

# Program Outline

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Session 1: Group building and storytelling

Session 2: Group building and learning to identify feelings

Session 3: Learning about healthy boundaries and how to communicate feelings

Session 4: Learning about mental illness

Session 5: Learning about the treatments for mental illness

Session 6: Developing resiliency

Session 7: Societal attitudes and stigma

Session 8: Self-care and self-esteem

When they have completed the program, children are invited to attend reunion meetings for ongoing support.



# Bringing "Kids in Control" to Your Community

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Want to start a "Kids in Control" Program in your community?

Call the BC Schizophrenia Society  
604-270-7841 or 1-888-888-0029  
bcss.prov@telus.net

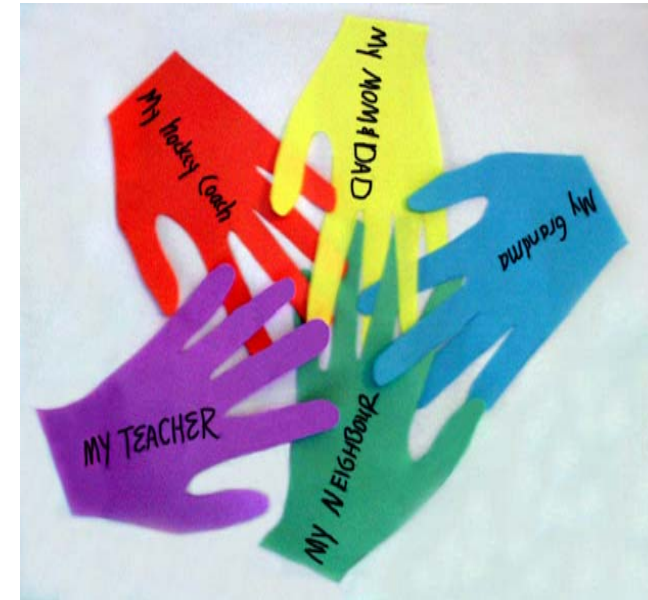
## Acknowledgments

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The BC Schizophrenia Society wishes to thank the Ministry for Children and Family Development for helping us make this program available to children and their families.



# Kids in Control



**British Columbia  
Schizophrenia  
Society**

## Why a Program for Children?

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The challenges for families when someone has a mental illness are sometimes overwhelming. Imagine what it is like to be dependant on a parent who is actively psychotic, paranoid, or so deeply depressed that they can't get out of bed. Or to live with a parent who has uncontrollable manic swings, who is grandiose and full of energy one minute and then, suddenly, in a furious rage?

Children who have a parent with a mental illness face a number of burdens, discomforts, responsibilities, and fears. Their lives can be shattered by unpredictable episodes of bizarre behaviours and disrupted by prolonged periods of separation due to hospitalization or apprehension by child protection workers.

Children may be emotionally at risk as a result of their parent's negative mood, lack of availability, and possible conflict within the family. Consequences are extensive and can result in neglect, abuse, academic difficulties, poor peer interactions, confusion, and inadequate coping skills.

## What is "Kids in Control"?

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"Kids in Control" offers education and support to children aged 8 to 13 years who have a parent with mental illness. Once a week for 8 consecutive weeks the children meet for about 1½ hours.

During the sessions, children are given information about mental illness plus an opportunity to develop and practice healthy coping strategies for dealing with the difficulties they may be facing.

Using crafts, games and interactive learning activities, children have the opportunity to join together in developing healthy attitudes and coping skills.

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[www.kidsincontrol.bcsc.org](http://www.kidsincontrol.bcsc.org)

A reason to hope.

The means to cope.

## Benefits of the Program

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Feedback from children who have taken the program reveals several helpful aspects.

Children routinely comment on how learning about mental illness helped allay their fears and that "now it doesn't seem as bad."

Children learn the importance of "The 3 C's"  
I can't **Cause** it.  
I can't **Cure** it.  
I can take **Care** of myself.

Learning how to deal with stigma and to resist messages of self-blame are other important topics.

Facilitators are continually amazed at the childrens' level of sharing and by the intensity of their participation.

For more information contact  
BC Schizophrenia Society  
604-270-7841 1-888-888-0029  
[bcsc.prov@telus.net](mailto:bcsc.prov@telus.net) [www.bcsc.org](http://www.bcsc.org)