

ONLINE GROUP MENTORING – OVERVIEW & KEY DETAILS



Our online group mentoring program, which helps participants **build confidence and social connections**, draws upon our very successful and highly acclaimed school-based and community-based mentoring programs and adapts them to the comfort of a home setting.

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 (six sessions total) 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 or young adult.

Each group includes 8 or 9 "mentees" led by two experienced I CAN mentors in a safe, engaging, supportive environment. Each of our mentoring teams includes at least one Autistic mentor, and in most instances, both mentors are Autistic. All of our groups are offered on a mixed gender basis.

In 2019, we are offering online mentoring groups at the time slots below for the following cohorts (please note that for some time slots, there will be more than one group running):

Primary School: Grades 5-6:

Monday 7-8pm AEST

10 to 13-Year-Olds (Not Grade Specific)

Mondays 7-8pm AEST

Wednesdays 7-8pm AEST

13 to 15-Year-Olds (Not Grade Specific)

Tuesdays 7-8pm AEST

16 to 20-Year-Olds (Not Grade Specific)

Wednesdays 7-8pm AEST

To be considered for any of the small group programs above, prospective mentees should be:

- Currently in one of the age/grade cohorts specified
- Located in Australia
- Aware that they are Autistic
- Comfortable engaging online
- Willing to take part in a group activity in the evening (this can be difficult for some individuals who need significant "down time" in the evening, so please consider preferences and needs)

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KEY DETAILS

TIMING

Each online group mentoring cycle includes 6 weekly sessions. Each online session runs for one hour at a consistent time every week.

We run new cycles approximately every 8-10 weeks. The next cycle will commence in mid-September.

COST

\$252 for a 6-session program.

NDIS

If you intend on using funds from a NDIS plan, please ensure that the plan is either self-managed or plan-managed. If you are plan-managed, please ensure that your plan management organisation will pay the invoice. If the plan management organisation decides they cannot pay using the plan, you must be able to cover the fee as per privately funded families. We cannot accept plans that are managed by the NDIA as we are not a NDIS-registered provider and do not foresee applying for registration in the near future. If you are NDIA-managed and wish to participate you must privately fund the online group mentoring program. Please note upon acceptance into the online mentoring program, you will be given a service agreement and a cancellation policy.

MENTORS

Each group is directed by a lead mentor and assisted by another experienced I CAN mentor. In some groups, we might add a third mentor trainee as part of their professional development. All of our online mentoring teams include at least one Autistic mentor, and in most cases, both/all of the mentors involved are Autistic, something that differentiates the I CAN Network from most service providers in Australia.

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. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started>. Additionally, Zoom has a chat function that allows communication with the group via typing. There is no fee to use Zoom.

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

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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 organized and navigating classes; managing stress/pacing yourself; building confidence/believing in yourself. Tips and ideas generated during each session will be circulated afterwards for future reference. Our mentors will also ensure that there is sufficient time to address questions and themes that the mentees raise.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST & OFFERS

Submitting an [Expression of Interest](#) form here or via the online group mentoring page on our website (www.icannetwork.com.au) is the gateway for being considered for an online group. You will be contacted as soon as a space is available in the group for which you have expressed interest.

WAITING LIST

Those who meet the participation criteria but do not receive an offer for the next cycle 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.

FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS

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

ADDITIONAL ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES

We anticipate continued and significant growth in our online group mentoring program during the course of 2019 and beyond. Please know that we are doing everything possible to grow our online offerings in a responsible manner to reach even more young people who might benefit. Please follow our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/theicannetwork/) (<https://www.facebook.com/theicannetwork/>) and sign up for our newsletter (<https://www.icannetwork.com.au/contact>) to keep up on the latest developments.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE I CAN NETWORK

We invite you to learn more about The I CAN Network, Australia's first social enterprise founded by and led by Autistics. Together, we are driving a rethink of Autism.

For more information about our mission, our history and our programs, please check out: <https://icannetwork.com.au/about/>.

Read the stories of some of our mentors, mentees and supporters via our annual April series, "Humans on the Autism Spectrum:" (<https://www.icannetwork.com.au/humans-2019/>).

To view recent coverage of our I CAN mentoring programs in school, the inspiration for our online offerings, please see ABC Lateline's segment: "Meet The Mutants: On The Spectrum and Proud:" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0w-G2003vKl>.

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