



ONLINE MENTORING – NOVEMBER 2020

INFORMATION FOR NEW ZEALAND-BASED PARTICIPANTS

We are very excited that in August, we expanded the reach of our Autistic-led online group mentoring to include participants who are based in New Zealand. This document details some key information about the program and includes information about our November 2020 cycle.

Our online mentoring groups, which help participants **build confidence** and **social connections**, draw upon our very successful and highly acclaimed school-based and community-based mentoring programs and adapt them to the comfort of a home setting. All of our groups are offered on a mixed gender basis.

Each online mentoring group includes up to 8-9 "mentees" led by two experienced I CAN mentors in a safe, engaging, supportive environment. The current support ratio is 1:4 (one staff member to 4 mentees) and please note that not all sessions will have full attendance by mentees for numerous reasons such as special occasions or previous commitments.

Our program is designed to ensure that even if you miss one session, it will not have an impact on subsequent sessions. Each cycle contains a one-hour session at the same time each week (6 weekly sessions in total).

For our November 2020 cycle, we are offering groups at the time slots below for the following cohorts:

*** Please note that, due to the time zone spread in Australia, some sessions will run quite late in New Zealand Standard time (NZST). As our program continues to grow, we anticipate more sessions that will be offered earlier in the evening local time.***

Online Mentoring Groups

(all times are listed in AEDT- Australian Eastern Daylight Time)

Mondays 4:30-5:30pm (AEDT)

Ages 9-13



Mondays 6:50-7:50pm (AEDT)

Ages 9-12 (*Imagination Club-Non Autism Specific*) - please see additional information below
Ages 10-13

Tuesdays 4:30-5:30pm (AEDT)

Ages 9-13

Tuesdays: 6:50-8:50 (AEDT)

Ages 13-15

Wednesdays: 4:30-5:30pm (AEDT)

Ages 9-13

Wednesdays: 6:50-7:50 (AEDT)

Ages 13-15

Ages 16-20

Thursdays: 6:50-7:50pm (AEDT)

LGBTQIA+ (Ages 13-17)

Screens, Tunes & Characters (Interest-Based Group for Ages 9-13)

Screens, Tunes & Characters (Interest-Based Group for Ages 13-15)

Screens, Tunes & Characters (Interest-Based Group for Ages 16-20)

All of our mentors have experience as school-based, and online mentors and are particularly passionate about working with Autistic young people and young adults. To date, all of our online mentoring team are Autistic. *Please note: our mentors are not trained counsellors and not intended to replace mental health or medical professionals.*

We have found that the online mentoring delivery model can be a very effective way to bring the **positive messages and powerful mentorship model of the I CAN Network** to participants who are navigating school life and post-school paths.

Our engaging group mentoring sessions, which take place for one hour each week via live video conference, allow participants to connect with others who will understand and accept them while developing strategies for managing changes, challenges and opportunities that can arise as an Autistic young person/young adult.



To be considered for any of the small group programs above, the conditions below need to be met and accepted:

- Currently in one of the age cohorts specified
- Located in Australia or New Zealand
- Aware that they are Autistic, *unless participating in the Imagination Club group*
- Comfortable engaging online and understanding that this may provide some sensory challenges for individuals who are sound sensitive as the online environment may prove to be noisy in some sessions.
- Willing to take part in a group activity (this can be difficult for some individuals who need significant "down time" in the late afternoon or evening, so please consider preferences and needs)
- Can attend the allocated day and time
- Are aware that an Expression of Interest (EOI) form has been submitted and are willing to participate.
- Understand that a cancellation policy is in place and is willing to accept its terms upon acceptance of a spot.
- Will need to be able to abide by our ICT terms and conditions that ensure online safety and positive cyber participation.

KEY PROGRAM DETAILS

TIMING

Weekly group mentoring sessions will run for 6 weekly sessions. If your cycle date includes school holidays, please note that sessions still run through this time, however we will not run on the week coinciding with a public (Australian) holiday. We run new cycles roughly every eight weeks and currently have 6 Intakes per year.

Each online session will run for one hour at a consistent time each week, for the duration of 2020. As our program expands, we anticipate adding more groups that are earlier in the evening NZST.



COST & PAYMENT

AUD \$270 for a 6-session program, with payment to be made through credit card only. Full payment is due 10 days before the first session. See details below for our cancellation policy.

MENTORS

Each group is directed by a lead mentor and assisted by another experienced I CAN mentor or assistant mentor. All of our online mentoring teams include at least one Autistic mentor, and in most cases, both/all of the mentors involved are Autistic. Currently all of our online mentoring staff are Autistic.

PLATFORM/TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

All online sessions are held in a private video conferencing room using ZOOM (www.zoom.us). Zoom is compatible with various operating systems and is accessible via computer, tablet or mobile devices (as a free download).

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started>. Additionally, we acknowledge that many of our participants experience anxiety prior or during sessions and we are very understanding and flexible, we allow video and/or audio off, and Zoom has a chat function that allows communication with the group via typing. There is no fee to use Zoom as we are running meetings. It is a free download.

We recommend testing the Zoom link ahead of schedule to ensure that it works on the preferred device. Please contact us if you need assistance with the Zoom platform.

STRUCTURE OF THE SESSIONS

Above all, the sessions are designed to be a respectful, safe place for young people/young adults to connect and be accepted and celebrated for who they are. The mentors invest a lot of time each week in coming up with angles and content that will resonate with the specific "mentees" in their group. Although the sessions are very fluid, they do tend to follow a certain general order each week.

As with all I CAN programs and our team meetings, sessions open with "Good News Sharing," followed by some sort of engaging "ice breaking activity" designed to draw mentees in and highlight their interests. The thrust of the sessions center around a particular theme, presented in a way that invites engagement, including: building friendships; managing change and challenges; getting organised and navigating classes; managing stress/pacing yourself; building confidence/believing in



yourself. Our mentors will also ensure that there is sufficient time to address questions and themes that the mentees raise.

Interest-based groups such as "Screens, Tunes & Characters" allow mentors and mentees to come together in a safe space to discuss shared passion around things like gaming, movies, music and various characters.

To learn more about session content, please see this February 2020 I CAN video overview, "Accessing I CAN Programs." Online mentoring is covered at the 16:58 mark:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=m31Ktl5nbGc&t=1588s.

IMAGINATION CLUB

Imagination Club Online is based on our very successful school-based programs for students in Upper Primary. It is not necessary for a participant to have an Autism diagnosis; the group is designed to accommodate students who have not yet received a formal diagnosis, are not yet aware that they are Autistic, are different in some other way or simply need additional encouragement and support. Autistic participants are also welcome to take part, although unlike our other group programs, there are no explicit themes around Autism or being Autistic (rather, the emphasis is on embracing differences more broadly). Remaining themes are similar to those in our other online groups.

OFFERS & CONFIRMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) form is the gateway for being considered for an online group. EOI link; <https://www.tfaforms.com/4842640>

You will be contacted as soon as a space is available in the group you have listed as your preference.

REPEAT PARTICIPANTS

As we launch each new online group mentoring cycle (roughly every 8-10 weeks), you will need to re-submit the Expression of Interest form to be considered for another online group:

ACCEPTING AN OFFER

You will receive an email from online@icannetwork.com.au informing you that a spot has been made available. The email will outline how many days you have to respond to the offer before the offer is



passed on to another individual. It is important to check your spam folder as unfortunately at times our emails will end up there.

You need to accept or decline the invitation. The process is outlined in the offer email. Please ensure that the participant has been asked before committing to a spot.

If you wish to accept, please fill in the online service agreement and familiarise yourself with the cancellation policy. You will receive a second email with the final logistical information including Zoom links, session prompts and staff allocations closer to the start date.

Please note this information usually comes within one week prior to the sessions as we have many families to bring onboard and formalise groups and staffing.

An invoice will be sent with a link to pay by credit card shortly after completion of the online service agreement. Full payment by credit card should be made no later than 10 days before the first session.

WAITING LIST

Those who meet the participation criteria but do not receive an offer for the next available group will automatically be placed on a waiting list in the order that your Expression of Interest was received. We will contact you when the first space becomes available in a new program cycle.

CANCELLATION, POLICY & WITHDRAWING

Please note that we have a strict cancellation policy in place for our program. We understand that certain circumstances may arise which means withdrawing from the program, however we are proud employers of Autistic individuals and we are unable to replace a participant spot with very short notice or once a program has commenced. Please familiarise yourself with the policy that is at the end of the document.

Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's attendance, due to the large amount of groups running at one time. Please email us if your child will be absent or if there are any other problems or concerns.

FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have further questions not covered in this document, please reach out to our online team: online@icannetwork.com.au.



I CAN NETWORK LTD. CANCELLATION POLICY

No charge if notice of cancellation is given 10 days prior to commencement of Session #1

I CAN Network will not charge the participant if they provide notice of cancellation 10 days prior to commencement of the Online Group Mentoring start date.

\$125 AUD administrative fee if notice of cancellation with less than 10 days notice

If less than 10 days notice has been given to withdraw completely from the Online Group Mentoring program an administration fee of \$125 will be payable.

\$125 AUD administrative fee if notice of cancellation given after Session #1

Participants who withdraw from the Online Group Mentoring Program within 48 hours after Session #1 (participant has either completed the first session or did not attend but did not provide 10 days notice) will incur a \$125 administration fee.

Full \$270 AUD charge applied if notice of cancellation given 48 hrs after Session #1

Participants who withdraw 48 hours after Session #1 will be required to pay the full amount (\$270).

Participants who miss a single session will forfeit that session and no refund or reduction in invoice amount will apply.

Missed sessions (partial attendance)



If the participant misses a session, you are still required to pay the cost and you will not be offered a discount or a replacement session.

If you do not contact us within the prescribed time limits as listed above and do not attend any sessions you are still liable for the cost due to us having to pay staff and running of the programs.

I CAN NETWORK LTD. ICT POLICY

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Agreement

At the I CAN NETWORK we support the right of all participants to access safe and inclusive learning environments, including digital and online spaces. This form outlines the I CAN Network's roles and responsibilities in supporting safe digital learning, as well as the expected behaviors we have of our participants when using digital or online spaces.

When I use digital technologies, I communicate respectfully by:

- always thinking and checking that what I write or post is polite and respectful
- being kind to my friends and other participants and thinking about how the things I do or say online might make them feel.
- not sending mean or bullying messages or forwarding them to other people.

When I use digital technologies, I protect personal information by being aware that my full name, photo, birthday, address and phone number is personal information and is not to be shared online. This means I:

- protect my friends' information in the same way
- protect my passwords and don't share them with anyone except my parent
- never answer questions online that ask for my personal information

When I use digital technologies, I respect myself and others by thinking about what I share online. This means I:

- stop to think about what I post or share online
- use spaces or sites that are appropriate, and if I am not sure I ask a trusted adult for help
- protect my friends' full names, birthdays, school names, addresses and phone numbers because this is their personal information
- speak to a trusted adult if I see something that makes me feel upset or if I need help



- speak to a trusted adult if someone is unkind to me or if I know someone else is upset or scared
- don't deliberately search for something rude or violent
- turn off or close the screen if I see something I don't like and tell a trusted adult

I agree to be a polite, safe and responsible and ethical user of digital technologies (*Agreement to be acknowledged in Service Agreement*)