

## Is shyness normal in young children?

Some shyness can be a normal part of development with young children. However, research shows that extreme shyness in young children can sometimes lead to more serious problems in later life. Your child may be experiencing difficulties beyond what is healthy if you notice your child experiencing any of the following:

- Prolonged clinging, crying, and/or tantrums when you separate
- Excessive shyness or avoiding social situations
- Avoiding situations or places due to fears
- Complaints of frequent stomachaches or headaches that are not caused by another medical explanation

## Referral Process

You can refer yourself to Cool Little Kids. Please call 905.527.5092 ext.2923 or email [coollittlekids@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:coollittlekids@hwdsb.on.ca)

## What if my child is over the age of 6?

Social work support is available for students of any age having difficulties with anxiety. Please speak with your child's Principal or Learning Resource Teacher if this is a concern.

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Anxietybc.com, (2015). What is CBT | Anxiety BC. [online] Available at: <http://www.anxietybc.com/what-cbt> [Accessed 24 Apr. 2015]. The Cool Little Kids anxiety prevention program was developed by the Centre for Emotional Health (CEH) at McQuarie University in Sydney, Australia. The CEH is a research centre whose focus is on the understanding, treatment and prevention of anxiety, depression and related mental health problems. ([http://centreforemotionalehealth.com.au/files/documents/Brochures/Cool\\_Little\\_Kids.pdf](http://centreforemotionalehealth.com.au/files/documents/Brochures/Cool_Little_Kids.pdf))

Anxietybc.com, (2015). What is CBT | Anxiety BC. [online] Available at: <http://www.anxietybc.com/what-cbt> [Accessed 24 Apr. 2015]. AnxietyBC (NOTE: There is a Trademark for AnxietyBC) is an online resource which provides information regarding anxiety and how to manage it. In addition to the information available on this website, there are links to mobile apps and downloadable resources as well.



HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
20 Education Court, Hamilton, ON L9A 0B9



COOL LITTLE KIDS PROGRAM

*Offered by Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Social Work Services*

## What is the Cool Little Kids Program?

The Cool Little Kids Program is an anxiety prevention program for primary caregivers of children in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 who show signs of being shy, withdrawn or inhibited. The program uses Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques and gives caregivers knowledge, practical skills and tips on how to help their young child manage and overcome anxiety.

## How Cool Little Kids can help

The program focuses on teaching caregivers how to work with their children by learning how to manage their worries and other negative emotions.

### **Caregivers will learn:**

- How to build their child's confidence
- How to manage their child's worries
- How to understand a caregiver's own reaction to their child's behaviour
- How their own worries about their child can be managed differently

## What is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)?

CBT is an evidence-based treatment approach that focuses on the way people think (“cognitive”) and act (“behavioural”). The concept behind CBT is that our thoughts about a situation affect how we feel (emotionally and physically) and how we behave in that situation.

With Cool Little Kids, caregivers are able to learn how unhelpful thoughts and behaviours can encourage anxiety. Then, they learn healthier skills and habits to reduce fears and worries.



## Who are the Group Facilitators?

HWDSB’s Registered Social Workers facilitate the group, employing their expertise in school-based mental health support.

## How long is the program and when is it offered?

Six sessions occur over 6 weeks. Each session is approximately two hours and will take place in HWDSB schools or at the Education Centre. The time, date and location of the groups depend on the needs of attending caregivers.



## Who attends the Cool Little Kids group?

Any primary caregivers involved in the day-to-day care of the child may attend the group. If all caregivers for a child cannot attend, we ask that the same caregiver attends each session to maintain consistency. Children do not attend the group.

## How much does the Cool Little Kids program cost?

This program is available free of charge to caregivers with children registered in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

## What topics does the program cover?

- Understanding anxiety and shyness in young children
- Causes and risk factors for child anxiety
- Helpful and unhelpful ways of responding to anxiety in children
- Skills and strategies to help your child build brave behaviours and face fears
- Dealing with setbacks and difficulties
- How to maintain progress after the program ends