



**From Clinic to Campsite:**  
Early intervention mental health  
groups for children experiencing  
familial mental illness

SUPPORTING KIDS  
LIVING IN FAMILIES  
AFFECTED BY  
MENTAL ILLNESS

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## How are our mental health early intervention programs similar to others?

- Psycho-education: symptom recognition, normalisation, targeting misconceptions and treatment barriers.
- Skill-building: basic stress / distress coping skills
- Help-seeking skills-building: creating plans, fostering intentions
- Developed and supported by clinicians, led by suitably trained adults
- Triage and referral-on for those in need







## How do our programs differ?

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- “Meeting kids on their turf”; clinical content delivered in an activity and team-based chat group
- “Like-minded” peers with shared lived experience
- Age inclusivity and span of program is 8-18 years
- Ongoing connection
- Therapeutic recreation format allows for real-time skill use

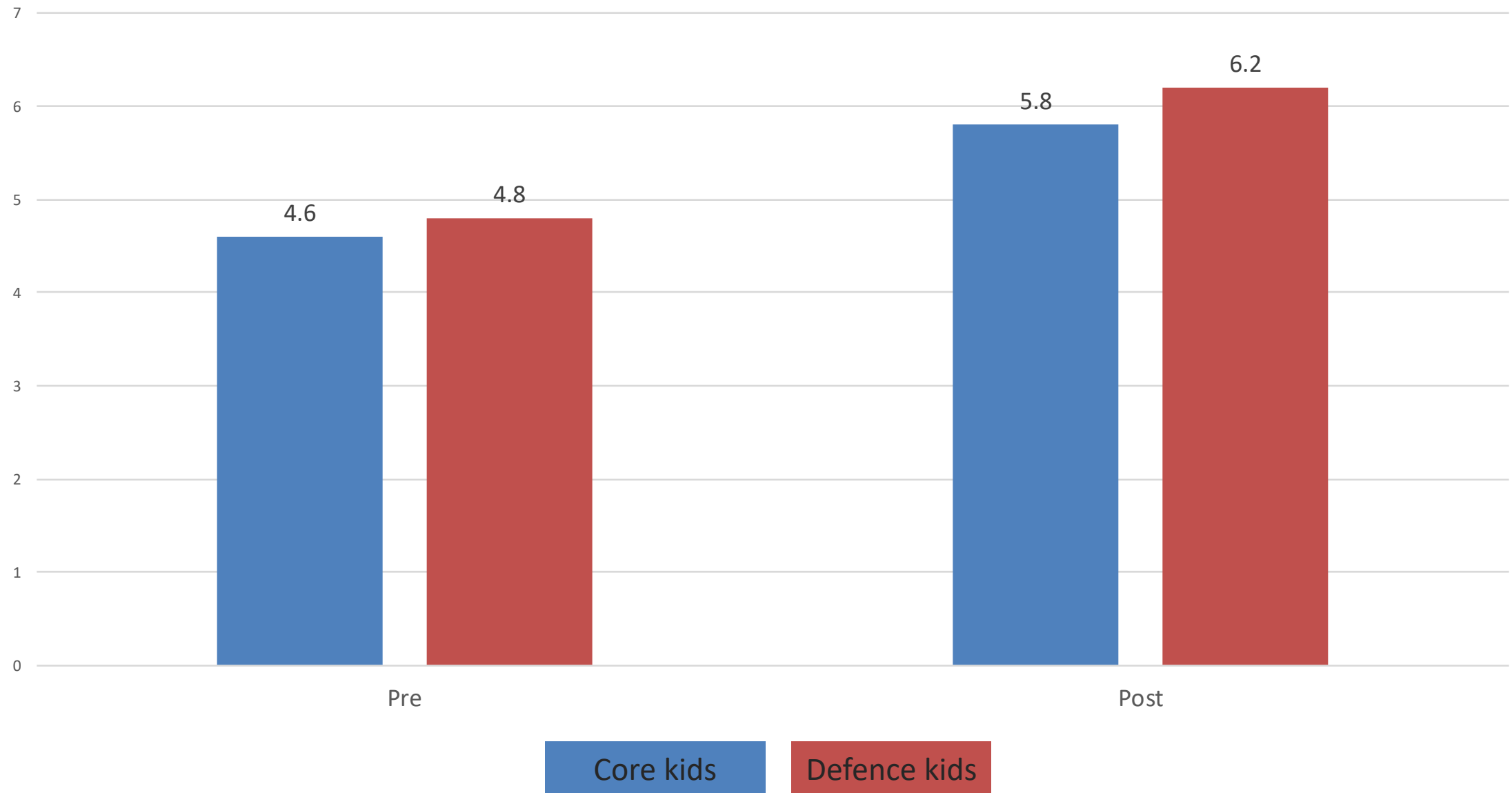




Do they  
work?

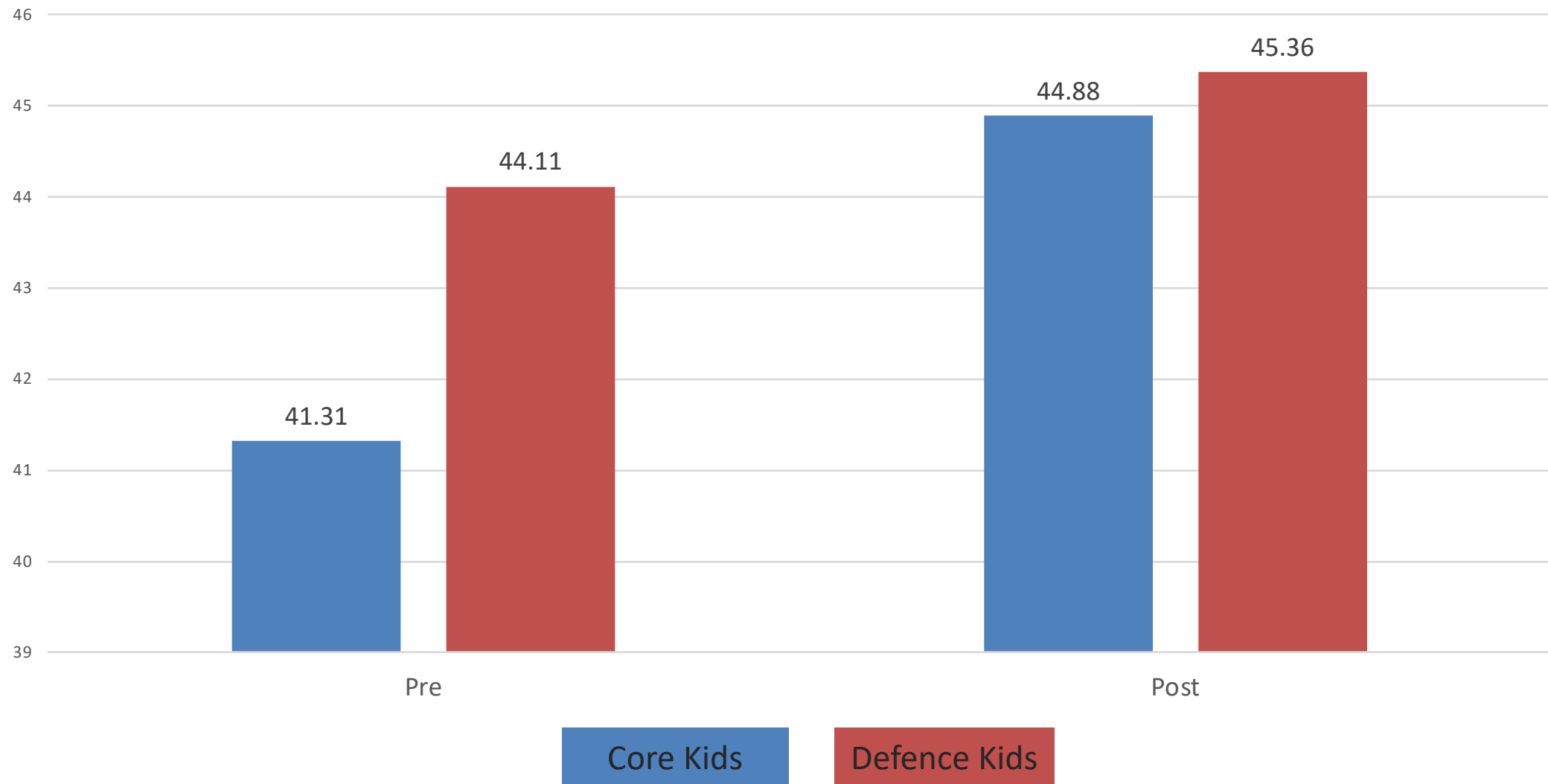


## Mental Health Literacy





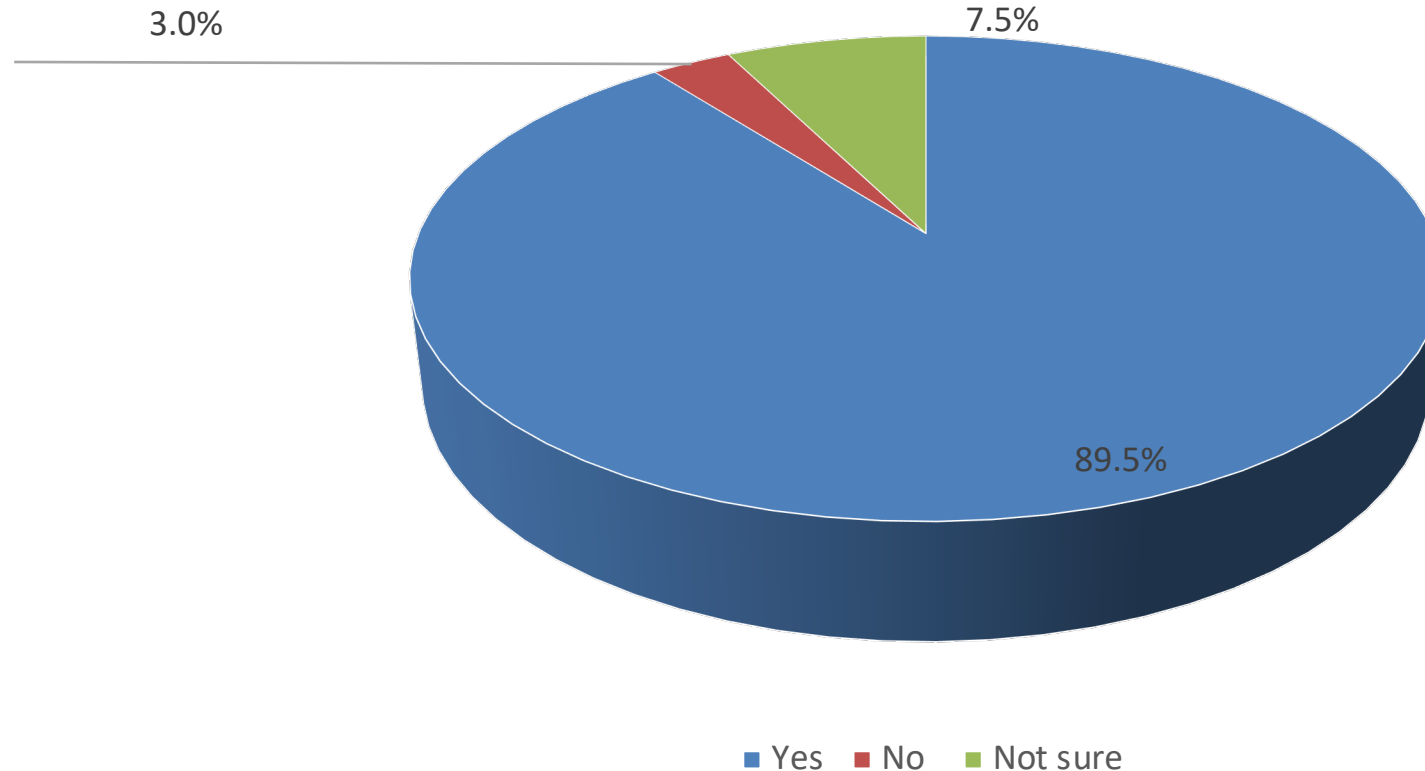
## Help Seeking Intentions





# Connection through program re-engagement

Do you plan to return to camp next year?





## Connection via a stepped-care model

- Sample of 130 young people : Total engagements 290 July-Sep 2020
- All young people in sample engaged at least once in the period
- Engagement number ranged between 1-5; mean engagement = 2.2
- 6months from Jul-Dec, more than 1000 touchpoints with these young people





Why do they  
work ?  
(hunches)

- Fun! Young people want to come and are supported to engage
- Stigma busting; safe environment and within a safe cohort
- Strengthens familial communication and family coping
- Real-time practice (e.g., phone helpline)
- Builds ancillary skills and self-efficacy
- A place to come back to – connection and trust
- Desire to return is high
- Cost effective relative to traditional clinical interventions





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[www.kookaburrakids.org.au](http://www.kookaburrakids.org.au)

