



CliniSibs

INFORMATION SHEET



What is CliniSibs?

While there are some wonderful parts to being a sibling of an autistic individual, there can also be some difficult parts too. Having an autistic sibling brings with it some wonderful positive moments as well as unique challenges. Research shows that siblings play an essential role in the family system and as a result, we have developed an evidence-based program to support siblings along their journey.

CliniSibs is a unique group-based program designed to bring siblings of autistic children together to learn more about autism, and to learn strategies to enhance their own resilience and psychosocial and emotional wellbeing through their shared sibling experience, enabling them to feel more adept at coping with difficult and challenging family situations. This is achieved by providing a nurturing and supportive environment for siblings to express themselves and enhance their sense of self through the development of emotional regulation strategies.

What does the research say?

Siblings play a crucial role in the lives of autistic children. The research literature strongly advocates for the sibling experience to be better understood and supported given their contribution to improving the outcomes for their autistic brother or sister.



Each week the program will explore the following topics:

- 1) **Parent introduction workshop**
Aim: Overview of program content, and how to prepare your child for CliniSibs.
- 2) **Getting to know ME!**
Aim: Introduction to CliniSibs and develop an awareness about self and others.
- 3) **What is autism?**
Aim: Develop awareness of autism and confidence in identifying the sibling's strengths and challenges, and communicating this to others.
- 4) **My sibling story**
Aim: Understand and explore the experience of being a sibling to a child with autism.
- 5) **Understanding my feelings**
Aim: Explore the range of feelings associated with being a sibling and the individual experience of these feelings.
- 6) **My big feelings**
Aim: Understanding the purpose of our big feelings and identifying coping strategies.
- 7) **Looking after ME!**
Aim: Identify opportunities to access support people and understand how they can enhance the sibling experience.

CliniSibs will incorporate a range of group discussions, craft activities, video and role play content to integrate the child's learning from the clinic into your home. Through these session topics, your child will also explore the unique qualities and strengths of their sibling relationship and how these can be fostered. Our aim is to assist siblings to feel connected, valued and worthy in their role.

Who is it suitable for?

The program is aimed at primary school aged children who have an autistic sibling. We are currently accepting expressions of interest for children aged between 7-11 years. CliniSibs will have a maximum of six children to ensure children are provided with an opportunity to both learn and practice the skills.

What can I expect?

CliniSibs will be run as a structured program at CliniKids, facilitated by a member of our Clinical Psychology team. Parents and caregivers will be invited to attend a parent only session (session 1) which will support parents to guide their child through the CliniSibs journey. After that, the children will come together for their 6 sessions, and session summaries will be provided to parents electronically after the group has met.

Families can access CliniSibs privately, or by using NDIS funding. Please speak to us about your child's NDIS plan, to see if their sibling is eligible for supports under their NDIS plan.

How can I get involved?

CliniKids are currently taking expressions of interest for the CliniSibs program. Should you wish to be placed on the waitlist or obtain further information please contact us:

clinkids.reception@thekids.org.au | (08) 6319 1133