

# 1. A Combined Parent-Child (CPC) Program

## OnTrac: A Combined Parent-Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Program for Children (aged 7-10) with ADHD

*In this document the term 'parent' is defined as any adult caregiver who is in a primary caretaking role of the child. This is not to imply that only biological parents can participate in this program. Foster parents, grandparents, biological parents, and other relatives and caregivers can be involved in the program.*

ADHD is a neurodevelopment disorder that negatively impacts children's functioning. Most childhood cases continue to meet the criteria of adolescent ADHD.

When a child has ADHD, it can shift routines and relationships in ways that affect the whole family, not just the person who has the condition. Studies show that when one person in the family has ADHD, it can affect how satisfied parents, siblings, and others in the family feel with their everyday life. For example, children with ADHD create far more demands on parents' time and attention. These demands can lead to relationship problems, less family togetherness, and more conflict. Research shows higher rates of divorce and depression among parents of children with ADHD, compared with other families.

Unfortunately, some parents feel helpless and lack the skills to effectively parent a child with ADHD. Some parents use punishment as a strategy to control their children's problem behaviours and may use increasing force if problem behaviours continue.

To prevent coercive parenting situations from escalating, all families should have access to services that help:

- Strengthen family relationships,
- Enhance the safety of family members,
- Children fit in,
- Do better at school and in society at large.

Families need help to refocus on the fact that the most important things children need are love, affection, and attention, along with clear limit-setting and consistency.

To assist families with young children with ADHD, a comprehensive approach that meets the needs of both parents and children is required. OnTrac CPC Program addresses this need.

### THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO:

- Empower parents through knowledge,
- Reduce parental use of punishment,
- Enhance positive parenting skills
- Increase child wellbeing and compliance.

### WE WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO:

- Reduce the child's problem behaviours,
- Reduce the stress you feel as a parent,
- Help you and your child get along better, and
- Discover what works best for you and your child.

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The program comprises three modules, divided into six sessions as follows:

### PSYCHOEDUCATION

The aim of this module is to provide information on:

- What we know about ADHD today,
- The different ADHD presentations,
- How ADHD impacts Executive Functioning,
- Maturity delays in children with ADHD,
- Co-existing conditions,
- Treatment options.

### ADAPTIVE THINKING

The focus of this module is to help the parents and children think about problems and challenges more adaptively in a collaborative and non-coercive manner. This includes:

- Understanding how our thoughts impact our mood,
- Identifying and challenging negative thoughts,
- Values clarification,
- Goals setting,
- Problem solving,
- ADHD and family relationships.

This involves having parents practice implementation of active listening, communication skills, and positive parenting with the child, and teaching children a variety of positive coping skills, particularly assertiveness and self-regulation skills.

### PRACTICAL COPING SKILLS

The aim of this module is to help the children work collaboratively with the parents to help monitor their use of time, identify the reasons for their procrastination and implement the necessary changes.

### ELIGIBILITY

Children aged 7-10 with ADHD as their primary condition and a parent are eligible.

### FACILITATOR

The facilitator is a registered psychologist, in collaboration with psychology/medical students with an interest in ADHD.

### PLACE AND TIME

Location for 2024 TBC. The program is delivered during school terms, from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Tuesdays for six weeks.

The program is offered under Medicare's Better Access Initiative, namely Group Therapy (item 80120). To obtain the rebate, participants need to provide a referral from their paediatrician/psychiatrist, or a Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP) from their GP, stating the item number above.

Feedback will be given to the referring professional at the end of the program.