

SAS SMALL GROUP PROGRAM

FOR CHILDREN WITH FASD



www.secretagentsociety.com

BE PART OF SOMETHING MEANINGFUL FOR YOUNG NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

As part of a Charles Darwin University research study, and in collaboration with Social Science Translated, children aged 8–12 with a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and their caregivers have the chance to receive specialised supports to build skills for life. Children participating in Secret Agent Society (SAS) Small Group Program in early 2025 can also contributing to much needed research on how to support children with FASD to thrive.

SAS is suitable for families with children between 8 and 12 to empower:

1. **Emotion Recognition** (in other people and self);
2. **Emotion Regulation** (particularly anxiety and anger);
3. **Social Skills** (for friendship, team work and getting along with others!); and
4. **Problem Solving** (as an individual and in a group).

The program is part of a research project, investigating the feasibility of the program for use with children with a diagnosis of FASD. The aims of the research study will be to investigate development in these areas for children with FASD; and the experiences of all participants during the program.

The project has ethics approval from the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: H25004).

What to do next

To be included in this research, please advise your SAS provider, who will then advise the research team. You will be contacted for a pre-group assessment to determine the appropriateness of the SAS Small Group Program and research eligibility criteria. The principal researcher on this project is Dr Rowena Friend, Rowena.Friend@cdu.edu.au.

Location

Anywhere in Australia. Please contact an SAS provider near you for their availability to enrol you in this program either in-person or via telehealth <https://www.sst-institute.net/find-a-service-provider>

Commitments

The program will run over a minimum 9-week period, commencing in Term 2 2025. Sessions for children are usually 1–2 times per week for 60–90 minutes. There are also a minimum of 4 sessions for parents to assist in understanding the program for their child. There will also be some brief questionnaires to complete as part of the research project, before, during and after the project.



What is the SAS Small Group Program?

SAS is a fun, evidence-based initiative that helps neurodivergent children develop essential social-emotional skills. Through engaging club meeting activities, practice missions, teamwork, and real-life practice support through adult 'Mentor', children learn to manage emotions, solve problems, and build friendships.

If your child often feels angry, anxious, lonely, or uncomfortable they may benefit from discovering some new social-emotional tools they can draw upon today and throughout their lives.

Try a program that actually works

SAS was first developed for supporting the social-emotional skills of children aged 8-12 years on the autism spectrum and the original randomised control trial (RCT) produced the highest published clinical change for a program of its kind! Since then, over 22 publications demonstrate how the evidence-based program creates meaningful change for children with a range of diagnostic and neurodivergent profiles including ADHD, anxiety, and autism during the transition towards their teenage years.

Learn together for the best results

The clinician-led experience helps parents and teachers support each "Cadet" as they complete the program. Child Club Meetings, Parent Group Meetings, secret Missions, Gadget Packs, Teacher Tip Sheets, Skills Trackers, and assessment tools are all enabled by a digital health platform, so every child can tap into their support network and reach their social-emotional goals! The approach is so effective that past research found 84% of parents believed that SAS led to lasting changes in their child's life.

"Crack the code" of emotions and social interactions

By cracking codes and collecting digital gadgets throughout their gamified learning journey, children discover new ways to:

- Understand how they and others feel and act.
- Build their own formula for friendships.
- Cope with change.
- Solve social and emotional problems.
- Recognise and respond to bullying.

Thank you for considering this research – your support can make a real difference in many children's growth and success!

