



Tuning in to Kids

*A six session parenting program for
parents of children 2 - 12 years (followed by 2 booster sessions 1 & 2 months apart)*

Information for referring agencies

Tuning in to Kids emphasises the early developmental pathways that are at the heart of children's socialisation and their learning of emotional competencies. These capacities affect children's functioning in all domains: social, behavioural, psychological, physiological and educational.

The approach taken in this program is consistent with attachment theory. It is particularly targeted at helping parents to develop strong, sensitive, and secure relationships with their children, which will provide a strong base for their future wellbeing. It is a program which offers an intervention based on evidence from clinical trials and field work which has been gained in community settings.

Tuning in to Kids focuses on developing supportive, emotionally responsive parenting – characteristics that are also central in a secure attachment relationship. The program has found that many problems are resolved when a child experiences validation and emotional understanding by close others.

The program broadly looks at:

- parents' attitudes and beliefs
- parents' family of origin and how this might have impacted on their emotions and parenting their own children
- the family's emotional climate (eg family violence, AOD use, mental health issues)

It teaches parents:

- awareness and regulation of their own emotions
- awareness of their children's emotions
- to use children's emotional experiences as an opportunity for closeness and teaching
- skills in assisting children to verbally label and manage their emotions
- skills in assisting children in problem solving
- to guide children's behaviour with appropriate limits

The research evaluation of Tuning in to Kids found that when parents learned these parenting skills, this was related to improvements in children's emotional competence, social skills and behaviour.

For further information on the program see: <http://www.tuningintokids.org.au/> or contact the service.

Please ring 4987 4674 to refer a family. Groups are limited to 8 parents and are offered in varying venues and locations throughout Port Stephens. Depending on capacity at the time we may be able to offer the program on a one on one basis. In addition, the ideas and strategies offered in TIK can often be new information for parents and it can be useful for parents to complete the program twice.