



## Adolescent Medicine

### How can I get involved?

Complete a referral form and return it to us. You can download a form at [www.rch.org.au/chips](http://www.rch.org.au/chips) The referral form will need to be completed and signed by a health professional working closely with the young person. When ChiPS receives a referral we will contact the young person to discuss their interest in and suitability for the program.

Supported by:



# ChiPS

## Chronic Illness Peer Support

A program for young people

### ChiPS: Chronic Illness Peer Support Adolescent Medicine

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne  
50 Flemington Road Parkville  
Victoria 3052 Australia  
TELEPHONE (03) 9345 6616  
FACSIMILE (03) 9345 6343  
[www.rch.org.au/chips](http://www.rch.org.au/chips)

## What is ChiPS?

ChiPS is a vibrant program for young people aged 12–25 with a primary diagnosis of a chronic illness who are ready and able to participate in a group program.

The focus of the program is to connect with other young people who get what it's like to live with a chronic illness. There are lots of opportunities to connect and have fun through peer support and youth participation.

ChiPS is based at The Royal Children's Hospital, Department of Adolescent Medicine. Young people from all over Melbourne together with those from regional and rural areas are all able to get involved.

### What members say about ChiPS:

"I thought that the 8 Week Group was a great opportunity to open up to people other than my friends and family. At first I wasn't sure about what I should expose about myself, but then I got more confident and realised that they felt the same way about things. I was able to talk to them about pretty much anything."

"It's great to be part of such an understanding and encouraging group of people."

"I enjoy ChiPS mainly because no one judges you for what you look like or looks at you funny when you cough. Everyone gets along so well, you could go to your first camp or social and everyone will treat you like they have known you for years."



## What does ChiPS offer?

### Peer Support Programs: 8 Week Group and Intensives

- Held over eight weeks (1.5 hours each week) or two days in the school holidays
- Share experiences and challenges of living with chronic illness using discussion, music, art and other group activities
- Meet other young people who have similar experiences
- Have fun

### Camps

- Experience a wide range of activities in a supportive and inclusive environment
- Activities on camp can include high ropes, archery, canoeing, drama and art
- Camps run for three days and two nights
- A medical team attends to support campers

### Socials

- Held four times a year (generally in the school holidays)
- Previous socials have included an MCG tour, Master Chef cook off, high ropes, circus skills, games afternoons, wheel chair basketball, movies and more
- All socials are adapted to the abilities of the group

### Leadership opportunities

- Leadership training days
- Public speaking opportunities
- Peer leader training (open to senior ChiPS members only)
- Age-appropriate Mental Health first aid training (open to senior ChiPS members only)

### Reference Committee

ChiPS is "For young people, by young people" and reference committee is how our members make it happen. Reference Committee is a group of ChiPS members who:

- Meet monthly to help run and organise the program
- Provide ideas and feedback on program initiatives
- Assist with organising socials, camps and publications
- Are involved in advocacy and promotion of the ChiPS program