactions between family members. The CAPER program is a psychological based program which does not involve medication.

The aim of the current study is to evaluate the CAPER program for children and adolescents aged 6 to 14 years of age who are currently experiencing emotional regulation difficulties over the past 4 weeks.

Who is the CAPER program study designed for?

For your child to be offered a place in the CAPER program he or she must meet the following criteria, including:

- The child must be at least 6 years old and in grades Kindergarten through to Year 8 (Upper age limit is 14 years).
- Your child has demonstrated emotion regulation difficulties as evidenced by at least one of the following behaviours on a regular basis in the past 4 weeks.
 - Temper outbursts
 - Easily annoyed or angry
 - Argumentative for no good reason

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- Acting out behaviours – e.g., throwing things, sulking
- Verbally defensive – or abusive (e.g., name-calling or being rude)
- Your child is not currently experiencing any acute or chronic mental health disorders including anxiety disorders (such as Social Anxiety Disorder, Separation Anxiety Disorder), PTSD or major depressive disorder.
- Your child must not be receiving other psychological treatment.
- At least one parent must also be willing to be actively involved in the therapy program on a weekly basis and for the duration of the program.

The CAPER program will not be suitable for your child if he or she is currently experiencing any of the following issues:

- ADHD.
- Significant learning delays that prevent mainstream class placement.
- Autism or related disorders.
- Considered at-risk due to child abuse, or neglect.
- Currently suicidal and/or are self-harming.

Who is Conducting this Study?

This study is being conducted at the Centre for Emotional Health (CEH) Clinic within the Department of Psychology at Macquarie University. The researchers include Associate Professor Maria Kangas, and Distinguished Professor Ronald Rapee who are both from the CEH, Macquarie University. Professor James Gross and Dr Yael Enav, both from the Department of Psychology at Stanford University, USA are also researchers involved with this study. Staff members include Dr Heidi Lyneham (Manager of the CEH Clinic) as well as the clinicians who will be working under the supervision of Associate Professor Kangas. This study is funded by a Macquarie University Staff Grant awarded to Associate Professor Kangas.

What Does the Study Involve?

Initial Assessment:

Before you can participate in the CAPER program, we have to thoroughly assess your child and family. The information we collect from you is used to determine whether our program will be suitable and beneficial for your child. We would like you to attend an initial clinical assessment interview. Assessment interviews are videotaped or audiotaped for quality assurance purposes (that is so that the results can be checked by a second researcher to ensure that an accurate assessment has been made).

The initial clinical assessment includes interviews separately for the child and their primary caregiver and typically takes 90 minutes to 2 hours. This assessment will be conducted by a registered psychologist or intern clinical psychologist. You will also be asked to complete a number of questionnaires about your child and your own thoughts, feelings and behaviours prior to attending the interview appointment.

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What happens after the initial assessment?

Within 2 to 3 working days following the initial assessment, you will be contacted by a member of staff and we will inform you whether our CAPER program will be suitable and beneficial for your child.

If our program is suitable for your child we will ask you and your child to complete a brief daily diary for a period of 18 consecutive days (2.5 weeks). The diary can be completed online (which you and your child will be sent a secure link to), or if you prefer you will be mailed out a hardcopy version. On a daily basis, you will be sent an email or SMS reminder to remember to complete the daily diary.

Once you have completed the 2.5 week daily diary, you and your child will be invited to complete a brief follow-up phone interview with a member of our staff, as well as complete several questionnaires (which should take no longer than 15- 20 minutes to complete). You will then be offered a start date for the CAPER training program.

If however, we evaluate at the initial clinical assessment that our CAPER program is not suitable for your child, we will let you know the reasons for this, and if appropriate we will recommend an alternative program we are conducting at our clinic, or refer you to more suitable therapy programs available at hospital or community health centres in the Sydney metropolitan area.

What does the CAPER program involve?

The CAPER program is an individual psychological based training program that is based on a cognitive behavioural approach. In this program, both the child and their parent learn how to adaptively expressive emotions, manage emotions more effectively and flexibly, as well as improve communication and social interactions between children and their parents and siblings.

This program will involve 6 x 1 hour weekly sessions, held over 8 weeks at the Centre for Emotional Health Clinic at Macquarie University, Ryde campus. Part of the treatment requires that one parent attends the first weekly session without the child/adolescent. The next 4 consecutive weekly sessions will involve both the child/adolescent and parent attending each of the sessions. The final 6th session is a hour 'booster session' that the parent attends and will be held 2 weeks after the 5th session. The reason for parent involvement in the CAPER program is so that you can assist your child to manage their emotion regulation difficulties as well as help them practice and apply the skills and 'home-practice' exercises between sessions. This program will teach both your child and you how to identify, evaluate, and manage upsetting emotions which may contribute to poor family interactions. This program does not involve taking medication.

The CAPER program is manual based. That is, there is set content for every session. Making sure the treatment sessions are the same (i.e., standardised) allows us to examine the effectiveness of this program across a number of pairs of children/adolescent and their parents. The therapist must cover the content outlined in the manual, however, he/she is able to tailor the application of that content to the needs of each child and family. In order to check that our clinicians are adhering to the recommended program procedures, the therapy sessions will be videotaped or audiotaped.

Who will be the therapist?

The therapists include CBT trained therapists, psychologists, clinical psychologists and post-graduate psychology students. All staff will be supervised by Associate Professor Maria Kangas who is a registered Clinical Psychologist in Australia.

What happens after completing the CAPER Program?

At the end of the 6 session program you and your child will be asked to complete an end of therapy assessment interview (within one week) of completing this program. The format of this clinical assessment will be the same as the initial assessment but will be brief (taking about 60 to 90 minutes). However you will have the option of completing this assessment in person or via telephone or Skype.

At one-month following the completion of the CAPER program you and your child will be asked to complete the final assessment, which once again will take the same form as the initial assessment but will be brief (taking about 60 to 90 minutes).

The follow-up assessments are an important part of our CAPER program. These assessments serve two purposes: (a) to evaluate the individual progress your child has made; and (b) to allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of our program. Hence, these follow-up assessments are integral to our research.

What commitment and costs are involved?

Eligible families will be required to pay a \$200 bond to participate in this study following the initial assessment. As the primary purpose of this study is to evaluate the initial efficacy of our new CAPER program, the end of therapy and 1-month follow-up assessments are very important.

For each follow-up assessment you and your child complete, you will receive part of the bond money back. In particular the following reimbursements will be made at each of the follow-up assessments:

- 1) Initial assessment – Free – However if you are assessed to be eligible to proceed to the CAPER program you will be required to pay a \$200 bond to proceed to the initial diary monitoring & treatment phase
- 2) At the end of the 6-session (7-weeks) of the CAPER program, you will be reimbursed \$100 for completing this assessment.
- 3) For completing the final, 1-month follow-up assessment, you will be reimbursed the remainder \$100 of the bond.

In summary, for completing all the assessment phases, you will receive the full bond payment back. Accordingly, the final total net monetary cost is nil for this program. That is, we will waive all clinic fees – as long as you pay the initial bond to take part in this study.

By paying the bond upfront, even if you and your child choose to discontinue with the CAPER program, the additional assessments are important so that we can learn about what determines success in our program. Hence, the bond money will only be reimbursed at completion of each of the 2 follow-up assessments (i.e., 7 weeks after commencing the CAPER program and then again at 1-month follow-up). For any parent-child pair that does not complete one or both of the follow-up assessments, the bond

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money will be retained by the Centre for Emotional Health clinic to cover administrative costs in hosting this program.

Will our information be confidential?

The Centre for Emotional Health (CEH) clinic is a training and research clinic. For research purposes CEH staff will use de-identified information collected during your assessment and treatment. All responses are confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without written consent. The only limits to our confidentiality agreement is if any information is disclosed during the course of the interview by your child or you that indicates illegal activity (e.g., child abuse), we are required by law to disclose this information to relevant authorities.

When results of our research are published only average scores will be included and no individual/family identifying information will be released. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time or choose not to participate without affecting your relationship with the CEH Clinic or Macquarie University. If you choose to withdraw, this will not affect your access to future treatment.

Further Information:

If you have any questions regarding this study please contact the CAPER program staff on (02) 9850 4082 or Associate Professor Maria Kangas on email: maria.kangas@mq.edu.au.

What do I do know?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you and your child decide to take part, you and/or your child can withdraw consent at any time without having to give a reason. Your choice to do so will not affect your relationship with the Centre for Emotional Health Clinic or Macquarie University.

If you would like your child to be assessed to be considered for the CAPER program, please complete the attached consent form and contact the CAPER program staff on (02) 9850 4082 to schedule an assessment interview.

Crisis Services

The Centre for Emotional Health Clinic does not have the resources to provide after-hours or crisis assistance. If you believe that your child is at any risk in terms of hurting themselves or others, it is important that you take action immediately. Contact your local Community Health Centre, Area Crisis or Extended Hours team, a telephone counselling service such as Lifeline (13 11 14) or the Suicide Helpline (1800 191 919), or the Emergency department of your local hospital.

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CAPER Program CONSENT FORM

I, [parent name]

Of[address]

have read and understand the information regarding the above named research study.

I have discussed the procedures with my child, _____,

and we are willing to act as voluntary participants.

I understand that my child and I have the freedom to withdraw our consent to participate and can discontinue our involvement at any time without prejudice to any future relationship with the investigators or the university.

Parent's SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Investigator's Signature: _____

DATE:

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participant's Copy [Please Keep]

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Investigator’s Copy [Please return to the Emotional Health Clinic]

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REQUEST for STUDY SUMMARY REPORT

CAPER Program

If you would like to receive a copy of the report summarising the findings from this study at the completion of the study (estimated month that results will be available is by March 2018), please complete the details on this form.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

or Email Address: _____

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