Mission Australia

Strengthening Families

Fact Sheet

Special Needs Family Support - ADHD

Special Needs Family Support – ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is an intensive family support program for families with a child or children up to 12 years of age diagnosed with (ADHD) or who display ADHD characteristics.

Target groups

The Special Needs Family Support – ADHD is an intensive family support program designed to achieve improvements in living skills for the child and family living with ADHD. The program targets children who display at least three of the following characteristics:

- Over-activity
- Impulsiveness
- Inattentiveness
- Poor concentration
- Learning difficulties
- Aggression
- Problems making friends
- School problems

Due to the limited funding, the program only reaches families living in the Campbelltown Local Government Area in South West Sydney. Referrals can be made by the family, agencies or professionals, with parental permission.

Service activities

The ADHD program is designed to achieve improvements in the areas where the child and family are facing difficulties, which may include:

- The home
- The classroom
- School environment
- Social group
- Sporting group

The psychologist's role is to initiate, maintain and support the learning of families and school or other groups. By working closely with the family and other significant people with whom the child comes in contact, the psychologist assists these people to:

- Understand the ADHD condition
- Adapt the environment to decrease the frustration for the child
- Work with the child on an individual level to:
    1. Control impulsivity
    2. Increase their attention span
    3. Manage hyperactivity

Following referral, the psychologist will make an appointment to meet the family in their home to discuss needs and develop an action plan. Ongoing discussion and support is arranged according to the family's needs. Support continues until family is confident in managing their issues or no longer requires the service. The psychologist can assist the family to advocate for the child's needs with other significant people, including their paediatrician.

Outcomes

With ongoing support during the learning process and putting into practice their developing skills, the outcomes for the family and child are:

- An understanding of the condition
- Reduction in incidents of anger
- Improvements in social skills
- Improvements in co-operation

For the child this means they are able to participate meaningfully in home activities, school and sporting, leisure and community activities.

For the family this means there is improved family functioning as they incorporate intervention strategies into family routines, have a better understanding of their child's difficulties and condition, and are able to advocate for their child. Broader community benefits include schools and other agencies demonstrate increased knowledge and skills in meeting the needs of children with ADHD and mainstream services work together to meet client and community needs.

Funding sources

The program is fully funded by the NSW Department of Human Services - Community Services through the Community Services Grant Program.

Mission Australia

Mission Australia is one of the nation's leading community service organisations, having helped transform the lives of individuals and families in need for over 150 years. Mission Australia's vision is to see a fairer Australia by enabling people in need to find pathways to a better life. We currently operate more than 550 community and employment services throughout metropolitan, rural and regional Australia, which provide:

- Pathways away from homelessness;
- Pathways to strong families and healthy, happy children;
- Pathways through a successful youth;
- Pathways to life and work-ready skills
- Pathways to sustainable employment

Contact Information

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"I feel I can now help my son and be a better parent" - Client 2010