



Welcome to the Core Program's OCD Stream!

It appears your child may be experiencing obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). OCD can show up in many different ways, but for most kids, it involves **obsessions** (intrusive thoughts, worries or fears) and **compulsions** (actions or mental rituals they feel they *have* to do to feel better or prevent something bad). You're not imagining it – it *is* hard. OCD can take up time, energy and joy. It can get in the way of fun, school, friendships, routines and peace. It can feel like a bossy bully telling everyone what to do. OCD is tough, but you and your child are tougher.

You and your child are taking an important and courageous step toward hope, strength and freedom from OCD. You are not alone. Your CASA Mental Health care team will walk with you every step of the way.

A Message to Kids and Teens

If you're like many kids with OCD, you've been dealing with thoughts and urges that feel pushy, scary or "just not right." You might be doing things over and over, or avoiding things you want to do, just to make those thoughts quieter.

The therapists at CASA can help you take back your time, your confidence and your life. You'll learn how to stand up to the "OCD bully," and you won't have to do it alone. We'll practice together, cheer you on and help you get stronger every week.

A Message to Parents and Caregivers

OCD affects the whole family. You may feel stressed, frustrated, guilty, confused or pulled into routines you never meant to support. Caregivers often feel very different emotions from each other, sometimes leading to conflict at a time when you need teamwork. You're not failing. OCD is simply tough.

The treatment your child will receive in the Core program gives you the tools to step out of OCD's traps, support your child effectively, and reduce the stress, guilt and chaos that often come with the disorder. Your role is incredibly important, and with practice, families truly do get stronger together.

**The good news is
OCD is *treatable*.
This program is
designed to help
you take back
control.**



What Treatment Looks Like

The gold standard treatment for OCD is called **cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)**, with a key piece called **exposure and response prevention (ERP)**. ERP might sound big, but it simply means facing the thing that triggers your OCD and practicing not doing the OCD behaviour.

Together, we call it CBT-ERP. It teaches us new ways to understand and respond to OCD thoughts and urges. Kids will learn that they *can* handle discomfort, and that OCD's threats and demands don't control them.



CBT-ERP teaches kids to:



Some kids also benefit from medication, which can make it easier to reduce compulsions and participate in therapy. Together, these treatments create real, measurable changes in the brain.

Why We Believe in This Treatment

Kids and teens often finish treatment with fewer OCD symptoms, and tools to stop OCD from controlling their lives. Even if OCD thoughts pop up again someday, you'll know exactly how to handle them. Research on this family-based program shows that kids and caregivers experience:

- Decreases in OCD symptoms
- Better daily functioning
- Less family stress and conflict
- Fewer OCD-driven behaviours and demands

And, research has shown that these improvements last. Families really do get better together.

What to Expect in Core's OCD Treatment Stream

After your referral, you'll have an assessment with a mental health therapist and a psychiatrist. Together, we'll build a personalized treatment plan. Your insights as caregivers and your child's own knowledge of their OCD are central to making this treatment fit your family. Your child's treatment plan may include:

- **Medication management:** A psychiatrist will work with you to explore medication options if needed.
- **The family-based CBT-ERP group:** A 12-week program with separate groups for kids, teens and caregivers, for 90 minutes each week.
- **The SPACE parenting group:** The Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions group runs for 10 weeks. Caregivers will learn how to reduce accommodations and support their child's independence.
- **Individual therapy sessions**

Next Steps

If you decide to move ahead with the OCD stream, your therapist will submit a referral. You'll then be scheduled for your initial assessment, and we'll start building your treatment plan together. **OCD is not the boss of you. Hope starts here.**

