

Secret Agent Society Whole of Classroom Trial Calling for Expression of Interest

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Program Synopsis

The Secret Agent Society (SAS) Program was originally developed as a small group social-emotional skills training program for children aged 8-12 years with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders (HFASD). The results from a number of trials with this program have shown very positive results. One of these trials was with children who did not have ASD but did have peer relationship difficulties or difficulties with anxiety. This has led us to develop a whole class program that we believe will have social, emotional and potential academic benefits for all students. All Grade 5 students will complete the program in schools that choose to participate. The program will be delivered by those teachers who choose to participate and support will be given by teacher aides.



Whole of Class SAS Program

The evidence base supporting the SAS program shows that it can be successfully delivered with great flexibility, in a range of different settings, and with different levels of intensity. The whole of class program is designed to be embedded within the Grade 5 curriculum to fulfill Australian Curriculum objectives in the areas of personal and social capability, critical and creative thinking, ICT capability and ethical and intercultural understanding in an engaging and user-friendly manner. This will be achieved through the use of the Award winning multi-level SAS Computer game in class lessons, (see www.sst-institute.net for a clip of the game), customised full-colour student handbooks, resources for support staff and parents and interactive activities that involve printable resources and visual supports.

Students will learn how their emotional responses influence other people's behaviour; how to analyse factors that impact on their ability to self-regulate; devise and apply strategies to monitor their own behaviour and set realistic goals and identify the differences between positive and negative relationships and ways of managing these.

Students will also be taught how to approach academic challenges and everyday problems with an enquiring, creative and critical mind. Ethical and intercultural understanding, friendship building skills, and a respect and appreciation of individual differences will be fostered throughout activities that are integrated with the academic curriculum. Children will engage in a range of learning activities including creating multimedia class presentations, group problem-solving exercises and individual journaling to develop these skills.

Teachers and teacher aides who volunteer to participate will be trained in the content and facilitation of the program and will be supervised while they are delivering the curriculum. Training will either be face-to-face or via an interactive website.

The program will run for ONE term with 9 weekly sessions and one session for student questionnaires and feedback. Teachers will be asked to complete questionnaires for children in the class with ASD (a battery at 3 time points – 1 hour assuming 3-4 students) and questionnaires about classroom and school climate, teacher confidence in managing students' behaviour, peer relationships amongst all students, tolerance of others, and so on.

It is estimated that it will take teachers approximately 3 - 4 hours to complete the measures at each of the 3 time points. A research assistant will be available on site to help with questionnaires. Schools will also be asked for data on the rates of student absenteeism, students' academic performance, incident reports, suspensions and expulsions to determine the impact the program has on these key performance indicators.

Schools will receive a classroom copy of the computer game and all necessary materials to deliver the program.

Teacher Commitment

- 2 days training
- 3-4 hours for completing questionnaires at 3 time points – pre, post and 3 month follow up (total of 12 hrs)
- Fortnightly Skype or phone supervision for the duration of the program – 1 hour per fortnight
- Preparation and Delivery of the program to a grade 5 class – Estimated to be a maximum of 1 hour per week preparation time and 1 hour per week delivery time over one school term.



HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Secret Agency Society - Whole of Classroom Project

Please indicate your
interest via email to:

Kate Sofronoff
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Please Note: To be eligible to participate in this project, schools require a minimum of two students with ASD to be enrolled for Grade 5 in 2017.



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