



# Aussie Optimism: Feelings & Friends

## What is Aussie Optimism?

Aussie Optimism is an evidence-based mental health promotion program that provides schools and families with practical information and strategies. The programs are mapped to the national curriculum for Health and Physical Education, and English and are designed to be run in schools, with whole classes in a school term. Aussie Optimism is a resilience program that can help all children build coping skills and self-esteem.

## Why Aussie Optimism?

Children and Adolescents often experience stress, which may make them feel down or anxious. For example peer pressure, family conflict, moving from primary school to high school, increased demands of study, performance expectations and body changes. Children and adolescents cannot always be protected from stress, however, they can be provided with the skills necessary to cope with stress and to rise above life's difficulties and challenges.

## The Aussie Optimism: Feelings and Friends Programs

The two Aussie Optimism: Feelings and Friends programs are developmentally appropriate for students in years 1 - 2 and year 3.

During the 10 weeks of program implementation Students learn to identify and label feelings first in themselves and then in others. Students learn and practice how to look out for body clues and early warning signs that help them know how they are feeling. The skills include:

- Identifying four common feelings (sad, angry, scared and happy)
  - First aids for feelings
  - How to be friendly
- Students are encouraged to apply these skills to:
- Talk about their own feelings and the feelings of others
  - Establish and maintain good relationships with family and friends
  - Cope with stressful or challenging situations

## How can my school run the Aussie Optimism Programs?

Teachers and school staff are required to attend a one-day training workshop for each program they would like to run. Workshops can be arranged at Curtin, your school or another venue of choice. Workshops cost around \$125(per program) and equip participants with the materials and skills necessary to run the Aussie Optimism Programs in schools.

## More questions?

For questions relating to **PDs or the ordering of our resources**, please contact Nethalie on 9266 2465 or [Nethalie.Coswatte@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Nethalie.Coswatte@curtin.edu.au)

For **questions, comments or concerns** please contact the Research coordinator Dr Shari Hassan on 9266 3463 or [S.Hassan@curtin.edu.au](mailto:S.Hassan@curtin.edu.au)