

The *Massage in Schools Program* is designed for children aged 4-12 and is now implemented in many countries.



MISP is:

- introduced into schools by trained instructors
- a peer massage program (students paired with students)
- based on an ethos of respect (for self and others)
- child centred (children have the right to say 'no' or to ask for changes in pressure)
- performed with the child's permission
- easily implemented in the classroom
- an inclusive program (all children in the class participate once parental permission is obtained)
- a way of incorporating all learning styles
- appropriate for children from 4 to 12 years of age
- easily incorporated into the daily teaching program (eg. 10 mins at the start of the day or after a break)
- applicable across curriculum areas
- adaptable for students with particular needs
- performed on the back, arms and head only (clothed)
- a proactive model for teaching children to cope
- another tool for teaching
- FUN!

Observations of MISP include:

- calmer, happier classrooms and children
- increased concentration
- less aggression and bullying
- children learn the language and actions of self-protection
- promotion of healthy self-esteem and emotional development
- better relationships between children
- better management of anger and emotional upsets
- better performance of children with difficulties
- a noticeable flow-on effect in all areas of life (in and out of school)



Some comments from teachers:

"We both think that the children start the day more settled after a massage ... it's been the best method of starting the morning."

"At the end of six weeks, the children in this class played better with each other than before and left nobody out."

"Children who had been isolated before were included. Once children begin to touch one another, barriers come down and they find it easier to be friendly."

"Children are more willing to sit next to each other. They relate better to each other."

Comments from students:

"It makes you calmer and you can work a lot better."

"We're less aggressive outside when we're playing."

"It makes us settle down and we can concentrate on our work better."

"When you're giving the massage it feels like you're doing something nice for the person."

"Massage makes me feel special!"