



## INTRODUCTION

The Fun Friends Program has twelve sets of activities (sessions), which take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour to complete each session. I would like it to be a fun, bonding activity between family members - something children will later in their lives remember with fondness. Please do not expect young children to pay attention for longer than 15 minutes at a time - they may need a little break to have a drink, get a hug or something to eat! Please follow the sessions from 1 to 12 (do not skip or alter order of sessions), as the social emotional skills taught follow a logical sequence that must be maintained, rather than "jumping" pages or activities. My suggestion would be for parents to get a book for each child between ages 4-6 years, and to do 1 session a week for 12 consecutive weeks (the activities can be worked on throughout the week, not all at once). Then keep the book as a memory, on their bedside table - come and re-visit any particular relevant session when your child has to face a challenging situation. Talk about ways to cope with each challenging situation the best way "we as a family" can. Remember that every parent is a powerful role model for their children - if you model the positive coping skills in times of stress, you'll learn as a family and your child will also learn more effectively - of course!

In addition to the "Family Fun Friends Adventure" booklet, you can purchase two sided coloured cloth koala hand puppets, and our logo Fun Friend "koalas" yellow eye pillows. Both of these items are important to do the activities in this program and can be used many times again by your family to play the Fun Friends games for promoting social and emotional development in your child.

Also, remember that there are two other versions of the Friends Program - Friends for Life for primary school children and also a youth version for high school adolescents. The skills taught in each one of these courses, are designed to match the developmental needs and challenges faced in that age group. At both of these two older age levels, there is still parental involvement, but the course must be run by trained teachers in school settings, or by trained psychologists at Pathways Health and Research Centres ([www.pathwayshrc.com.au](http://www.pathwayshrc.com.au)). The reason for this is to make sure the Friends Program will be used properly, at an age where some children may have other challenges which must be handled by an independent, unbiased professional.